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~~1ST NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE~~
WASHINGTON, D.C.

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THE NRO STAFF

December 18, 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. FLAX

SUBJECT: Your Meeting with Messrs Warnke and Halperin

PROBLEM:

To prepare for your meeting with Messrs Warnke and Halperin.

BACKGROUND:

On November 29, you received a memorandum from Ambassador Kohler (see Attachment 1), calling for a DOD-initiated meeting of the NSAM 156 Ad Hoc Committee. Since the memorandum caught us by surprise, our immediate concern was to find out who in the DOD had called the meeting and what was on his mind.

Our investigation showed that Dr. Morton Halperin, Deputy Assistant Secretary (Plans and Arms Control), ISA, had called the meeting. We are also told that the business of the meeting was to have been consideration of a proposed U.S. initiative for the U.S. to negotiate privately with the Soviets for a joint public disclosure of both nations' satellite reconnaissance capabilities. It was also likely that the episode of the Lindsay paper would figure in these discussions, since Mr. Raymond Garthoff (State) told us that Dr. Halperin was very unhappy over the NRO's "Gestapo tactics" in commandeering and classifying all copies of that paper.

On November 29, you discussed the proposed NSAM 156 Ad Hoc Committee meeting with Mr. Warnke and he told you he had never heard of it. You asked me to investigate the possibility of postponing the meeting until the DOD members had a chance to get together on the DOD initiative. Mr. Garthoff was pleased to cancel the meeting.

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PRESENT SITUATION:

Messrs Warnke and Halperin are to meet with you on December 19 at 1400 hours to discuss this entire matter. We see several possible avenues of discussion:

1. The initiative may turn out to be a proposal to the Soviets, pretty much as disclosed to us by an ISA staff member.
2. It may involve using the Lindsay paper, as written or in some new form, to create an image of U.S. "openness."
3. It may be a disarmament proposal, requiring an exposure of our policing capability (satellite reconnaissance) to strengthen its credibility.
4. It may be a complete surprise.

ALTERNATIVE COURSES OF ACTION:

There are several courses of action open to us in response to ISA's proposal.

1. We can hear the proposal and agree to calling an NSAM 156 Ad Hoc Committee meeting. Unless the proposal is fairly innocuous we should avoid this response. The NRO is an organization representing the DOD and the CIA; as such it has an obligation to insure that proposals affecting it are staffed in both organizations. The fact that the initiative is DOD-inspired puts our relationship to the Ad Hoc Committee in a completely different light from previous meetings, where proposals originated with the White House, the State Department, and with the BOB/PSAC (jointly). Even if we were assured that Mr. McNamara agrees with the proposal (and we will probably be told something like that by Dr. Halperin), we owe it to the other half of the NRO to coordinate.

2. We can hear the proposal and insist that we must coordinate it with the DOD and CIA. Under Mr. Nitze's and Mr. McNaughton's regimes, proposals of Ad Hoc Committee variety were almost always coordinated with the Joint Chiefs of Staff (which also includes the DIA). This was a surprisingly rewarding coordination; many good ideas were developed in the process. Other reasons for following this course of action are indicated in 1, above.

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3. We can hear the proposal and recommend it be considered, but not in the NSAM 156 Ad Hoc Committee. Considering the very considerable statutory authorities of the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence, we may want to move toward more classical staffing of a proposal, rather than trusting it to an Ad Hoc Committee. The Ad Hoc Committee may have served its purpose well in the past; as of now, the principals are having more difficulty in holding to a detached view than they did in 1962. They are, more and more, representing vested interests. For example:

DOD/ISA

This membership has been controlled increasingly by arms control people, starting with Yarmolinsky-Barber and moving to Halperin.

ACDA

This is the agency which had convinced Mr. Rostow that we will "probably" have to disclose U.S. satellite reconnaissance capabilities to our fellow citizens and Congress to prove that we can police a not-yet-announced disarmament proposal.

CIA

After last summer's disclosure fiasco, hardly to be relied on for solid support. Probably still smarting under Mr. McNamara's fiat.

White House

These representatives are under so much pressure from earth-sensing enthusiasts in Commerce, Interior, and Agriculture that they have flinched from drafting a NSAM which would give one department coordinating authority.

NASC

The member is unfriendly to the NRO; believes all space activity should be open and peaceful.

NASA

The detached view of NASA in 1962 has certainly changed to one of partisan interest since 1965.

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Additionally, this group, except for yourself and Dr. Seamans, is essentially uninformed on the real issues: the basis of NRP security; the true threat of NASA's earth-sensing program; the fallacy of "legitimization"; and present inter-nation attitudes regarding satellite reconnaissance. To most of these people, satellite reconnaissance is a space stunt which we will disclose some day; they do not understand it as pure espionage, which can never be disclosed unless one is willing to forfeit a capability.

4. We can hear the proposal and temporize. A strong case can be made for deferring any initiative at this time. We are replacing a Secretary of Defense, an Under Secretary of State (Political Affairs), an Associate Administrator of NASA, and the CIA representative. Why not wait until the dust settles? Disarmament has no suspense date.

RECOMMENDATION:

I recommend that we examine critically the future role of the NSAM 156 Ad Hoc Committee in the life of the NRO. We should be able to find our security policy answers in consultations with the JCS, the DIA, the DCI, the ExCom and the 303 Committee. The Ad Hoc Committee, although superb in 1962, looks somewhat tarnished in 1967. If we are forced to the Ad Hoc Committee, we should invoke our obligation to coordinate thoroughly with the DOD and CIA. We should brief all Ad Hoc Committee members ~~thoroughly~~ prior to any meeting and should insist that the Committee's findings go to its principals (Secretaries of Defense and State and DCI) prior to going to the White House.


PAUL E. WORTHMAN
Colonel, USAF

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DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE .
WASHINGTON

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27 November 1967

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MEMORANDUM TO : DOD - Mr. Paul Verneke
- Dr. Alexander Flax
ACDA - Mr. Adrian Fisher
CIA - Mr. [REDACTED]
White House - Mr. Spurgeon Kelly, Jr.
- Mr. Charles Johnson
KASC - Mr. Edward C. Welch
KASA - Mr. Robert C. Sosmans, Jr.

SUBJECT : Consideration of Policy on Classification of
Satellite Reconnaissance

The Department of Defense has suggested that the NSAM 156 Ad Hoc Committee meet to discuss various aspects of our policy with respect to classification of satellite reconnaissance activities. I am therefore inviting you to meet in my office conference room at 4:30 PM on Monday, December 4.

[REDACTED]

ROY J. MARSH

[REDACTED]

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