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September 12, 1969

Honorable Robert C. Seamans, Jr.
Secretary of the Air Force
Washington, D. C. 20330This document consists of 2 pages
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Dear Bob:

As you know, NASA's long range plans in space astronomy point toward the eventual development and operation of very large diffraction limited orbital telescopes. One step along the way that we are considering is a large stellar telescope (ATM-B) for operation with the second "dry workshop", planned for flight in 1974. We have, with the assistance of the MDL team, taken steps to have

Space Flight Center examine the existing MDL hardware at Eastman Kodak. Their purpose is to make a preliminary evaluation as to the suitability of this equipment for stellar astronomy, the steps that might be required to so modify it, and the probable compatibility of the system with the Apollo Telescope Mount and dry workshop. We expect to have their preliminary findings within several weeks.

In the event their report is positive, NASA would see the next step as a detailed technical feasibility study. Under the circumstances, this study would be classified and probably best contracted for by the DOD with reimbursement from NASA. We feel we can progress this far without any commitment being sought or implied as to the actual use of DORIAN systems or technology by NASA.

If the feasibility study were to show significant advantages of such utilization, we could then come to grips with the security and program policy issues that this might raise.

In the longer term, we are vitally interested in the question of how NASA should move in the development and testing of very large optics,

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and what role the classified capabilities — technology and facilities — should play therein. This topic can await further elaboration until the more immediate questions of existing hardware have been resolved.

Sincerely,

| Signed
Homer E. Newell
Associate Administrator

cc: Colonel Lew Allen, Jr. USAF

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*Prepared —
D. H. Newell 9/12/69*

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