

~~TOP SECRET~~
DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON

Noted by [redacted]
2/5/64



OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY

February 4, 1964

Dear Mr. McCone,

Since our last discussion on 10 December, and receipt of your letter of 13 December, I have conducted a detailed personal survey of the management, technical, and contractual arrangements, and the practices followed, in the CORONA project. I have concluded that the Government's management of this project is a significant factor contributing to the unsatisfactory record of recent performance. I am convinced, now more strongly than before that certain changes are absolutely necessary to insure that this program meets the needs of the intelligence community, and specifically to guarantee its full assistance to you in your responsibilities as DCI.

As a result of my survey, I have this date issued a policy directive, copy attached, which defines overall objectives for the conduct of the CORONA project. The directive also outlines administrative procedures that will require all proposed changes and all significant engineering efforts to be referred to me prior to implementation. I consider the procedures outlined to be interim in nature, but they will remain in effect until I feel that the project is under satisfactory control, and until more permanent actions are effected.

On 28 January 1964, I received a memorandum from the FIAB (copy attached) which is self-explanatory. In view of the fact that you were out of the country, and recognizing our past discussions and mutual interest in this program, on 30 January 1964 I discussed with Secretary McNamara the material I intended

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to present to the FIAB. I explained that this was to be a report of the results of my personal survey, and that I would make clear to the FIAB that any proposed actions would be discussed with you and with Secretary McNamara prior to implementation.

During the FIAB briefing, I was specifically asked to outline the steps that in my view were necessary to bring into being a satisfactory management structure. This I did, making clear that the recommendations made were entirely my own.

I think it desirable that I give you a detailed accounting of the present practices on this project as my survey has revealed them. I would like to review for you the material I gave the FIAB, and to describe a specific plan for aligning the management and contractual structure squarely with the objectives that you and I consider primary.

Arrangements will be made with your office as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



Brockway McMillan
Director
National Reconnaissance Office

2 Attachments

1. Policy Directive
2. FIAB memorandum, 28 Jan 64

Honorable John A. McCone
Director
Central Intelligence Agency



February 3, 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR DIRECTOR, PROGRAM A
DIRECTOR, PROGRAM B

SUBJECT: Operating and Engineering Objectives for CORONA

This memorandum sets forth a statement of policy for the CORONA project against which engineering objectives can be set and engineering decisions made. It, further, establishes procedures by which DNR0 will be kept informed of the degree to which this policy is effective, and will be made aware of any problems that may create a need for further guidance.

Program Directors will see that the guidance contained herein is made clear to the affected administrative and contracting offices, to the members of the Configuration Control Board, and to the appropriate engineering supervision in the organizations of the affected associate contractors.

All items of equipment, however supplied to the project, all applicable engineering effort, and all test, check-out, and launch services are considered to be within the scope of this directive.

General Policy

1. The primary objective of the CORONA project is to achieve consistent reliable returns of intelligence photography of a quality comparable to that of the best experienced during 1963, on a schedule closely approximating that laid down in advance by the DNR0, and in a manner responsive to the targeting guidance supplied by USIB. Within the limits permitted by this objective, it shall be the policy to stabilize the configuration of the CORONA system, maintaining a fixed configuration with uniform procedures for test, check-out and launch.

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2. It is a secondary objective to improve the performance of the CORONA system in quality, in responsiveness to intelligence needs, and in reliability and economy. It is considered that stability of configuration will contribute importantly to this objective.

3. The amount of engineering effort expended on this project must be controlled to insure that this effort is always and economically directed toward approved objectives of high priority. Changes will not be introduced into the system or its operation except as they are judged essential to meet the primary objective, or are judged to contribute significantly toward specific, important, identifiable improvements in quality, responsiveness, reliability or economy.

Policy on Ancillary Payloads and Experiments

4. Secondary or ancillary payloads and experiments will not be scheduled for or carried on a CORONA mission without the explicit approval of DNRO. No CORONA mission will be specially configured to accept such payloads or experiments without specific approval from DNRO.

5. No engineering effort will be expended against development or integration of ancillary payloads or of experiments without explicit prior approval of DNRO.

6. In general, DNRO expects to approve for initiation or for flight only those ancillary payloads or those experiments that in his judgment: either contribute significantly to knowledge about the performance of the CORONA system, or are necessary to the engineering or development of specific desired improvements to the system.

Initiation of System Improvements

7. It will be the policy to initiate efforts toward improvement of the system only when the effort is specific in nature, when the effort is directed toward a specific identified improvement in quality, responsiveness, reliability or economy, when it is judged that this improvement will be significant

and desirable in the light of the cost to attain it, and when it is judged that the improvement can be brought about without significant risk to the primary objectives of the project. Engineering directed toward improvements judged to be highly desirable, which do not demonstrably fail the last two criteria, may be considered for initiation on a phased basis to arrive early and in an economical manner at judgments relative to these two criteria.

8. In general, changes directed toward improvement of the system will be instituted in two or more steps. The final step will be accomplished by approval of a separate technical directive authorizing introduction of the change into scheduled flight systems or procedures. Prior to this step, initiation of engineering, procurement, and fabrication will be accomplished by approval of a technical directive, or by approval in sequence of a number of separate directives, approvals being phased as may be needed to implement the objectives of paragraph 7 above.

9. The Chairman of the Configuration Control Board (CCB) or his designated representative will keep DNRO informed on a timely basis of significant matters pending before the CCB that come under the scope of the policies here set forth. Information to be presented will include a pertinent description and status of the effort proposed; CCB disposition of these matters, whether favorable or unfavorable, will be reported as effected.

10. Document [REDACTED] Operating Procedure for Systems Engineering and Technical Direction, dated 10 June 1963 and incorporated by reference into applicable contracts, establishes procedures for Government approval and transmittal of technical direction to CORONA contractors. DNRO directs that henceforth the following administrative practices be observed in [REDACTED] in accomplishing the procedures outlined in the referenced document: Subsequent to approval of a technical directive by the CCB, but prior to its approval by the designated representative of AFSSD, and prior to its transmittal for implementation, the technical directive and necessary supporting documentation will be reviewed by DNRO or, at his direction, by the Deputy DNRO. Following this review, the TD and documentation will be returned to [REDACTED] with DNRO comments for further action as appropriate.

SEAL: [REDACTED]

Brockway McMillan

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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PRESIDENT'S FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE ADVISORY BOARD

January 28, 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. BROCKWAY McMILLAN
DIRECTOR, NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE

Mr. Clark Clifford, Chairman of the Board, has asked me to advise you that the Board will next meet January 30 and to request that you meet with the Board at that time and provide the members with a current status report on the NRO and its programs similar to status reports which you have given us in the past.

In December you mentioned informally that you were planning to have a group of consultants examine the conduct by the Government and its contractors of one of the important programs under your responsibility. I suggest that when you meet with the Board that you also report on the status of that inquiry and on any findings or conclusions you may have reached in connection with it.

It would be most agreeable to the Board's schedule if you could join with us from 11:30 AM to 12:30. The meeting will be held in Room 297, Executive Office Building.

J. Patrick Coyne
J. Patrick Coyne
Executive Secretary

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