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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON 20330



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6/6/69

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

MAR 5 1969

Dr. Flax:

We are presently preparing a MOL back-up book for use by key OSD and AF officials during the forthcoming Congressional Hearings. The BU Book will include significant points made by DoD witnesses in previous years, various subjects that always come up (cost; alleged duplication with AAP; program status; system fact sheets; etc.). It will contain very little BYEMAN material, and what there is will be clearly identified as such.

As presently planned, the BU Book is fairly straightforward and is not a concern. There is one area, however, on which I do need some advice. The background follows:

1. In my informal discussions with MOL-cleared Senate and House Committee Staff Members, several of them have expressed concern re the increasing difficulty of justifying MOL to the full Committees without being more specific on the "experiments". They all urge "stronger justification" but recognize the dilemma of attempting this in non-BYEMAN sessions.
2. I remember the Clifford/Nitze session with the Senate Committee last May wherein the MOL "camera" was discussed and described as capable of seeing [REDACTED] . . . This year, except for the DDR&E, a new team will appear on the hill. They probably will need some assistance on non-BYEMAN defenses of MOL aimed at avoiding embarrassing situations, and also should have a disaster plan handy in case one of them is backed into a corner and has no choice but to discuss MOL as a reconnaissance vehicle.

In light of the above, it might be appropriate to also include in the BU Book guidance on increasingly-classified

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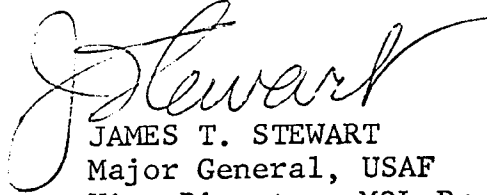
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levels of MOL information, along with appropriate security safeguards to be taken, for use with Committees as appropriate. The attached very rough draft will give you an idea of what I mean. Any thoughts you have along these lines would be appreciated.



JAMES T. STEWART
Major General, USAF
Vice Director, MOL Program

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MOL JUSTIFICATION

BACKGROUND

Recent informal discussions with MOL-cleared* House and Senate Committee Staff Members indicate some concern for the forthcoming Hearings re the increasing difficulty of justifying MOL to the full Committees without referring to its reconnaissance mission. They recognize the problem of discussing MOL in light of the stringent security measures used to protect knowledge of the fact, extent, and capability of the NRP, but nevertheless feel that stronger MOL justification may be needed this session.

The problem exists because only a limited number of Committee and Staff members are MOL-briefed. The same procedure has been used for MOL, as for other covert DoD and CIA undertakings -- namely, brief the Chairman, and ask him to designate for complete MOL briefings the minimum number of Committee and Staff members he feels are necessary to permit the Committee to fulfill its responsibilities. The minimum number recommended to the Chairman normally are the Senior Minority Member and Chief Counsel. As a result, only a few

*"MOL-cleared" or "MOL-briefed" in this paper refers to the reconnaissance aspects of MOL.

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are MOL-briefed on each appropriate Committee (Note: For obvious reasons, these informal arrangements with the Chairman are handled very discretely).

Prior to Hearings by a Committee, the MOL Program Office (Gen S. L. ... daily) briefs the MOL-cleared Staff Members and MOL-briefed Committee Members (as desired) on the program objectives, status, etc. The Chairman, MOL-briefed Committee Members, and Chief Counsel then endeavor during the Hearings to steer questions and discussions away from the sensitive reconnaissance aspects of MOL. In past years, this has worked quite well.

Recognizing, however, that a Committee or a particular member may insist on details from a key OSD or AF official, it may become necessary to discuss the MOL reconnaissance mission with a full Committee. The following are levels of information which should be discussed, along with appropriate security safeguards to be taken, in increasingly difficult situations during Committee Hearings.

PREPARED STATEMENTS; ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS; ETC.

