



16 March 1965

The Honorable Brockway McMillan
Director
National Reconnaissance Office
Washington, D. C.

Dear Dr. McMillan:

I have your letter of 2 March 1965 which raises the question of the [redacted] role in CORONA and its implementation. I have reviewed the history which you outline and find that it is subject to interpretation, and does not include reference to significant correspondence and subsequent agreements. The real point seems to be that the specific problem of [redacted] has been overrun by the larger question of active CIA participation in the CORONA program, and it has been placed in a holding pattern -- with other wished-for changes -- by the decision of Mr. Vance and Mr. McCone that no management or contracting procedures be implemented in CORONA until an overall adjustment of responsibilities therein could be established between ourselves.

A comprehensive agreement on CORONA management bearing my signature was tabled at the ExCom Meeting of 12 January 1965. This proposal had been jointly constructed by our staffs. We have heard nothing in response. My staff has been in frequent contact with yours to identify any potential differences or problems it may pose, but again without result. Certainly incremental approaches to a comprehensive plan, such as your letter proposes, are a poor substitute for the broader agreement we have been directed to establish as rapidly as possible.

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In Accordance with E. O. 12958

on NOV 26 1997

[redacted]

[redacted]

Several awkward situations have developed during this interregnum that I feel compelled to address now. The Lockheed systems integration effort in support of our payload assembly and checkout (AP) facility at Palo Alto, as well as the Lockheed improved stellar/index camera integration contract, has not been funded since July, 1964, nor is money now available to CIA to fund this contract. The practical consequence of this deficiency is that Lockheed has had to bear the expense of these activities, of nearly [REDACTED] without benefit of current reimbursement. Therefore, pending resolution of the broader CORONA payload management question, I have instructed [REDACTED] to have his contracting officer re-establish this coverage by retroactive contract along the old lines. If this contract needs alteration in light of the new agreement we are approaching, we can easily amend it. We will expect NRO to reimburse CIA for this coverage.

Finally, as to the draft directive which you sent me yesterday, I know of no incident which would prompt a change in the procedures which have operated so satisfactorily since the beginning of the CORONA program. Admittedly, should the Director, Program A, be designated as specifically responsible for the on-orbit camera operation, then the directive which you propose would be highly desirable. I do not believe that it is the intention of either the Director or Secretary Vance that such a change be executed; but, to the contrary, we fully desire that the CIA AP Facility remain responsible for the operation and control of the CORONA payload, as has been the case historically. I therefore cannot concur with your proposed directive in that its implementation would dilute the effectiveness of payload control which we now have, confuse the chain of command decisions, and permit unnecessary distribution of payload and operational information. In essence, your directive would establish the Satellite Test Center as the West Coast targeting arm of the SOC. This is a function of the CIA and should remain with CIA. Additionally, as I have mentioned above, I

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prefer that we not attempt piecemeal solutions to the CORONA program, but reach an agreement to its overall management. Then, I am confident, many of the specific problems will fall in place.

I am sure that you will recognize this response for what it is -- a comprehensive approach to the CORONA question and an appeal for you to address yourself to my earlier proposal.

Faithfully yours,

/s/

Marshall S. Carter
Lieutenant General, USA
Deputy Director

[Redacted] (9 Mar 65)
[Redacted] (11 Mar 65)
[Redacted] (16 Mar 65)
[Redacted] (18 Mar 65)

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