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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

WASHINGTON



OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY

May 21, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting with Secretary Laird, Saturday, May 17

I discussed several points with Mr. Laird.

1. F-15. I told him we had a problem since Messrs. Seamans and Foster seem to be in rather strong disagreement about how best to contract for the F-15. Mel said that his involvement in the case had been minimal and he expected that the whole question had been resolved in a meeting with Packard the day before. He said that as far as he was concerned, he expected Bob Seamans to run the Air Force and that the people on the third floor were there mainly to set policy. Inasmuch as Dr. Seamans has already sent a memo to Mr. Packard on this subject, I guess the next step is to review the situation with Packard. Perhaps in the meantime we could have further meetings with Foster to try to clarify his views as to why the fixed price technique is the best way to go.

2. MOL Announcement. I told Mel that I was struggling with the problem of preparing a public announcement in case the President decided to cancel MOL. He said we ought to try to be ready for the eventuality. He then said that you must realize that I cannot accept the idea that programs in the Defense Department can be canceled without a thorough review of such programs between me and the President. I said I certainly hoped there was such a policy, but we had been hearing all kinds of rumors circulated by the Bureau of the Budget. He said that he has a firm understanding with the President that no such possibilities can take place without him having his own chance to defend any specific program which is brought into question.

3. Goldflow implications of stationing military personnel overseas. I told Mel that I had an extra-curricular interest in finding technological ways of replacing some of our military people overseas. I told him that I did not want to get into the

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question of military forces overseas, but of support to these forces, since the question of how much military force we should have overseas is basically a political one. On the other hand, the technical support provided to them also involves large amounts of manpower and I would like to take certain actions leading to the reduction of this technical support. I cited the case of communications support and the NSA type of activity, both of which tie up large numbers of people and told him that there were technical developments possible--such as, relay satellites, which would enable a lot of this work to be done at home. He encouraged me to proceed with such studies and make recommendations since according to him it costs us \$7,000 a year to keep a man overseas.

4. Drones. I told Secretary Laird I was proceeding to get a number of drones available which could replace the EC-121, but was having a little trouble clarifying the "military requirement". I told him that I did not think I should wait until this requirement was clarified but should proceed with our program. He agreed and asked whether or not I was in touch with JCS and DDR&E on this matter. I told him that I was, but did not want to wait for them to finish their studies. He agreed that this is a capability we need.



John L. McLucas

cc: Dr. Seamans
Dr. Gardiner Tucker

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