The following material should be used as appropriate in prepared statements, responses to questions during full-committee

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hearings, etc. (Note: Although initially classified CONF or SECRET, as appropriate, most of the following will subsequently be cleared for inclusion in UNCL Hearing Transcripts):

1. The purpose of MOL is to develop both manned and unmanned space hardware unique to Defense purposes.
2. In the process of operating and testing such payload hardware, a great deal will be learned about the extent of man's capabilities in space for military purposes.
3. Like most DoD major R&D space projects (VELA; Defense Satcom; TRANSIT; MIDAS, etc.), which unlike ground-based development efforts usually provide an early useful service to the strategic and tactical forces, MOL is also expected to provide a useful Defense support function at the outset. This support function appears to be of such value as to justify the program cost.
4. MOL does not carry bombs or weapons of any kind. MOL in no way abrogates the space treaty.
5. The NASA AAP Orbital Workshop cannot accommodate the MOL experimental equipment (the Workshop cannot be flown low enough for the necessary prolonged periods). MOL, on the other hand, could meet a limited number of the AAP objectives if the DoD experimental equipment were removed.

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6. MOL makes maximum use of already-developed Gemini, Apollo, Titan III, and other DoD/NASA unmanned systems.

7. MOL cost has grown from the initial estimates for four basic reasons:

a. More mature experimental hardware was planned for the initial flights;

b. The development of that hardware is taking longer than originally anticipated.

c. Less-than-optimum funding in FY 68 and FY 69 caused stretchout; and the MOL Program today is dollar-paced.

Note that Congress has appropriated all funds requested of it for MOL.

d. More precise cost estimates were obtained during detailed program definition and contract negotiation phases.

INCREASED COMMITTEE PRESSURE FOR MORE SPECIFIC MOL MISSION INFO:

1. Ask to go "off the record".

2. Caution any non-Committee government Legislative Liaison people present that the following is highly classified, sensitive information -- and no notes are to be taken or subsequent memos written.

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3. Identify MOL as a "surveillance" system which, by virtue of its polar orbit, will have overhead access to the entire world. MOL contains a very-advanced, highly-classified sensor designed to be operated at orbital altitudes on the order of 70-80 miles. The technical intelligence information obtained is expected to be of great value to DoD force planning (R&D and Production) and operational employment, and may be highly valuable in any future Strategic Arms Limitation Agreement that might be reached. . . . Emphasize that MOL is not a bomb-in-orbit. Point out reason for DoD extreme reluctance to admit MOL is a surveillance system is the international "delicacy" of this subject.

FULL COMMITTEE INSISTS ON SENSOR/MISSION SPECIFICS:

1. Ask Chairman to have a few words in private with him. Then ask if he really wishes his full Committee to probe further into this subject. If answer is affirmative, proceed as follows with the full Committee.

2. Request to remain completely "off the record", no notes, etc.

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3. Request that the Hearing Room be cleared of everyone except the Committee members, MOL-cleared Committee Staff members, and MOL-cleared DoD witnesses.

4. Request Chairman to have the Chief Counsel keep a record of all present in the room. State that what you are about to discuss is highly sensitive, should not be discussed outside the Hearing Room, that indiscrete disclosure could have grave repercussions both present and future for the U.S., etc.

5. Describe MOL camera in layman-terms as world's largest, high resolution camera to be flown in either aircraft or space vehicles. Will have 6-foot diameter "lenses" and a [REDACTED] focal length. Will provide [REDACTED] resolution photography from satellite altitudes -- e.g. possible to [REDACTED] DoD plans to fly about two MOL missions per year for technical intelligence on Sino-Soviet strategic and tactical weapons systems, etc. MOL might photograph as many as 2,500 Sino-Soviet targets in a single 30-day mission. . . . Point out this super resolution is not needed for broad National Intelligence Estimates (e.g. numbers of ICBM's, missile firing submarines, strategic bombers, etc.) -- but is needed to determine precisely how capable

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the Sino-Soviet offensive/defensive weapons are so that U.S. Armed Forces can be planned and utilized accordingly. Note that a sizable DDR&E/DIA study effort in 1968 concluded that the value of such info to DoD operations and decisions would be worth the cost of MOL.

6. Finally, conclude session by repeating request not to discuss or write about MOL as a reconnaissance vehicle outside the Hearing Room.

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