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Dr. John McLucas
Director, National Reconnaissance Office
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear John:

We now have a number of system candidates for crisis reconnaissance ranging from standby Coronas, to to the solid state and tape storage imaging systems; and it is clear that within the next six months the Excom must decide whether it wants to invest a significant amount of money in the more limited capability systems for this specific requirement, and, if so, how this investment should impact the plans for an EOI system. As we discussed last week, in order to evaluate the relative merits of the alternatives it will be necessary to establish a set of performance criteria against which the systems can be compared - criteria which will be satisfactory to each Excom member and to the other principals who participate in the Excom decision process. I have discussed this with Mr. Helms and he, for one, would like to have this criteria established and agreed upon before decisions are made.

I therefore encourage you to organize an ad hoc committee along the lines we discussed to establish criteria which can be reviewed and approved by Excom at its 29 January meeting. I suggest this committee be chaired by Dr. Naka, with Dr. Martin and Dr. Steininger as members, and with participation by COMIREX and by representatives of Dr. Foster and General Bennett. For its statement of requirements, the committee would have available the USIB Near Real Time Requirements of July 1969, as amplified by the COMIREX paper defining representative crisis situations which will be available early in January.

It would be helpful if the performance criteria proposed by this committee could be reviewed by the Land Panel so that at the January meeting Excom could have the Panel's advice along with the ad hoc committee recommendation.

~~SECRET~~

In the meantime, I suggest we discourage any efforts to compare alternative systems until approved standards for comparison are available.

Sincerely,

Carl E. Duckett
Director
CIA Reconnaissance Programs

cc: Dr. David

HANDLE VIA BYEMAN
CONTROL SYSTEM ONLY

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