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(1) Reconstituted as an integrated, operational organization jointly staffed by the three military services, CIA, and NSA with the DNRO being the line manager of the various NRP programs? Under whose authority?

This option appears to be quite similar to leaving the organization as is. Under the current structure, the NRO is operational and jointly manned, and exercises considerable management authority over NRP program managers in the development, acquisition and operation of satellite systems. However, improvements can always be made. A possible improvement would be to modify the organization to emphasize the DNRO's line authority over all segments of the program, thereby eliminating any real or perceived instances of conflicts of organizational interests, particularly in the cases of the NRP programs managed by the CIA and the Navy where NRO program managers have other line responsibilities within their parent organizations.

If the executive authority for the NRP were to remain the Secretary of Defense and the organization under the cover of Air Force management, then the very practical matter of adequate logistical and material support for the NRP would be assured. This is a major (and perhaps overwhelming) advantage.

(2) Established as an autonomous agency, similar to NSA (is NSA autonomous?).

This option would greatly increase internal, non-mission related management requirements. In general, the NRP currently obtains most administrative, general, and some mission related support from other organizations. If the NRP were made autonomous, these non-mission related requirements would have to be assumed within the program structure. Existing external support is satisfactory and does not require NRP management to spend significant time on non-mission related administrative and personnel problems. Thus such additional requirements would detract management attention from the important job of executing successful hardware programs.

(3) Be abolished with its activities assigned to other intelligence entities (CIA, AF, NSA, etc.).

Abolishing the NRP and assigning its activities to other intelligence entities could jeopardize the viability of the total program. Such normalization of a program would perhaps lead to more average performance as opposed to the unusually

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successful program achieved under the streamlined NRO management system. It is questionable whether the "national means of verification" could continue to be adequately achieved if the intelligence satellite programs were distributed piecemeal to various agencies. Additionally, separation of developer-producer-operator from the product user community is a particularly effective mechanism for preventing advocacy and duplication of capability. Further I believe it would be hard for anyone to argue convincingly that any management structure that has been as successful over the years as the NRO should be suddenly abolished.

(4) Or left as is?

My overall assessment is that the current internal NRP management structure has resulted in extremely successful programs and therefore should be retained as is. I base this assessment on the fact that over the past 17 years we have improved significantly the intelligence collection capabilities of our systems in terms of quality, quantity, timeliness, and system lifetimes, and have been able to develop and successfully operate, in response to Community requirements, new generation systems while maintaining a fiscal expenditure at a relatively constant level. In addition, in all of the recent reviews of intelligence organizations, the NRO has repeatedly been singled out as an exemplary model.

The current external management environment, however, is one of flux and ill-defined roles for the various high-level staffs vis-a-vis the NRP. As such, a permanent organizational/management structure to replace the 11 August 1965 charter is essential.

c. Are there elements (programs) of the NRP that are more appropriately transferred to the DOD principally for military use as "tactical" assets?

The NRP's unique success in the technological development of satellite systems would imply that it would be more advantageous to continue the development of "intelligence gathering satellites" under a single organization, regardless of the specific mission. Further effort does need to be devoted, however, to defining the scope of support that "tactically capable" satellites should provide in support of operational requirements. A policy determination on this issue is essential prior to dedicating NRP assets to a tactical mission. Regardless of the specific application of the product, the systems should continue to be built by the NRP.

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Have

d. Has-the-program-obscured major programmatic choices (been obscured) into incremental improvement issues, submerging substantive intelligence justification in favor of technological alternatives?

I am not aware of any effort to submerge substantive intelligence requirements in favor of technological alternatives. In fact, the EXCOM/CFI/PRC(I) decision process is a vehicle for insuring that programmatic decisions are made in support of intelligence needs. The NRP responds to collection requirements established by the Intelligence Community. While options are presented by the NRP for the satisfaction of these requirements, resource allocation is made by the PRC(I) which is a distinct, separate resources allocation authority which bases its decisions on the intelligence value of the options presented.

Intelligence Community Staff --

With regard to questions pertaining to the Intelligence Community Staff, I feel that the IC Staff should have an important role to play with regard to the overall National Foreign Intelligence Program, in an overall coordinating and support role but not in a line management or an intervening role. In this regard, it is important to recognize that the NRP, as compared to programs such as the GDIP and CCP, is unique in several ways and does not require the same type of management oversight that is applied to these programs. The NRP consists of a very limited number of programs and efforts that are relatively easy to understand at the program option level. The program does, however, involve very substantial funding levels. Since the issuance of E.O. 11905, there has been a significant increase in the scope and depth of IC Staff involvement in the NRP on studies and issues. Whereas the IC Staff can perhaps play an important role in resolving a multitude of low-level and cross program issues not requiring top-level management attention within other programs such as the GDIP and CCP, their involvement in the major decisions of the NRP which are ultimately addressed at the highest level, only adds inefficiency to the bureaucratic process. The results of such involvement have been delays in the decision process, significantly increased staffing requirements for the NRO, and clouding of issues resulting from the presentation of data, programs and options by an intermediary staff.

Charles W. Cook
Acting Director

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