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FOR YOUR:

DATE: 26 Aug

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MEETING WITH: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

SUBJECT:

SALT IMPACT

Letter to U. A. Johnson  
requesting NSAM 156 Committee  
study.

BY: 

YOUR COMMENTS/DIRECTION:

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~~SSO AND SPO HANDLING ONLY~~

RECORD OF COORDINATION

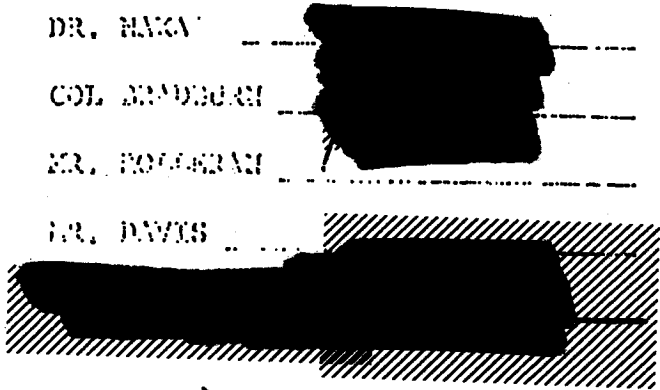
SUBJECT: SALT Ratification Impact

DR. HAKA

COL. SANDERSON

MR. ROBERMAN

MR. DAVIS



~~SALT ?~~

Why not SALT ?

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~~(S)~~ NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

THE NRO STAFF

August 25, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. McLUCAS

SUBJECT: SALT Ratification Impact

With regard to the ratification of a SAL Treaty, Agreement or Interim Agreement, there appears to be a potential risk to the NRO arising from open discussion of "national technical means of verification" during the ratification process. According to the ACDA charter, any form of agreement which results from the SALT talks requires some form of Congressional hearing and approval.

Almost certainly there will be focus on what is included in the term "national technical means" and to what degree should confidence be placed by the US in these national means. Ensuing open or closed discussions run the risk of publicly and officially disclosing the fact of satellite reconnaissance and the relative excellence of the collection systems.

From what we have been able to determine, no formal assessment has been made of the potential impact of the level of hearing given any agreement arising from the Talks. Furthermore, the SALT people feel that the Soviets plan no public discussion or evaluation of any type of agreement. Thus, prolonged detailed Congressional discussion of US national means may have an adverse political impact through discussions of comparable Soviet systems and activities.

We feel that this issue should receive formal attention by the Verification Panel or the NSAM 156 Committee. Alternatives should be sought which will minimize the impact

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on the NRP if detailed ratification or review discussions are held. A possible course of action would be to enlist the support of the appropriate people in the Congress who would be reviewing an agreement.

As you are aware, the Verification Panel has provided the interagency effort on SALT positions but the NSAM 156 Committee has previously dealt with issues of disclosure and political implications of the conduct of satellite reconnaissance. For this reason we recommend that the NSAM 156 Committee be requested to review this question. It should be pointed out that an attendant risk is that the "fact of" issue could be reopened in this forum with disappointing results. We feel, however, that no consideration at all of the question offers greater risk to the security of the NRP.

RECOMMENDATION: That you sign the memorandum at the right to Ambassador Johnson requesting a NSAM 156 Committee review of the issue.

  
Major, USAF

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