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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

Honorable Cyrus R. Vance
Deputy Secretary of Defense
Washington, D. C.

Dear Cy:

I am pleased that your memorandum of 15 October concerning the CORONA program is in general accord with my proposal to consolidate the entire CORONA program under [redacted] over-all management. I do find several comments in your memorandum which manifest a possible misunderstanding of exactly what [redacted] role, and hence the Agency's role, should be in the CORONA program. For clarity's sake I will relate my concept.

As I suggested in my 6 October memorandum, and as was illustrated in its attachment, [redacted] would be responsible for the technical direction of the payload contractors which include Itek, GE, and Lockheed. Also under [redacted] would be the Palo Alto facility for the assembly, integration, and checkout of the payload system. Although the technical functions conducted by the Agency at Palo Alto would be an extension of [redacted] direction, I see no reason, at this time, to disturb the mechanism for operational support which that facility provides to the NRO Satellite Operations Center during CORONA on-orbit operations.

[redacted] direction over the Lockheed Systems Integration contract will require careful coordination with the [redacted] hence my desire that [redacted] recognize [redacted] role in the payload area. [redacted] will look to Lockheed to perform the necessary payload integration function and to [redacted] for that system engineering coordination necessary for the interface of the complete system. Specifically, [redacted] should be responsive to [redacted] for whatever assistance that he may require.

[redacted] copy [redacted]

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Regarding the CORONA Advisory Committee, the fact that CORONA is an operational program whose primary purpose is the acquisition photographic intelligence, it would seem paramount that the entire system function in behalf of the primary mission and hence that [redacted] as technical director of the payload, be established as the governing element or Chairman. Other membership could be drawn, as you suggested, from the NRO Staff, NPIC, etc.

Technical directions on approved changes would be prepared by those technical directors responsible for their respective areas and forwarded through appropriate contract officers to the contractor. In other words [redacted] in his management of the CORONA program would look to two deputies, so to speak--one [redacted] responsible for the payload; the other, responsible for the booster, launch and tracking operations, and recovery efforts.

I trust that this elaboration clarifies my previous memorandum. I believe we are moving in the proper direction and have asked General Carter, upon returning from his Far East trip, to introduce [redacted] to [redacted]

Sincerely,

John A. McCone
Director

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