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5 Dec 58

MEMORANDUM FOR THE UNDER SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE

SUBJECT: DISCOVERER-THOR Project and SENTRY Programs

In accordance with our agreement of yesterday, it is requested that the following instructions be forwarded to BMD concerning the DISCOVERER-THOR project and SENTRY programs:

"Recent fiscal determinations incident to the formulation of the 1960 Budget have necessitated the modification of the SENTRY Development Program. Furthermore, the inception of the DISCOVERER Program as it is constituted from elements also creates a requirement for program management determinations.

"In response to these influences, the ARPA staff has proposed a reorientation of the two programs. The details of the proposal have been furnished to Program Management personnel of the Air Force Ballistic Missile Division. Acknowledging the tenuous nature of this proposal until further detailed study can be made by the Project Personnel, it is the purpose of this memorandum to request such a study and present the findings for our joint consideration on the 15th of December. It is our objective to reach a final determination as to the content of the programs for FY 1960 and balance of FY 1959 in their major elements by 17 December.

"The actions suggested in the ARPA proposal should each be reviewed with the objective of determining fiscal and project timing implications. Where contract cancellations are involved, an assessment of industrial impact should be made. In general, the goal should be to determine the practicality of making the downward adjustments suggested, the cost in time and money for implementing the new program elements suggested, and alternative suggestions where program elements suggested by the ARPA staff are determined to be impractical.

"For the purposes of this review, it should be assumed the development resources available will amount to [redacted] in FY 59 and [redacted] in FY 60. Intelligence requirements as they might influence the evaluation should be based on the best information that can be made available in the time period provided. It is recognized that fully refined information cannot be made available by the dates suggested herein.

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However, it seems likely that sufficiently accurate determinations can be made as to permit major decisions which are necessary for the formulation of a final development plan.

"In the interim period, until the major program decisions are finalized, the Air Force Ballistic Missile Division should be directed to withhold any major fund commitments that go beyond the scope of the ARPA proposal. In those areas that might be designated for cancellation, no material procurements should be authorized beyond the absolute minimum necessary for preserving the continuity of engineering effort."

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Ray W. Johnson
Director

cc: [REDACTED]

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(Prep. by [REDACTED])

Coordination: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

DISCUSSION.

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