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(S) NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE

WASHINGTON, D.C.

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OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

26 July 1974

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: National Photo Plan

In a discussion with Bill Colby this morning, I was asked to proceed with certain elements that would be part of a National Photo Plan. These elements are ones that are appropriate to the NRO mission; namely, the design, operation, and planning for the future acquisition systems to meet the intelligence requirements of the country.

In the discussion, it was very clear that Bill Colby has a fine appreciation for the need to provide the national intelligence data to all users - strategic, tactical, operational, etc. He observed that there are a great number of people who are interested in photo imagery as a source of needed intelligence. He recognized the capability of operational theater commanders, such as CINCPAC, in analyzing the total intelligence problem in the area of their responsibility. By specific example, he pointed out that it is not necessary that a Pacific area intelligence problem be resolved in NPIC - it could just as well be resolved in the theater command with proper data exchange to Washington. He observed that, in this example, NPIC may still want to work a specific problem and, therefore, he's not saying that we should do away with an NPIC type of organization. This discussion led to his basic observation that we must also consider the photo interpretation analysis and associate all of the associated intelligence functions in the overall National Photo Plan.

I volunteered that the NRO, with its basic responsibility, would be a good organization for the generation of at least a major portion of the plan. Two specific areas that he agreed were worth NRO study were:

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a. Definition of the requirements problem for photo systems for all areas, such as NRT, Search, TI spotting, Mapping, etc. The plan would detail specific studies which should be conducted to arrive at plans for the future. Examples: What are the search requirements? What revisit time is required? Is stereo required? Color? Special film filter for economic problems, such as grain estimates?

b. Planning for acquisition systems of the future with a full provision for advanced technology. New ways of doing business, such as shuttle, and provision for entirely new concepts which may be available by improved technology, such as ~~_____~~

To respond to this problem, I propose that we prepare a detailed outline of the aforementioned two sections of the National Photo Plan. The outline should identify projects that need to be done, specific organizations in the NRO, or, more importantly, organizations in the intelligence community - tactical and strategic outside of the NRO that are required to resolve issues. Care must be exercised that designated projects are in bite-size pieces. We must avoid broad charters, and ill-defined study tasks assigned to ad hoc committees by reason of our own inability to circumscribe the problem.

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cc: Gen Kulpa, SAF/SS

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