

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~(S)~~ NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

THE NRO STAFF

August 24, 1970

Noted by the  
Under Secretary  
of the Air Force

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. McLUCAS

SUBJECT: A Few Parting Thoughts

1. Organization: Although I have thrashed mightily at the question of organization within the NRO and have written you several, probably ill considered, notes on the subject, I leave somewhat mellowed and am convinced that our present organizational arrangement can work about as well as any. There are still significant problems but they can be worked within the organizational structure. Similarly, although there is more concern about changes in the structure outside the NRO, I believe it somewhat a matter of choice and personality as to whether there is an ASD/A or a DDI and whether there is staff assistance from DDR&E, ASD/SA, DIA or whatever. Clearly the ExCom is a very good set-up and nearly essential to our joint type of operation. It is best if the Chairman of ExCom can look to the DNRO for objective appraisal of all program issues including those requiring inputs from DIA, NSA, DDR&E, ASD/A, CIA, etc. Something like the current ASD/A function of addressing cross-program issues separately from the DNRO may be useful but insertion of any autonomous level between the DNRO and ExCom needlessly complicates the decision process.

There is one issue, outside the NRO, which is most disturbing to me. It is extremely important that the President receive definitive intelligence advice from a single, highly competent and completely objective source. The DCI was created to provide him that and it was a very wise action. It is so important that the DCI maintain a position of objectivity, integrity and unexcelled competence that it is most disturbing to observe even small examples which tend to erode that position. Such examples have occurred from time to time in matters relating to the NRO when the DCI has been placed in the position of providing judgments and recommendations which appear influenced by collection system aspirations of his CIA staff. There is a simple solution which avoids this occasional difficulty

HANDLE VIA

~~TOP SECRET~~

EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC DOWNGRADING  
AND DECLASSIFICATION SCHEDULES

CONTROL NO. \_\_\_\_\_  
COPY \_\_\_\_\_ OF \_\_\_\_\_ COPIES  
PAGE 1 OF 3 PAGES

~~TOP SECRET~~

and that is to separate the DCI with his estimating and evaluation staff, USIB, etc., from the CIA organization devoted to collection programs. Such a separation seems to have been intended originally but has become very blurred in practice. One man really can't wear conflicting hats. The DCI at ExCom should represent the intelligence community and its needs of intelligence. His advisor there should also be a representative of intelligence needs and priorities. The DNRO should represent NRO-CIA programs. Obviously that is not the case. The danger is not, as I once thought, unbalanced representation of CIA program views, but is rather that it demeans the position of the DCI and must, in some small way, damage his credibility for complete impartiality on intelligence matters and any damage of that sort is a small tragedy. The DCI must, in all situations, be the unquestioned senior intelligence officer to whom all should defer on intelligence estimates and basic intelligence needs. It is very bad that we contribute to small nicks in that image.

2. Security: I am not at all confident that the U. S. can engage in public, official discussion of its satellite reconnaissance activities without encountering major objections to its continuation.

spying. If a bi-lateral agreement were reached with Russia, it would still be very complicated to open the subject because it is hard to imagine assuring other countries that our satellites were operated only against Russia. As long as we must avoid official acknowledgment we must operate covertly and I believe compartmented security is essential with the sort of control we have now. Nevertheless, our security system is unpopular with many. The complaints raised about it can in most cases, and in all essential cases, be answered by changes within the framework of the system. For example, it might be possible to give much broader distribution of KEYHOLE photography if "sanitized" sensibly and not "attributed" to satellites. It doesn't matter so very much if recipients speculate about its source as long as the government position of "no comment" can be maintained.

~~TOP SECRET~~

EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC DOWNGRADING  
AND DECLASSIFICATION SCHEDULES

CONTROL NO. \_\_\_\_\_  
COPY 2 OF \_\_\_\_\_ COPIES  
PAGE 3 OF \_\_\_\_\_ PAGES

~~TOP SECRET~~

CONTROL SYSTEM

To alleviate some of the annoyances felt within DOD, I have initiated certain actions which have been described in a separate paper. I hope that by taking a constructive attitude and taking the initiative in working for improvements while firmly maintaining the truly essential elements of our security program we can avoid the ill-advised proposals which seem to keep coming up.

3. Fitzhugh: It is a great disappointment to me personally that my tour ends with the receipt of a very damning comment by the Blue Ribbon Panel. It is particularly frustrating that I have not been able to find out what "fiction" I have allowed to pervade the staff nor where I misunderstand my responsibilities or "deliberately tried to mislead the panel." I have never been so accused before and I suppose I can take some "pride" in having the first accusation made at such a level and distributed to so many senior persons and probably being the only individual so vilified by the Panel. I have been unable to see Fred Buzhardt but I am writing to him to seek some clarification. If you are able to obtain some understanding of the basis of Mr. Fitzhugh's comments I would very much appreciate being informed. Obviously we must take whatever corrective action is indicated.



Lew Allen, Jr.  
Brigadier General, USAF  
Director

CONTROL SYSTEM

~~TOP SECRET~~

EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC DECLASSIFICATION  
DOD DIRECTIVE 5200.10 DOES NOT APPLY

CONTROL NO \_\_\_\_\_  
COPY \_\_\_\_\_ OF \_\_\_\_\_ COPIES  
PAGE 3 OF 3 PAGES