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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON

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NO DATE

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY

MEMORANDUM FOR DIRECTOR, NRO PROGRAM A  
DIRECTOR, NRO PROGRAM B

SUBJECT: Responsibility for the CORONA Project

At the present time, and for historically valid reasons, the management of the CORONA project is divided, with the Director, Program B, responsible for "black" contracts, and the Director, Program A, responsible for the remaining contracts, and for launch operations. Under this arrangement, there is no place in the NRO, short of my office, where the authority resides to review all applicable contracts for consistency and completeness, to exercise continuing contractual and technical surveillance over contractors and over the Service agencies, and to issue direction to contractors on all aspects of the program.

I feel that it is essential for me to establish a single point of authority within the NRO for the CORONA program, to which I can then assign full responsibility for the successful conduct of the program. I am convinced that the Director, NRO Program A, because of the direct authority he has over the necessary Air Force resources, is the only one to whom I can reasonably assign this responsibility. Accordingly, I hereby make this assignment to him, under arrangements similar to those we have used in the case of LANYARD.

Specifically, the "black" contracts associated with the CORONA program will be administered by a CIA contract officer who will serve on the staff of the Director, Program A, in El Segundo, California. He will administer these contracts under the management direction of the Director, Program A. I will hold the Director, Program A, responsible for conduct of the entire program; one of his first tasks will be to review all applicable contracts, black and white, for their consistency and completeness, and amend them as may be necessary.

Declassified and Released by the NRO

In Accordance with E. O. 12958

on NOV 26 1997

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I consider it essential that the technical resources and experience of the whole NRO be made available to the CORONA program as needed. I expect the Director, Program A, to continue to use the Configuration Control Board as a principal management tool, and I expect the Director, Program B, to make available to Program A the advice, consultation, and assistance of appropriate Program B personnel as members of the CCB and as individual consultants.

Program B will continue to provide Program A with security support and film courier support.

The Director, Program A, will review the present management of the white aspects of the CORONA program, and recommend any changes needed to strengthen and centralize authority.

I want it clearly understood that the changes here directed are strictly and solely for the purpose of creating an adequate focus of authority and responsibility for the continuing management of this important program. It is my intention by these changes to make the CCB a more effective instrument for technical guidance to the program, by providing a strong management within which the whole program can be brought into view, and through which all aspects of the program can be controlled in an integrated way. In addition, I intend that, through the medium of the CCB, the technical people in both Program A and Program B will be kept informed of the technical and operational problems of the program. It must be understood, however, that technical and contractual direction to the contractors involved in this program will flow only through the Director, Program A, and the responsible contract administrators on his staff.

*Brockway McMillan*  
BROCKWAY McMILLAN  
Director  
National Reconnaissance Office

Concur:

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JOHN A. McCONE

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