

Honorable John C. Stennis
United States Senate
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Chairman:

With respect to the nomination of Mr. James Plummer for the position of Under Secretary of the Air Force, I would like to submit some information regarding the responsibilities of that office.

The Under Secretary of the Air Force has responsibilities comparable to the Under Secretaries of the Army and Navy. As my alter ego, Mr. Plummer would be responsible for all matters of Air Force business which demand attention during my absence. In addition, he would have certain delegated responsibilities which would be mutually agreed upon between the two of us. These items could include subjects of special interest to him or areas which drew on his expertise. During my tenure as Under Secretary, I had special responsibilities in the field of personnel, unmanned aircraft and space programs.

Since Mr. Plummer is not yet on board, we have not worked out what these special responsibilities might be. However, there is one area in which he would have special responsibilities which I would like to call to your attention.

By mutual agreement of the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence, the Under Secretary of the Air Force is designated as the manager of the National Reconnaissance Program. The Under Secretary runs the NRO, the National Reconnaissance Office, which manages the NRP. He has a small staff which reports to him and assists him in the management of the major programs which fall within the cognizance of the NRO. The NRO is responsible for the formulation, conceptual design, research and development, procurement and operation

Q. I understand you are going to dispose of your stocks. When will these transactions be completed?

A. Within the next days.

Q. As you know, the Senate Democratic Caucus has adopted a policy with respect to every civilian nomination which requires the nominee be asked: Do we have your commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate?

A. You certainly do have my commitment to do so.

Q. Your background is excellent and you appear strong in technical areas. These are areas which I am sure there is much help needed. In your dealings with the Government from private industry, have you developed any ideas as to what you might want to do now that you are working on the Government side?

A. (A statement as to any personal ideas.)
A suggestion: During this time period of declining resources I would hope to assist in applying technology toward fielding systems to solve military problems at reasonable costs and in a timely fashion.

Q. I would like to stress that if things are not going right you gain a lot more by coming back and being frank about them rather than trying to hide them and explain them away and defend some program that is not going right. In other words, if you will be perfectly frank with Congress, I think you will get good cooperation.

A. That is my intention Senator. Thank you.

Q. Have you had any experience in the Air Force, working for the Air Force or any other Branch of the Armed Services?

A. (Outline military experience.)

Q. Do you have any situations now in which your previous employer is a contractor you will be contacting in connection with on-going programs in the Air Force?

A. Yes. LMSC does have on-going programs for the Air Force.

Q. I understand that you are severing all relationships with your prior employer.

A. Yes, completely.

Q. You have no understanding that you will go back to work with them once you are finished here?

A. I do not.

Q. You will have no contractual obligation with LMSC or they with you once you take this position?

A. No, I will not.

Q. Do you have any retirement benefits coming to you from Lockheed, and if so will such a retirement plan be affected in any way by the business that Lockheed does in this next few years, or is it totaled and fixed at the time you leave the Company?

A. (Answer as appropriate.)

- Q. During the last 20 years you have been employed by LMSC, one of the Government's biggest contractors. Will this give you any difficulty in looking after the Government's end of the operations with respect to the Government's dealings with Lockheed or other private contractors?
- A. No Sir. I have discussed this with Secretary McLucas and we have arranged that if there is any question or if there could be any appearance of conflict, I will step aside. I don't feel that my prior employment should be a factor or prejudice my judgment in the future.
- Q. Mr. Plummer, you bring in a background of much experience to this important job. Are you making a great financial sacrifice to take this position?
- A. Senator, I will be accepting a lesser financial remuneration, however, I have taken this into consideration in making my decision to leave LMSC to come into Government. I have decided that I would like the opportunity to contribute something and employ what experience I have gained over the last several years in amore direct service to the Government.
- Q. Are you willing to serve in the capacity as Under Secretary of the Air Force through 1976?
- A. Yes I am.
- Q. Have you been involved in the building of Air Force spy satellites?
- A. I have over the years been involved with several sensitive projects the details of which I am not privileged to discuss in relatively open hearings. I will be glad to discuss the details of my past involvements with a more closed group at the discretion of the Chairman.

- Q. If you have been working the spy satellite program what will be your responsibilities in connection with such a program as Under Secretary of the Air Force.
- A. I am not privileged to discuss the full details of certain specific responsibilities in a relatively open hearing. I will be glad to discuss in depth with a more closed group at the discretion of the Chairman.
- Q. Isn't it true that one of the main reasons that the Lockheed loan was approved was so that your Company could continue its work on spy satellites?
- A. Although I am not privy to all of the background of the decision to approve the Lockheed loan, LMSC has always been a major profit center for the Corporation. I believe that the Government, as a consideration, did not wish to see LMSC sacrificed as a viable defense producer.
- Q. Will you be working with the CIA in your new position?
- A. Of course, as Under Secretary I will be involved in oversight of Air Force intelligence activities. In that connection, I expect that I will have contact with the CIA.