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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON

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Dr. McCon
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OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY

21 November 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL MARTIN

SUBJECT: Contact Between Dr. Wheelon and Colonel Battle

Colonel Battle called this afternoon to ask if he could see me briefly on a "matter of mutual interest." I went to see him immediately; he advised that Dr. Wheelon and Mr. Bross had visited him on 20 November, and he wanted to "clear his skirts with us."

Dr. Wheelon said they would discuss CORONA and MURAL matters. When Colonel Battle pointed out that he had been debriefed, he was told, "Don't worry about that; as of now you're cleared - we'll handle that." After a discussion of the "mess the program is in at Los Angeles," Wheelon asked Battle's reaction to Dr. McMillan's proposal to place all of CORONA under General Greer (Battle advised me that this put him on the spot, because he wasn't sure of the why of the proposal, even though Wheelon had surfaced the what). Battle replied with a long resume of how Mr. Bissell supported the program, stressing the fact that knowledge, confidence, and support were much more important than ownership. He asked Wheelon and Bross if they had ever visited Colonel Charley Murphy's place; if they knew what he did, if they knew the Murphy (i. e., Agency) role in CORONA operations, etc. Both Wheelon and Bross admitted never having made the trip.

Colonel Battle's key point was that a Program Manager (like Colonel Worthington) needs trust, confidence, and backing, such as Battle always had from Bissell. In such an atmosphere, technical problems are faced as incidents, not as crises. ("Anxiety will never replace thrust," etc.)

Colonel Battle said it was clear to him that Dr. Wheelon is not at all sure how Mr. McCone will vote on Dr. McMillan's proposal. Additionally, he feels he may have held his audience, but he doubts if there were any converts.

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PAUL E. WORTHEMAN
Colonel, USAF

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CORONA/MURAL

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