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NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE PROGRAM

Washington, D. C.

ExCom-M-27

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Continued?

NRP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting Held September 30, 1971
Office of Deputy Secretary of Defense
Room 3E 928, The Pentagon
2 - 3:05 p.m.

Members Present

Mr. David Packard	Deputy Secretary of Defense
Mr. Richard Helms	Director of Central Intelligence
Dr. Edward E. David, Jr.	Science Advisor to the President

Others Present

Dr. John L. McLucas	Director, National Reconnaissance Office, Ex Officio
Dr. F. Robert Naka	Secretary, NRP Executive Committee and Deputy Director, NRO Ex Officio
Vice Adm. Noel Gayler	Director, NSA
Mr. Kenneth W. Dam	Assistant Director, OMB
Dr. Charles A. Sorrels	OMB
Mr. Carl E. Duckett	DDS&T/CIA
Dr. John J. Martin	Office of Pres. Sci. Advisor
Col. David D. Bradburn	NRO Comptroller
	Director, NRO Staff
Dr. Albert C. Hall	Observer

The EOI/FROG Decision and the NRP Budget

Dr. McLucas opened the meeting with a discussion of the effect on the NRP budget by the decision to proceed only with the Electro-Optical Imaging System and to terminate system

GAMBIT HEXAGON TAGBOARD

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development on the Film Readout GAMBIT System. He said that before the July ExCom meeting we produced an estimate of the EOI System cost and allocated that money by year in accordance with our best ideas at the time. After the meeting, [redacted] estimated a program with a [redacted] ceiling on the budget for EOI plus the Data Relay Satellite. He said the bids on EOI will be coming in momentarily with the completion of the system design competition. Rather than review all the old estimates, it would be better to wait and deal with the real figures in the bids. We have no particular pressure now to firm up our costs, except that we would like to tell Senator Ellender how much we can reduce the budget with the decision to proceed with EOI only.

Mr. Packard reviewed the timing situation, saying the authorization bill is going through fairly well and present estimates indicate its completion by the middle of next week. The House and Senate appropriations are pretty well written up so that the whole subject is likely to be settled by the end of October. He felt we should provide an answer to Senator Ellender by the end of next week at the latest. Dr. McLucas continued that we have two problems: One, how much to delete from the NRP and, two, how Mr. Packard will describe this to Senator Ellender. Complications from other intelligence programs may offset the NRP reduction. Mr. Packard responded that we should address the NRP situation on its own merits, independently of any other problem. Mr. Helms concurred, saying he and Mr. Packard were obliged to respond in that manner because of the letters each had received.

After some discussion, it was agreed that the letter to Senator Ellender should state our decision to proceed with EOI only, reducing the NRP budget in FY 1972 by [redacted] the amount programmed for FROG.

[redacted] pointed out that we should describe this money to Mr. Ellender as Total Obligation Authority because of the carryover from FY 1971, with New Obligation Authority to be discussed with Mr. Woodruff. Mr. Packard agreed.

Dr. McLucas expressed concern over the [redacted] budget-limited program which had been proposed in relation to Dr. Kissinger's memorandum. He said he had discussed the matter with Mr. Wayne Smith because the letter from Dr. Kissinger had not specifically mentioned any budget limit. Mr. Smith had responded that that letter was intended to approve the option stated in Mr. Laird's letter--a [redacted] program and first launch in 1976.

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Mr. Packard did not want to make an arbitrary statement that we should keep that budget below [redacted] rather, he felt, we should stay in the range of [redacted] per year in the next few years. It is too difficult to predict all the factors, such as inflation, that would affect us. Mr. Helms inquired whether one of the problems might be the funding for the Data Relay Satellite which should be absorbed by the NRP. For example, should not SAC pay for some of those costs. Mr. Packard responded that SAC should pay for those costs and he had some flexibility there. [redacted] pointed out that we were setting up a mechanism for identifying funding for the two additional missions separately from support of EOI. In response to Dr. David's question, Dr. McLucas replied that he had assured the accommodation of other users by the Data Relay Satellite. Mr. Helms pointed out that the [redacted] ceiling was only within the Administration and need not be exposed to Senator Ellender.

