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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON

SAFSS

BYE-6677-63
27 MAR 1963

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MEMORANDUM FOR The Director, National Reconnaissance Office

SUBJECT: NRP Satellite Standby Capability

Reference: DNRO memo to SecDef, dated 25 March 63.

In reconfirmation of verbal concurrences given to you earlier regarding your proposed actions on the above subject, I request that you take the necessary steps which you have noted to establish a minimum CORONA R-7 capability by May, 1963, and a more complete R-7 capability by September, 1963. These steps are to include acquisition of six CORONA systems, appropriate Agena D peculiars, and the necessary pad modifications and additional pads. Concurrently, please establish the possible compressions in pre-launch functions, and the detailed cost requirements.

I request also that the appropriate initial steps you have noted to develop an R-7 capability for GAMBIT be taken, and accurate costs established, although I assess the possibility of achieving such an operational flexibility with GAMBIT to be substantially less than that for CORONA for some time.

Since for both the CORONA and GAMBIT programs proposed the pad availability and turn-around times are critical, the implicit estimates made in your memorandum concerning these items should be reaffirmed.

Additionally, I desire that the problems of achieving an R-1 capability for at least CORONA be further examined, including maximum compression of pre-launch functions, development of sufficient programming options, and provision for greatest continuity in holding at R-1. This should be particularly examined from the point

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SS-1	L	IA		
SS-2				
SS-3				
SS-4		DA		
SS-5				
SS-6		BA		
SS-7				
SS-8		HA		
RF-1		SA		
RF-2		BA		
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of view of possible interleaving and phasing of the cycling of R-1 and R-7 vehicles to provide one or two vehicles in the R-1 condition at all or nearly all times.

The intent of this is to provide an emergency capability to cover highest priority areas already in programming options as quickly as possible in emergency situations or as weather possibilities permit photography. In connection with this, I believe that we should prepare plans for a minimum intelligence cycle capability for the very highest priority special tasks, including only sufficient orbital duration to achieve the special coverage goals, expedited transportation and processing of this probably limited amount of film, and directed photo interpretation of such limited coverage. A goal of 3-5 days total time duration, launch to first analysis report, should be set for this objective; I would like to know the minimum time technically feasible.

Please inform me when further details of these initial actions, additional studies, and development of steady state operational procedures, and their associated costs, can be reported. I assume that the FY 1963 funding for these programs can be made available from NRO resources. Please examine the impact of the FY 1964 requirements on the FY 1964 program for NRO contained in the budget request now before the Congress.

Robert S. M. Namuro

cc:
Dir, CIA
DepSecDef

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