



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

OFFICE OF
THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR (SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY)

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Dr. Brockway McMillan
Director
National Reconnaissance Office
Washington, D. C.

Dear Brock:

I have your note of 5 October 1964 on ZOSTER and it reminds me of the earlier letter which has now been re-covered. Very briefly, the status of ZOSTER is as follows: Unexpended funds totaling approximately [redacted] were carried over from the Covert Satellite Account of Program B in FY-64, as we agreed at our redirection meeting held here at Headquarters in June 1964. At that time we concluded that CIA had carried the study of a true current intelligence or indications satellite about as far as was appropriate for a Government group to do, and it was decided to bring in carefully selected industrial groups who could contribute their corporate skills and experience to the evaluation of the system potential. At your suggestion, OSA people visited extensively with Capt. Gorman, USN, of General Greer's staff to discuss his R&D contract efforts on reusable film, video links, etc. which might now bear on this application. Capt. Gorman was also good enough to come to Washington to describe his activities to me personally. In spite of this enthusiastic cooperation, we found little of direct applicability, except possibly the RCA/Philco work on electronic tape storage of video signals, which is obviously in good hands.

The project officers in our Office of Special Activities then constructed a list of small contractual support efforts that they wished to undertake. Their general approach was to encourage groups with unique competence to think about the ZOSTER problem by supplying a small amount of money, rather than trying to underwrite

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major developments. In this category of stimulation activities, the following four contracts were established:

Xerox Corporation - [] to cover study of reusable photo-sensitive media.

[] Fairchild Camera and Instrument Corporation - [] for demonstration of photo-sensitive mosaics (solid state "Vidicon").

Philco Corporation - [] for Video transmitted photo simulation study.

[] United Aircraft Corporate Systems Center - [] for a study of guidance systems in relation to ZOSTER requirements.

I insisted that an over-all systems analysis effort be established to further refine the CIA evaluation of orbit choice, readout location and band width, payload weight estimates, etc. It was hoped that such a group could also provide a measure of coherence and integration to the smaller contract efforts, notwithstanding the strong propriety constraints. The OSA people judged that Lockheed and STL both had the breadth and experience to attempt this job. A short competition was held in which Lockheed did very badly. On the contrary, STL came in with a well-balanced thoughtful understanding of the problem, obviously based on considerable previous study. On this basis, a contract was negotiated with STL in the amount of [] and they are now underway. Lockheed elected to pursue the problem on company funds and are being given a parallel opportunity.

At the time we established the Special Projects Staff in DD/S&T to serve as a focus for CIA participation in the satellite portion of the National Reconnaissance Program, we made the decision to transfer the ZOSTER program and people to SPS. With the press of other programs, this was delayed and only during the past week has Mr. Maxey had an opportunity to review the entire program in detail. When he has completed his examination, it may be that a

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regrouping or shift in emphasis among the contractual efforts will prove desirable. I have given him your earlier letter and he is mindful of your views on this matter, views with which we both have a good deal of professional sympathy.

Sincerely yours,

Albert D. Wheelon
Deputy Director

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