

CORONA

December 10, 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. FLAX

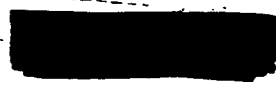
SUBJECT: CORONA Improvement Program

1. It is time again for the monthly "pilgrimage" on behalf of the CORONA Improvement Program. The choice is simple; either we immediately authorize CIA to contract for the 60" spacecraft and modifications to the RV's necessary to accommodate the DISIC (dual-head, improved stellar index camera), plus authorize [redacted] or CIA-OSP to contract for integration of the DISIC, or else delay the first launch of the rotator KH-4 from February 1967 to March 1967 and buy another J-1 payload (current version). A recent message (Tab A) from CIA requested authorization to proceed on the remaining elements of the CORONA Improvement Program.

2. You will recall that the rotator KH-4 camera development was considered the pacing item toward a January 1967 launch date when go-ahead for its development was given in July 1965. Dr. McMillan did not authorize initiation of work on the larger-diameter payload shell, RV's, etc, believing that the then-imminent new NRP Agreement might result in a large-scale realignment of CIA and [redacted] CORONA responsibilities. Last month, the 60" payload shell and RV modifications became the pacing items for the J-3 model, and we slipped the launch date for the first J-3 payload from January to February 1967 (Tab B).

3. I gather you share Dr. McMillan's desire to settle CORONA management responsibilities and clean-up the unsigned contract situation at the same time that release of the remaining CORONA Improvement Program items is given. I agree with the objective, but at the same time doubt that any decision on [redacted] CIA-OSP management responsibilities for CORONA will alter

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radically the present contractual arrangements (i.e., CIA contracts for the cameras, camera payload shell, RV's, and their integration into a complete payload sub-assembly; meanwhile, [redacted] contracts for the boosters, launch services, AGENA, and overall system integration/engineering, etc). If this premise is correct, then we could authorize the initiation of work on the remaining elements of the CORONA Improvement Program in advance of formalizing any management arrangements.

4. This early release of the remaining CIP items would require, however, that we settle one minor management issue. This pertains to the integration of the DISIC into the camera payload section. The development contract with Fairchild for this item is held by [redacted] (initially, this SI camera was intended for [redacted] last Summer, in light of the CORONA Improvement Program, [redacted] proposed to contract with LMSC for DISIC qualification and integration into the CPS. CIA-OSP countered with the recommendation that they hold both the development/production and integration contracts for the stellar index camera--as is the case with the current Itek SI camera. I don't believe it really makes any difference who holds the DISIC development/production contract, but do believe that the DISIC integration should be a part of the LMSC payload sub-assembly contract now held by CIA-OSP.

5. Accordingly, attached (Tab C) is a proposed message to [redacted] and CIA-OSP authorizing initiation of engineering/fabrication of the 60" CPS, modifications to the RV's (required for the DISIC), procurement of DISIC's [redacted] and integration of the DISIC (CIA-OSP) into the camera payload sub-assembly.

6. However, if you do not wish to resolve even the DISIC issue, aside from the overall CORONA problem, and unless the latter can be accomplished in 2-3 days, then we must again slip the first launch date of the J-3 payload (from February to March 1967) and authorize CIA to procure an additional J-1 payload. Attached (Tab D) is a draft message which would accomplish this.

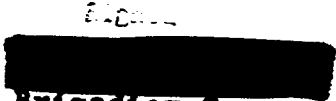
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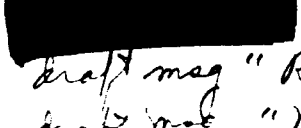



HANDLE VIA [redacted]  
CONTROL [redacted]

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7. I feel we would be on very "thin ice" with the ExCom if it became necessary to explain further slippage in the introduction of the J-3 model (Rotator Camera). In any event, I am opposed to further slippage because this is a worthwhile improvement. I recommend, therefore, that you authorize release of the message attached as Tab C.

  
Brigadier General, USAF  
Director, NRO Staff

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a/s

To: A.   
To: B.   
To: C. draft msg "Ref  ---  
To: D. draft msg "New projected launch date for  
C. as J-3 is March 67. ---  is with  
27 Feb 67. ---  ---

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CONTROL SYSTEM ONLY

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TWX to [REDACTED]

Reference [REDACTED] Subject is CORONA Improvement Program.

1. CIA-OSP is authorized to amend its existing LMSC contract to accomplish necessary engineering, fabrication, and payload integration effort for J-3 configuration to meet first launch date of February 1967. This includes integration of the DISIC into the payload sub-assembly.
2. CIA-OSP is authorized to amend its existing GE RV contract to accommodate the DISIC in the CORONA J-3 model.
3. [REDACTED] will procure sufficient production DISIC units to meet J-3 requirements.
4. Above actions are temporary expedients and should not be construed as a solution to on-going CORONA management discussions. Additionally, specific guidance on the unsigned contracts with LMSC will be provided in the near future.