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A REPORT BY J-5

FIRST CORRIGENDUM

JCS 2283/384

BYE-5830/65

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14

12 October 1965

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NOTE BY THE SECRETARIES

to the

HOLDERS OF JCS 2283/384

A Report by the J-5 on

AN OFFER OF INSPECTION OF THE MANNED ORBITAL LABORATORY (MOL)(U)

FIRST CORRIGENDUM

At the request of the originator, holders are requested to insert the attached revised pages ^{4, 5, 6, 7} ~~5, 6, 7~~ and ~~8~~ in the subject report and destroy the superseded pages in accordance with existing security regulations.

R. C. FORBES

J. E. MANSFIELD

Joint Secretariat

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ENCLOSURE

DRAFT

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subject: An Offer of Inspection of the Manned
Orbital Laboratory (MOL) (U)

1. (U) Reference is made to a memorandum* from the 1
Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security 2
Affairs) for the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, same 3
subject, dated 8 October 1965, which forwarded a Department 4
of State proposal** in which it is recommended "that the 5
United States be prepared, if apprehensions over the MOL 6
program seem to be building up seriously, as a result 7
of allegations that the MOL is intended to carry weapons 8
of mass destruction, to offer inspection of such vehicles 9
before launch, on a basis of reciprocity." 10

2. ~~(S)~~ Although the political and psychological 11
impacts of a United States proposal for verified inspec- 12
tion are presented in the Department of State proposal, 13
the impact of our national security program is not 14
adequately treated. Certainly, before any discussions 15
are undertaken by the Department of State in the United 16
Nations or at any international level, these security 17
implications require the most careful consideration, and 18
the disadvantages must be evaluated against the possible 19
political gains that might result. 20

3. ~~(TS)~~ The United States policy regarding pre-launch 21
inspection is clear and the Joint Chiefs of Staff believe 22
it to be consistent with our security interests. National 23
Security Council Action 2454 states: 24

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* Available in SAO channels. TCS 251126/65

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"The US should note in connection with private disclosures that, except in some cases for specifically defined disarmament agreements, the US cannot agree to:

- a. Declarations of the precise purpose of all satellites,
- b. Declaration of the equipment of all satellites,
- c. General requirements for advance notification of all satellite launching and the tracks of satellites,
- d. Pre-launch inspection of the satellites, or
- e. A specific definition of peaceful uses of space which does not embrace unlimited observations."

In furtherance of this policy the United States has on record with the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee a proposal for pre-launching inspection of space vehicles as part of its general proposal on the freeze on nuclear delivery vehicles. The United States has said:

"Observers would witness announced missile and space firings to ensure that the proper types and numbers of vehicles were being launched. It is our view that pre-launch inspection should consist of visual observation of the gross characteristics of the vehicle being launched."

4. ~~(TS)~~ There are three possible Soviet reactions which could result from deviating from current US policy specifically for Manned Orbiting Laboratory (MOL) - rejection, delayed acceptance, or immediate agreement. On the basis of interim examination, the following general observations appear appropriate:

- a. Rejection. The United States would probably emerge with a higher prestige factor in the international arena. On the other hand, having indicated

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TCS 251136/65
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a willingness to depart from current policy, it should be expected that numerous additional proposals for "deviation" will be surfaced.

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b. The Delayed Acceptance. The Soviet Union could at first decline and then accept the proposal (and this option is open to them in the Department of State proposal) in which case, should they match their acceptance to the launch dates for MOL, they would regain any lost prestige and successfully expose or preclude US exploitation of at least a portion of the United States overhead reconnaissance program.

c. Immediate Agreement. Should the Soviet Union agree immediately to such a proposal, the potential political gain or value to the United States would be questionable, and other gains minimal. This elective appears most disadvantageous to the United States.

5. ~~(TS)~~ It would appear that at most the United States might gain some international goodwill and perhaps some further acceptance of the use of satellites for reconnaissance purposes. The technical and intelligence gains about the Soviet Union would be questionable. On the other hand, the Soviet Union, by acceptance, would also enhance its image and in addition, would gain intelligence and technologies, including detailed knowledge about our current capabilities. Additionally, the United States could conceivably be placed in a most awkward position with nothing to gain and much to lose if the proposal is seized upon and accepted by a third party. Inadequate consideration has been given to this possibility which merits the most careful analysis and study.

~~TOP SECRET~~

TCS 251136/65

Cy 14

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6. ~~(TS/D/D)~~ The preponderance of the Department of State arguments in favor of initiation of an offer to inspect the MOL prior to launch is centered around an attempt to assuage any international apprehension that might develop from adverse Soviet Union propaganda, and to enhance the image of the United States intentions in space. In the arguments opposing such an offer, the Department of State acknowledges that the proposal could jeopardize not only the MOL program, but seriously affect the entire United States National Reconnaissance Satellite Program, even though the proposal is rejected by the Soviet Union. In view of the overriding importance of the National Reconnaissance Program to our national security and the fact that it is our primary - and in some areas the only source of information with which to develop critical intelligence about the Sino-Soviet Bloc, as well as other areas world-wide, this capability must not be jeopardized.

7. ~~(S)~~ The Joint Chiefs of Staff strongly recommend that the pre-launch inspection offer of the MOL, as proposed by the Department of State, be withdrawn from any further consideration.

8. (U) The extremely short time available for this response has not permitted detailed development of all the adverse impacts of such a proposal on our security interests. In the event such a study is desired, the Joint Chiefs of Staff are prepared to undertake it.

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TCS 251136/65
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