

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

March 21, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR  AFXPD

SUBJECT: Comments on State Department Draft Study

This memorandum responds to your request that we review a State Department draft study entitled "International Prospects and Problems in Remote Sensing of Earth Resources by Satellite," dated March 13, 1969. Our comments follow.

Generally, we consider the State proposal to be a constructive initial effort and certainly worthy of further consideration.

The paper provides a reasonable discussion of the many hazards inherent in a venture of this nature. One of the more important hazards, for example, is the absence of a distinction between that information gathered for so-called "beneficial purposes" and that which is collected as economic intelligence.

State's proposal for international cooperation in this venture is particularly attractive in that it provides a needed impetus for proceeding jointly with a program directed toward the objectives planned by NASA for the ERTS program.

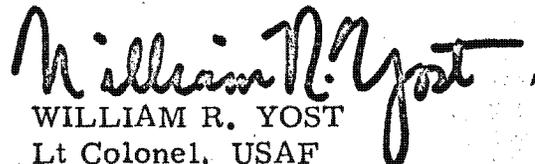
We do not agree that a new interagency committee is needed to coordinate U.S. efforts in this area. We, in DOD, have for some time sponsored the need for a single focal point in the Government to monitor this type activity. Specifically, we have suggested the NASA, an active participant in international space efforts, as the logical candidate for this responsibility. This designation could perhaps be accomplished most effectively through the issuance of a National Security Study Memorandum (NSSM) specifically designating the NASA as "lead crew" for remote sensing of earth resources. This means, of course,

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that State could negotiate the political implications of such endeavors directly with the NASA.

It should be kept in mind that it is difficult for the DOD to give a departmental response to State's draft study in view of the fact that the President has directed a Space Group to consider matters such as this from a national point of view. The optimum U. S. position will probably be well defined as a result of these deliberations.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this paper. Please feel free to contact us on any questions you may have concerning the paper or our comments.

  
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for Plans & Policy  
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