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Lt Col Quiggins/me

October 15, 1965

**MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
FOR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS**

**SUBJECT: Review - An Offer of Inspection of MOL**

In your memorandum dated 9 October 1965, you requested my views concerning a State Department draft position paper entitled "An Offer of Inspection of MOL." As you are aware, Dr. Flax's staff has been working with Mr. Friedman to produce a draft Department of Defense position paper (BYE-36894-65) on this subject. I agree with the conclusions stated in that draft.

The State Department paper emphasizes the psychological advantages to be gained by a U. S. initiated pre-launching inspection proposal, but neglects the potential impact of such action on national security. I do not agree that "Our main concern is public and official opinion in other countries" (see page 3 of the State paper). Our primary concern in all of these discussions is the preservation of our national security; in this particular case, I rate the value to national security of preserving our reconnaissance capability above that of public and official opinion in other countries.

On page 5, the State paper says that "We are virtually certain that the Soviet Union would turn down such a proposal." I do not find support for this statement within the paper or within the record of previous negotiations with the USSR. Rather, it appears to me that once the United States makes the proposal one can only surmise the Soviet reaction. The DOD draft lists some of the more obvious responses which the Soviets could make to this U. S. initiative. I would emphasize my belief that the initiative could well be accepted and, once accepted, (1) would result in the U. S. deliberately revealing a sophisticated operational satellite reconnaissance program, and (2) could result in Soviet responses designed to interfere with the success of that program. The responses could range from political/propaganda attacks to the use of Soviet anti-satellite systems.

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We have no assurance that a U. S. initiative for pre-launching inspection can be restricted to manned vehicles; as a consequence we bare ourselves to the possibility of a USSR acceptance, based upon a completely unacceptable exchange -- that of unmanned satellites. Such an event is certain to jeopardize our national satellite reconnaissance program. The continuation of this program is vital to our national security; the benefits of a pre-launching inspection initiative are trivial by comparison.

In summary, the State Department draft does not present a convincing argument in favor of a U. S. initiative. I recommend that the Department of Defense maintain a strong opposition to satellite pre-launching inspection at this time.

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Harold Brown

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