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CONTROL SYSTEM

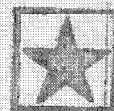


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| Dr McClucas  |     |
| Dr Neke      |     |
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PRIORITY CHARGE

FOR [redacted] FROM COLONEL YOST  
REFERENCE OUR TELEPHONE CONVERSATION THIS DATE, THE FOLLOWING IS A COMPLETE QUOTE OF DR. NEWELL'S LETTER TO DR. MCLUCAS CONCERNING NASA'S DECISION ON POSSIBLE USE OF CORONA SYSTEM AND TECHNOLOGY IN ITS EARTH RESOURCES SURVEY PROGRAM.

DEAR DR. MCLUCAS:  
THE NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE AND NASA HAVE BEEN WORKING TOGETHER OVER THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS ON THE POSSIBLE USE OF CORONA SYSTEMS AND TECHNOLOGY FOR EARTH RESOURCES SURVEY. THIS EFFORT WAS EMINENTLY SUCCESSFUL IN IDENTIFYING A DESIGN CONCEPT WHICH WOULD PRESERVE THE INTEGRITY OF THE BASIC CORONA SYSTEM AND MEET NASA'S NEED FOR MULTISPECTRAL IMAGERY OF HIGH QUALITY AND FOR HIGHER RESOLUTION STEREOSCOPIC COVERAGE. BECAUSE OF THE MINIMAL MODIFICATIONS CALLED

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PAGE 2 WHIG 0043 ~~TOP SECRET~~  
FOR TO THE ORIGINAL CORONA, THIS APPROACH WOULD HAVE SERVED TO ASSURE CONTINUED CORONA CAPABILITIES FOR THE NRO IN THE EVENT OF CHANGING REQUIREMENTS AND WOULD HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY INEXPENSIVE FOR NASA. UNFORTUNATELY, WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO MAKE PROVISION FOR THIS PROJECT IN THE FY 1971 NASA BUDGET. THE LEVEL OF AUSTERITY IS SUCH AS TO PRECLUDE ANY NEW PROJECT INITIATIONS AT THIS TIME AS WELL AS FORCING SIGNIFICANT CUTBACKS IN ONGOING ACTIVITIES. WE NEVERTHELESS REMAIN VITALLY INTERESTED IN AN EARTH RESOURCES TECHNOLOGY SATELLITE PROJECT TO FOLLOW THE ONGOING ERTS A&B PROJECTS; WE EXPECT TO MAKE VIGOROUS EFFORTS TO INCLUDE A FOLLOW-ON PROJECT IN FY 1972 BUDGET. WE DO NOT HAVE MUCH HOPE OF BEING ABLE TO WORK WITHIN BOTH AUTHORIZATION AND FUNDING CONSTRAINTS TO BEGIN ANY EARLIER. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THIS DOES NOT PROVIDE YOU THE ASSURANCES NECESSARY TO RETAIN THE CORONA SYSTEM IN BEING, AND THAT, IF NO OTHER FACTORS INTERVENE, YOU PLAN TO PHASE OUT CORONA PRODUCTION AND TEST CAPABILITIES THIS SPRING, NASA CANNOT AT THIS TIME COMMIT ANY SIGNI-

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FIGANT FUNDING SUPPORT, BUT WE WOULD DEEPLY APPRECIATE ANY STEPS THE AIR FORCE COULD TAKE THAT WOULD PRESERVE THE OPTION OF EVENTUAL NASA UTILIZATION OF THE TECHNOLOGY, FACILITIES, AND PROJECT TEAMS THAT MADE THE CORONA SO SUCCESSFUL. WE WOULD ASK YOU TO CONSIDER FOR

PAGE 3 WHIG 0043 ~~TOP SECRET~~

EXAMPLE, THE POSSIBILITY OF NASA'S MODIFYING CORONA PYLOADS IN THE INVENTORY WHICH MAY BECOME EXCESS TO YOUR REQUIREMENTS WHEN HEXAGON BECOMES OPERATIONAL. WE FULLY RECOGNIZE THE INHERENT DIS-ECONOMIES OF NOT PICKING UP A VALUABLE ACTIVITY WHILE IT IS STILL ONGOING, BUT IN OUR BUDGETARY ENVIRONMENT WE CANNOT DO OTHERWISE. WE MUCH APPRECIATE THE COOPERATION AND FORWARD THINKING YOUR ENTIRE ORGANIZATION HAS OFFERED US IN THIS MATTER, AS WELL AS THE CONTINUING EXCELLENT WORKING RELATIONS WE HAVE ON RELATED STUDIES AND ACTIVITIES. AS OUR PROGRAM PLANNING DEVELOPS OVER THE COMING YEAR, WE WILL BE IN TOUCH ON FUTURE POSSIBILITIES AND PROBLEMS.

SINCERELY,  
HOMER E. NEWELL

ASSOCIATE ADMINISTRATOR

AS I MENTIONED IN OUR TELECON I WOULD APPRECIATE ANY COMMENTS OR THOUGHTS YOU MAY HAVE CONCERNING FUTURE POSSIBILITIES.

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