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December 10, 1963

MEMORANDUM TO DIRECTOR, NSO STAFF

SUBJECT: Advanced Planning for the NRP

I desire to establish within the NSO Staff a focus of responsibility for Staff functions in support of advanced planning for the NRP. You are hereby directed to establish the Office of Deputy Director, NSO Staff, for Advanced Planning. The responsibilities and functions of that office will include those outlined below.

It is my intention that this be a small office, manned by people of the highest qualifications we can command. I seek your recommendations in detail as to the initial organization of the office, and your nominations as to its staffing.

Under the Director, NSO Staff, the primary responsibilities of this office will be:

1. To assist the DNRD to plan and execute a program of research, of study, and of development for components and systems to support the gathering of image and signal intelligence by overflight of denied territory;
2. To insure that the NSO employs all resources available to it, each to its best usefulness, in support of this planning function;
3. To insure that decisions by DNRD to undertake new developments are made in the light of the best available knowledge of technical possibilities and requirements, and are made against criteria which fully reflect both national policy and the need to make efficient and economical use of all resources;

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4. To maintain a current analysis of the status of applicable technical knowledge and of the status of all significant relevant studies, research, and development activities that are conducted by the NRO, by elements of the DOD and the CIA not normally considered part of the NRO, or by other agencies from which information may be available;

5. To maintain a current projection of the technical requirements that may be expected to govern the development of future systems for gathering intelligence by overflight of denied areas;

6. To maintain a current analysis of the technical requirements imposed by the needs of the intelligence community upon systems in current use in the NRP;

7. To maintain a current analysis of the performance of current systems against existing and projected technical requirements, and of the technical problems encountered by these systems;

8. To analyze for DNRD the plans and programs of the NRO Program Directors and review and analyze such proposals for new studies or developments as may be submitted to DNRD;

9. To conduct such other studies and analyses as DNRD may direct;

10. To recommend to DNRD such plans and actions as are found necessary to improve the quality and economy of the NRP, and to improve its responsiveness to national needs.

As these responsibilities indicate, this is to be a Staff office, to assist in guiding and planning, but not responsible for conducting, the research and development program. Responsibility for specific tasks in the conduct of the program will continue to be assigned by DNRD to appropriate Program Directors or other agencies.

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The Advanced Planning Office must be staffed by people capable of making the basic analyses required. Normally, however, the execution of planning studies calling for significant effort will be assigned by DPRO as tasks to appropriate Program Directors or to other agencies, under guidance approved by DPRO.

The existence of this Advanced Planning Office at Staff level does not imply an exclusive responsibility for such planning. Program Directors will continue to be responsible for advanced planning in connection with their assigned programs. Creative and imaginative thinking toward the future is encouraged in all elements of the NRO and within the related elements of industry. It is my intention that the Advanced Planning Office assist DPRO in the recognition and pursuit of promising lines of inquiry, and that it not assume the function of initiating all inquiries itself.

Signed

Brockway McMillan
Director
National Reconnaissance Office

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