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Washington, D. C.



April 23, 1969



MEMORANDUM FOR MR. DAVID WILLIAMSON, NASA

SUBJECT: Single Governmental Focal Point for Space Activities

The attached memorandum brings up an old but important subject which hasn't been discussed in polite company for a long time. I suggest that you and I prepare an acceptable draft NSDM and endorse it to the Manned Space Flight Policy Committee at the next Survey Applications Coordinating Committee meeting.

*Paul*  
PAUL E. WORTHMAN  
Colonel, USAF  
Member

Attachment

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ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

#3

16 APR 1969

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

In reply refer to:  
I-3032/69

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF SPACE AND ENVIRONMENTAL  
SCIENCE AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF STATE

SUBJECT: International Prospects and Problems in Remote Sensing  
of Earth Resources by Satellite

Your draft on "International Prospects and Problems in Remote Sensing of Earth Resources by Satellite" presents a very well-reasoned approach to international participation in prospective programs for remote sensing by satellite. I agree with you completely that it is not too early to prepare for the growing domestic and foreign interest that seems likely to arise on this subject.

The draft also provides a thoughtful discussion of the many hazards inherent in a venture of this nature. One of the more important among these is the general lack of an international measurement to distinguish between information gathered for so-called "beneficial purposes" and that which is economic intelligence. Your suggestion to include maximum foreign participation—from the very beginning in the Remote Sensing Program could be one way to assist in reducing suspicion of the program's objective and of assuring optimum development in this endeavor.

As you indicate in the draft, the best solution to international problems in this field will evolve from clear evidence that the program is economically sound and beneficial. The step-by-step approach in the draft to have the United Nations and selected countries participate in NASA's first experimental remote sensing satellite will certainly prove US sincerity in wanting international cooperation in this field and will assist materially in popularizing the capabilities of the program.

However, I do not see a need for a new interagency committee to coordinate US efforts in earth sensing at this time. As you know, the Department of Defense consistently has sponsored the concept of a single governmental focal point to monitor space activities. Specifically, we have suggested that the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), an active participant in international space efforts, should be the logical agency for this responsibility. NASA could be directed as the "action agency" in remote sensing by issuing a National Security Decision Memorandum (NSDM) to that effect. Once this was accomplished, the State Department could then negotiate directly with NASA on the political implications of such endeavors.

*Request Officer*

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Finally, I would prefer not to give a conclusive response to the draft until I have studied the recommendations of the President's Space Task Group, concerning this and other national space matters and its proposed national space program. As you recall, this Group was organized by direction of the President and operates under the leadership of the Vice President. The optimum US approach to the sensing program will be better defined after these studies are completed.

We sincerely appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on your draft paper and I assure you that the Department of Defense will be happy to contribute, whenever appropriate, to this very interesting subject.

SIGNED

G. Warren Nutter  
ASD/ISA

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