

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY

MEMORANDUM

3 November 1964

Cy:

The attached is self-explanatory. I agree with Gen Stewart that there is no need for you to write USIB again on this matter.

*Brook*  
Brockway McMillan

Brook-

We must be more careful in the future. This is sloppy and puts us in the position of looking like we don't know what we are doing. How did it happen

*Cy*  
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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY

3 November 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR Dr. McMillan

SUBJECT: ~~(TS)~~ NRP CORONA Mission J-1014

1. Reference is made to Mr. Vance's 22 October 64 memorandum to the Chairman, USIB, subject as above (copy attached).

2. Late last week, in the check and double-check process that is part of the count-down procedure, the West Coast discovered--to our great surprise and their considerable embarrassment--that the orbital parameters set in J-1014 would not accomplish what we thought they would. Rather than completely covering Cuba on days 1-4, the orbit would have covered Cuba only on days 5-8, with small but significant gaps between swaths.

3. These orbital parameters were computed several months ago. As I understand the situation, LMSC generated the data, which supposedly was checked by our representative at the AP facility, and then forwarded to the ~~(S)~~ NRO Operations Center. This is a good example of the diffused CORONA management responsibilities--note that the CORONA Program office was not involved in the effort. We have directed SA FSP to set up necessary procedures immediately, where by the Program Office reviews and approves all orbital data submitted to the Operations Center.

4. Over the past weekend, two new sets of orbital parameters were developed, checked, and validated for the CORONA system--one for Point Arguello, and the other for the VAFB Thor Pad. The reason for two sets of parameters is the slightly decreased flexibility of the TAT at VAFB. Particulars of the two orbits follow:

a. VAFB: This is a 10 day synchronous, 9 day equally-spaced orbit on an inclination of 70 degrees. The mission duration is 9 days (5 on the first bucket). Complete coverage of Cuba, with good overlap, is acquired on the first five days. All of Russia and China are covered with no gaps over the nine day period. Perigee ranges from 105 miles at 50° North to 115 miles at 20° North.

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RECEIVED FROM A. BOWEN TO A. BOWEN  
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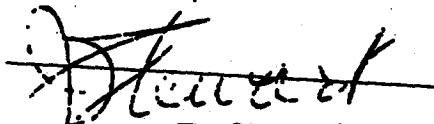
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b. PALC Thor Pad: This is a 9 day synchronous, 8 day equally-spaced orbit on an inclination of 75 degrees. The mission duration is 8 days (4 on first bucket). Cuba is covered completely, with good overlap, on the first four days. Other details are similar to the orbit described above for VAFB.

5. Since CORONA mission J-14 must be launched from VAFB (the PALC Thor Pad is down for modifications), the ten-day synchronous orbit described in paragraph 4a will be flown. These orbital parameters are now being set in J-14; unfortunately, this caused us to recycle the count-down to approximately R-19 days, and we can no longer make the 10 November launch date. The new target date is 20 November, and we might beat that by a couple of days.

6. USIB and COMOR will not be disturbed by the later launch date. Both USIB and COMOR, in approving the mission proposed in Mr. Vance's 22 October memo, felt that a launch date of 10 November was too early after J-13 (launched 2 November).

7. I will advise COMOR of the new launch date. Since the end result of the new orbit calculations is almost identical with that previously proposed, there appears to be no need for Mr. Vance to write USIB again just to explain technical differences in orbits. You may wish to advise Mr. Vance of our problems, however, in case the subject comes up during an ExCom meeting.

  
James T. Stewart  
Brigadier General, USAF  
Director, (S) NRO Staff

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