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THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

HANDLE VIA CONTROL SYSTEM

PROJECT CORONA



October 15, 1964

Dear John:

Thank you for your memorandum of October 6 in which you proposed to consolidate under [redacted] the CIA responsibilities for security, contracting, and technical assistance in the CORONA program. The centralization of these functions under [redacted] immediate direction will be an important move in improving the management structure that now exists on this critical project.

We are in full agreement that there must be a single authoritative Program Director to whom we can assign responsibility for the successful conduct of the CORONA program. The consolidation that you propose will make it possible for [redacted] subject to the policies of the (S) DNRO, to exercise complete technical direction as well as over-all management control. [redacted] as previously agreed, will perform the General System Engineering function.

We agree with your suggestion to form a CORONA Advisory Committee. We would propose to establish [redacted] CORONA Project Director, as Chairman, and ask [redacted] to serve as Senior CIA representative; this Committee should also have one government representative from the A/P facility and one (s) NRO Staff representative. Additional advisory participation as appropriate could include CIA Headquarters, NPIC, ACIC, AMS, etc.

We agree that all proposed changes to the CORONA system should be referred to the CORONA Advisory Committee for evaluation and appropriate recommendations to [redacted] who will be responsible for approval or disapproval of minor changes. We believe that major changes should be reviewed and approved by the (S) DNRO before any directive action is taken. Technical directions on approved changes would be prepared by the CORONA Project Director and forwarded to the contractor(s) involved through the appropriate contracting officer(s).

Declassified and Released by the NRO

In Accordance with E. O. 12958

on NOV 26 1997

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The effect of these arrangements would be to insure that, as we agreed on October 6, there will be a single authoritative representative of the Government for technical direction on the entire CORONA system (Re-entry Vehicle, Camera, Sub-structure, Agena, Booster, STC, and Recovery Forces). This will be [redacted] responsibility. In addition, consolidation of the CIA functions under [redacted] reporting directly to [redacted] will insure fully effective application of CIA resources.

We agree that your proposed plan for realignment of management controls of the CORONA program describes a positive step that we should take without delay.

With your concurrence, the (S) DNRO will meet with [redacted] and [redacted] and initiate with them preparation of detailed arrangements.

Sincerely,

Cyrus R. Vance

The Honorable John A. McCone

Director of Central Intelligence

[redacted] CONTROL SYSTEM

PROJECT