[redacted] raised the question of whether the \$2.6M reduction in the TAGBOARD Program (by its being put in dead storage) should be included in the letters to Senator Ellender. Mr. Packard responded we should add that amount to the [redacted]

Mr. Packard reported that he had visited the [redacted] facility this week and was very encouraged with the progress on EOI. He had visited [redacted] last April when the program was in a much earlier stage so he could not make any relevant comparison. However, he felt [redacted] program was in good shape and they had worked out a good schedule. He also felt the ExCom was correct in not trying to shorten the schedule at this time but [redacted] proposed schedule could be shortened if the program proceeded well for the first 18 months. He discussed in some detail four technical problems. They were

1. The sensors, which appeared to be well under control;
2. The communications link and the question of cathode life of the traveling wave tube;
3. The [redacted] and
4. The engineering integration of the whole system, which would probably be the most difficult problem.

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Dr. Hall inquired what confidence Mr. Packard had [] estimate of cost and schedule. Mr. Packard responded that he could not judge the costs; however, he did review the schedule in detail and believed it to be realistic. There are a number of milestones identified with reasonable time provided to accomplish the work. It is a 49-month schedule and confirms his view that it would be unwise to condense the schedule at this time. If everything works out well, we might be able to achieve first launch in a little less time. Dr. McLucas [] cost estimates were below those of the CIA but at this time he did not know how to assess that fact.

Dr. David inquired how much slack there was in that schedule. Mr. Packard responded that in the first three months the specifications are all reviewed and concurred upon. Following that, all hardware components are tested, leading up to the Preliminary Design Review. During the second year, production prototypes are worked on; then in the final two years, the system is assembled, integrated, tested, and launched. Hence, he felt there was enough flexibility to be reasonably safe. Dr. McLucas added [] would probably say there was four to six months' slack.

In response to Dr. David's question on program structuring, Mr. Packard said that was well laid out with milestones and management responsibilities which would show any slip and who was responsible for correcting it. He felt [] team was good but suspected that was true of many companies these days.

Mr. Duckett commented that Dr. Steininger had visited the five major contractors last week, three on the spacecraft and two on the ground processing facility. The review indicated the competition is intense and will be close.

Mr. Packard raised the question of the type of contract and the ensuing discussion concluded that a cost contract would be necessary. Dr. Hall inquired whether it was possible to make a selection and then make a final determination of costs. Dr. McLucas responded that the Air Force has recently tried a couple of contracts where the program had been reviewed in detail after selection of a successful contractor.

Dr. David inquired whether [] do the software itself. Mr. Packard responded that he did not know based on the briefing he had received. Mr. Duckett commented that the Government had been careful not to pry too deeply into this area because there were a number of "gentleman's agreements" between contractors.

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Mr. Packard suggested that the selection be made with as little emphasis on cost estimates as possible, keeping some flexibility in order that adjustments can be made after the selection. Dr. Hall pointed out that from his experience it is feasible to make a selection, then negotiate in detail the work statement, and then get a cost. It is a far better way of obtaining a cost figure because before the selection there is an adversary relationship which disappears after selection.

Admiral Gayler inquired how the Data Relay Satellite was going to be procured. Dr. McLucas responded that it would be a normal Air Force procurement through SAMSO. Admiral Gayler said he was interested in the subject because he would like to consider

Action: Mr. Packard will send a letter to Senator Ellender before the end of next week.

Launch Schedule and Days in Orbit
For Photographic Reconnaissance Satellites

Dr. McLucas felt there were no big decisions involved in the remaining topics but he wanted to spend a little time in discussion. One of the elements during discussion of the need for a reconnaissance system was how well we can operate with our present systems. We have stated earlier our approaching ability to have a satellite in orbit 360 days a year with four launches each of GAMBIT and HEXAGON. In order to provide on-orbit control, the Satellite Control Facility would be required to make a slight change in software and perhaps add a computer, possibly increasing costs only a couple of million dollars. This will permit them to handle two satellites in orbit simultaneously--one in the operational mode and the other in the solo or engineering mode after all the film capsules have been recovered. As for the requirement for increased satellite life, we expect to obtain a 30-day mission on the third GAMBIT launch from now. For HEXAGON, having flown only one 30-day mission so far, we know of no reason that we cannot be at a 60-day mission a year from now.

Dr. McLucas reported that he had talked to a number of people recently about the desirability of increasing our days in orbit. Quite a few people believed it would be desirable provided it did not cost too much money.

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