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WASHINGTON, D.C.

THE NRO STAFF

July 16, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Briefing on NRP FY 72 Financial Plan to the Senate
Armed Services Committee, 15 July 1971Attendees

Senator John C. Stennis, Chairman
 Senator Margaret Chase Smith, Member
 Mr. T. Edward Braswell, Jr., Chief Counsel
 Mr. Robert E. Morrison, DASD(I)
 Mr. Allen D. South, Office of OSD Comptroller
 Col David D. Bradburn, Director, NRO Staff
 [REDACTED], NRO Staff

Col Bradburn made an opening statement covering the following points:

a. Satellite collection systems have been vitally important for the past ten years; we believe they will increase in importance during the next ten years. A large percentage of our knowledge of Soviet strategic systems has been and will continue to be derived from satellite collection systems. Satellites will also be a principal means of inspection of a SALT agreement; in this role satellites are comprehensive and unprovocative.

b. The satellite collection program is not showing budget reductions to the same proportion as the rest of the Defense budget for three reasons: (1) intelligence collection is considered increasingly vital by the Defense Department as weapons procurements are decreased, (2) within the intelligence collection area, emphasis is shifting toward a greater dependence upon satellite vehicles than on other collection systems, (3) two new satellite systems are programmed this year in response to a newly framed requirement for near-real-time return of photography from satellites.

GAMBIT CORONA

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c. Overall our program is tending toward fewer launches per year, with each vehicle having a greater capability or longer life than earlier types. Thus we expect the photographic satellites to be launched at rates of 8, 6, or 7 per year in the near future.

d. The two near-real-time satellite systems proposed for funding in FY 72 are FROG and EOI. FROG offers an early capability based on our existing GAMBIT System; EOI offers a better capability with enhanced potential for [redacted] and faster return of imagery but a longer development time and greater costs prior to deployment. The plan we recommend will provide FROG in about 30 months and EOI in about five years.

[redacted] then went through the financial data explaining each item in our FY 72 program of [redacted]

Col Bradburn then showed pictures of each satellite system and representative CORONA and GAMBIT photography to illustrate "search" and "technical intelligence" products.

There was then a discussion period of about 15 minutes of which these are the highlights:

a. Senator Stennis asked whether all costs for these programs were reflected in the [redacted] figure. Colonel Bradburn answered that only the salaries of Air Force personnel were excluded. Senator Stennis asked that this information be supplied to the Committee. (This was the only action item arising from the meeting.)

b. Senator Stennis asked what portion of the total amount would be for the CIA. Col Bradburn replied that about [redacted]

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c. Senator Smith commented that she supported the idea of improved satellites to observe the Russians. She felt that there might be things going on [REDACTED]. Her remark was quite general but indicated that she is a supporter of satellite reconnaissance.

d. Senator Stennis said that he believes the money spent on satellite reconnaissance has been well spent because it has probably enabled the country to spend much more wisely on other things in our inventory than would have been possible without the satellite reconnaissance.

e. Senator Stennis asked what percentage of the time our satellites are up. Col Bradburn said the photographic satellites are in orbit about 50% of the time now, with intervals of up to a few weeks without any coverage. The longer life satellites are tending toward nearly continuous coverage, but with intermittent return of film at intervals of about two weeks. It is mainly the schedule for film return that determines how soon a picture of a given area can be available for analysis. The near-real-time systems, FROG and EOI, will be on station continuously and will read out the pictures [REDACTED] over-all delay will be under one day for FROG and [REDACTED] for EOI. [REDACTED]

The session lasted about 45 minutes; the atmosphere was cordial and informal. Senators Stennis and Smith both said they were pleased with the information as presented. The one action item was to provide an estimate of O&M costs for Air Force personnel (see above).

David D. Bradburn
David D. Bradburn
Colonel, USAF
Director

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