

Functions: MOL



1-2 CIA
3 Dr Brown
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June 12, 1965

Dear Red,

As you know, in 1963 the Secretary of Defense directed the Air Force to undertake a study of a possible manned orbital laboratory (MOL) and of military and other experiments that might be conducted in such a laboratory. During calendar 1964, a wide variety of experiments were examined, many of them by specialized contractors. Some Air Force funds were reprogrammed to the NRO, and comparative studies of manned and unmanned systems for high resolution optical reconnaissance were conducted under the aegis of the NRO. The code name DORIAN, in the BYEMAN system, was established for these latter activities.

Late in 1964, drawing on the results of these studies, the Secretary of Defense changed the priority of objectives for the planning of the MOL, placing emphasis on the development of technology contributing to improved military observational capability for manned or unmanned operation, and encouraging consideration of intermediate steps toward operational systems. The Secretary requested that a program be planned and submitted for his consideration during May.

For the past five months work has gone forward toward these more specific objectives, under the personal direction of the Under Secretary of the Air Force. Payload studies have been continued by the NRO under DORIAN classification, using funds reprogrammed from the Air Force.

I am informed that from this work a fairly specific program has now evolved for the development of a capability for very high resolution optical reconnaissance. Details of this proposed program have been briefed to Harold Brown, and at his recommendation, to Don Hornig and the Panel on Reconnaissance of the President's Science Advisory Committee. A formal presentation to the Secretary of Defense is under preparation.

Even in advance of formal submission of this program, I would like to be sure that you have had a chance to see the

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kind of program that has evolved, and be informed about the capabilities that it promises. I would like to be better informed myself, and I have asked Brock McMillan to try to arrange an hour's briefing for both of us. I trust that it will be possible to hear this soon.

Sincerely,

~~SECRET~~
Cyrus R. Vance

Vice Admiral William F. Raborn, USN (Ret)
Director
Central Intelligence Agency

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