

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT

Letter to Secretary Vance re Agency/in CORONA Role

This memorandum has attached two letters for your selection which are responsive to Secretary Vance's letter to you of 15 October 1964. We recommend for your signature the letter proposed as Attachment A.

- In his 15 October letter, Secretary Vance has extended the intent of your 6 October letter to include several points which, if implemented, would limit and hence the Agency's, effectiveness in the CORONA program.
- Specifically, you had stated that every phase of the CIA activities encompassed in the orange square on the chart attached to your 6 October letter would become a responsibility of This included the flow of NRO funds and technical direction from to the payload contractors. All of these activities, however, would be conducted under the direction of
- 4. In Secretary Vance's letter, he places technical direction with then establishes as the CORONA Project Director, and later states that technical directions on approved changes would be prepared by the CORONA Project Director and forwarded to the contractors. In doing so, who would be charged with the responsibility for the payload, would not control the wherewithal to execute necessary decisions, i.e. technical direction. The attached letters address themselves to this point.

classified and Released by the NRO

Accordance with E. O. 12958

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- 5. We also feel that the center of gravity of the CORONA program should focus on the payload, payload requirements and that the program be oriented at all times towards its primary mission. We can help promote this by placing as Chairman of the Advisory Committee and have so stated in each of the letters attached.
- 6. The proposed responses to Secretary Vance attempt to reaffirm our position. Attachment A meets each issue more directly and with greater clarity than Attachment B. We prefer "A" because we feel that the CORONA program cannot tolerate the continuance of fuzzy responsibilities and grey areas of control. The simplicity and directness of "A" leave little room for misunderstanding.
- 7. Accepting the assumption that the Agency can contribute to the CORONA program, and in fact has a responsibility to it, we should not deny to our representative, the functional tools he needs to perform his duty to or anyone else. We support the concept of consolidating the CORONA program under and would like to foster the idea, as you have suggested, that have two deputies in the CORONA program-for the payload area, and for the remainder.
- 8. By stating that the has direction over CORONA and granting technical direction over the payload is similar to giving Dr. Wheelon direction and over-all management control of but granting the technical direction to the contractors.
- 9. By reserving for the payload technical direction, we have in no way diminished over-all management control and direction, unless, of course, it is the intent of Secretary Vance that the Agency not have in fact the true responsibility for the payload. If such is the case, we would question seriously then the

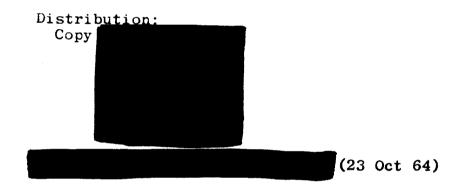


advisibility of wasting a meaningless environment.

talent in such

10. It is recommended that you sign Attachment A.

ALBERT D. WHEELON
Deputy Director
for
Science and Technology



Honorable Cyrus R. Vance Deputy Secretary of Defense hashington, 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 over-all management. I do find several comments in your memorandum which manifest a possible misunderstanding of exactly what I felt role, and hence the Agency's role, should be in the CORONA Program.

As I suggested in my 6 October memorandum, and operating under the general management and direction of would be responsible for the technical direction of the payload contrastors. My desire that recognize role in the payload area was to permit to call upon carrying out the approved changes in the program.

Since CORONA is an ongoing operational program whose primary mission is photographic, it would seem appropriate if the payload, were established as Chairman of the CORONA Advisory Committee. Other membership could be drawn, as you suggested, from the NRO Staff, MPIC, etc.

Also under 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 direction, I see no reason, at



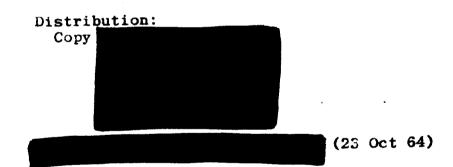
this time, to disturb the mechanism for operational support which that facility provides to the NRO Satellite Operations Center during COROMA on-orbit operations.

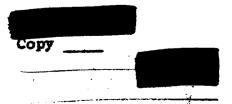
of the CORONA Program to have two deputies, so to responsible for the payload; the other launch and tracking operations, and recovery efforts.

I believe that we are moving in the proper direction and have asked General Carter, upon returning from his Far East trip, to introduce to

Sincerely,

John A. McCome Director





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

Dear Cy:

I am pleased that your memorandum of 15 October concerning the CORONA Program is in general accord with management to consolidate the CORONA Program under over-all management.

whose primary purpose is the acquisition of photographic intelligence, it would be most appropriate if would look to the payload, to chair the Advisory Committee.

Additionally, I feel it would be proper functionally for technical directions on approved changes concerning the payload to be prepared and executed by through his contracting officer to the contractor.

Should be prepared to assist in this area when required.

As I have suggested previously, I look upon in his general management and direction of the CORONA Program to have two deputies, so to speak, one responsible for the payload; the other, responsible for the booster, launch and tracking operations, and recovery efforts.

I believe that we are moving in the proper direction and have asked General Carter, upon returning from his Far Last trip, to introduce to

Sincerely,

John A. McCone
Director

