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~~ISI~~ NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

D 12. A.

THE NRO STAFF

26 March 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR COLONEL KULPA

SUBJECT: URSALA 2 Launch Philosophy

BACKGROUND: We have been slipping the URSALA 2 launch date based on the good health of URSALA 1 and to protect against a gap between URSALA 2 and 3. The program office has requested a decision to launch URSALA 2 on HEXAGON Mission 1206 or 1207 (attachment 1). Our initial thoughts on URSALA launch philosophy are included as attachment 2. The NSA expressed a desire for a Mission 1207 launch date (CONCERT 0258, 26 Oct 72) based on the same philosophy.

DISCUSSION: The optimum time to launch URSALA 2 depends on several interrelated factors as discussed below:

a. URSALA 1 Health. URSALA 1 had an anomaly in February such that no ELINT pulsed data could be collected from the mission. A positive statement concerning this anomaly is that it has been resolved and is temperature dependent; there is no reason to believe the mission will not last through September 1973. A negative statement concerning the same anomaly is that the one year planned life of the mission runs out in July; tasking has been at a reduced level from previously demonstrated capability and although the situation is expected to improve, we are handling the mission with "kid gloves."

b. URSALA 3 Launch Date. The URSALA 3 mission is currently scheduled to be available in January 1974 and there has not been any announced slip in the availability date. However, there are significant changes in the payload between URSALA 3 and URSALA 2 and our track record of meeting availability dates with "new" P-11's has not been all that good. Suggest you telephone General Bradburn or Colonel Simington for a personal appraisal on this item.

~~EARPOP HEXAGON~~

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c. Plane Spacing. From a target revisit point of view and assuming two URSALA's up and operating with associated processing capability, it is good to have the planes about 90 degrees apart. Both Missions 1206 and 1207 are satisfactory for this purpose.

d. Processing Capability. There is only enough processing capability at [redacted] to handle about two thirds of a healthy URSALA in good sun conditions (about 160 minutes/day collection). Therefore, it doesn't make much sense to have two URSALA's up at the same time unless we need the revisit time for a particular area of interest, e.g., S.E. Asia or the Middle East. Two URSALA's up might force improved processing or demonstrate a two URSALA capability for ocean surveillance versus [redacted] Tactical ELINT Study).

e. EOB Capability. With the death of STRAWMAN 4 and the [redacted] our only realistic EOB capability is with the URSALA series. The POPPY geopositioning capability is really debatable when it comes to hard core EOB production. Here, once again, we can build a case both ways. We can say launch in May to preclude a possible EOB gap due to failure of URSALA 1 because the [redacted]

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[redacted] I believe the swinging vote here is that the highlight for last year's 5-Year Plan said "Protect against any gaps in EOB," which drove us toward the purchase of URSALA 3 and 4; this year, we asked the SIGINT Committee if any areas in the 5-Year Plan required de-emphasis and the group almost put it in writing that they did not want as much routine EOB reporting.

ACTION: In view of all of the above considerations, request you release the message at right.

[redacted]

Chief SIGINT Branch

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2 Attachments

- 1. Request to Launch URSALA 2
- 2. URSALA Launch Philosophy

cc-- [redacted]

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WASHINGTON, D.C.

THE NRO STAFF

6 October 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL BRADBURN

SUBJECT: URSALA 2 Launch Philosophy

Background:

Program Office A has advised us that they need a decision on the URSALA 2 launch 45 days before HEXAGON Mission 1206 is launched. (Attachment 1)

Action:

Request the message at right be released in order to clarify our position on the URSALA 2 launch date.



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Chief, SIGINT Branch

Attachment
CHARGE 5169

wd
See Internal
6 Oct 72
(this file)

Classified by BYEMAN-1
EXEMPT FROM GENERAL
DECLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE
OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652
EXEMPTION CATEGORY 5B(2)
DECLASSIFY ON IMPEDET

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~~HEXAGON~~
~~EARPOP~~

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PRIORITY
ROUTINE

CHARGE

INFO: WAHOO, JUNO, MAGIC, CONSOL,

CONCERT

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CITE: C3 C3

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SUBJECT: URSALA 2 LAUNCH DATE

x

REFERENCE: CHARGE 1647, 20 MAR 73

1. CONCUR WITH YOUR RECOMMENDATION TO LAUNCH URSALA 2

NO EARLIER THAN MISSION 1207 IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARA-

x

GRAPH 5 OF REF.

2. MISSION 1207 IS CONSIDERED THE MOST LIKELY LAUNCH

FOR URSALA 2. HOWEVER, DELAY OF LAUNCH TO AN EVEN LATER

x

MISSION SHOULD BE INVESTIGATED CONSIDERING PLANE SPACING,

7

CONTINUED GOOD HEALTH OF URSALA 1, AND THE UNDESIRABILITY OF

OF A GAP BETWEEN URSALA 2 AND 3.

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3. PLEASE FORWARD COMMENTS RELATIVE TO LAUNCHING ON

MAR 1973

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2

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JOHN E. KULPA, JR., COL, USAF
DIRECTOR, NRO STAFF

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Col Kulpa



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MISSION 1207 OR 1208 BY 1 JULY 1973.

E-2 IMP DET.

2 2

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SECURITY CLASSIFICATION			
TYPE MSG	BOOK	MULTI	SINGLE
		X	
PRECEDENCE			
ACTION ROUTINE			
INFO ROUTINE			

DTG

FROM: WHIG
 TO: CHARGE

INFO: WAHOO, JUNO, MADAM

EARPOP

SUBJ: URSALA 2 LAUNCH DATE

REF: CHARGE 5169

1. THE REASON FOR PROTECTING A MISSION 1205 LAUNCH OF URSALA 2 IS TO PROTECT AGAINST AN EARLY SERIOUS DEGRADATION OR FAILURE OF URSALA 1.
2. ASSUMING CONTINUED GOOD HEALTH FOR URSALA 1, URSALA 2 SHOULD BE LAUNCHED ON MISSION 1206 OR 1207. IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT STUDIES YOU HAVE PERFORMED INDICATE THAT THE BEST ORBIT PLANE SEPARATION BETWEEN URSALA 1 AND URSALA 2 WILL BE OBTAINED IF URSALA 2 IS LAUNCHED ON MISSION 1207. A 1207 LAUNCH WOULD ALSO HAVE THE EFFECT OF MINIMIZING ANY POSSIBLE GAP BETWEEN URSALA 2 AND URSALA 3.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS
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MONTH OCT	YEAR 1972
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SIGNATURE
 TYPED (or stamped) NAME AND TITLE
 David D. Bradburn
 Brigadier Genral, USAF, DepDirforTechSvcs

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SECURITY CLASSIFICATION	REGRADING INSTRUCTIONS
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ClassificationPage 2 of 2

Continuation Sheet

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3. REQUEST YOU CONTINUE TO PROTECT A MISSION 1205 LAUNCH DATE AS LONG AS ECONOMICAL PER REF A. ADDITIONALLY, BASED ON URSALA 1 VEHICLE HEALTH, PROJECTED LIFETIME, AND ORBITAL PLANE SEPARATION AS OF 1 DEC 72, REQUEST YOUR RECOMMENDATION WHETHER URSALA 2 SHOULD BE MOVED TO MISSION 1206 OR 1207.

E-2 IMPDET.

END OF MESSAGE

Releasing Officer

Authenticating Officer

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