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FUNCTIONS: NASA

FUNCTIONS: NRO ✓

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23 April 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: NASA's Reconnaissance Activities

Earlier this week, Dr. McMillan asked Dr. Hall to prepare a Memorandum for Record which would describe a meeting which Dr. Hall had had with Mr. Mueller and others of NASA. At this meeting NASA made clear that it was determined to justify continued NASA activity in the near-earth manned space-flight area, even if it had to use reconnaissance as a basis for such justification. It was clear to the observers from the DOD that NASA also desired to establish an exclusive NASA franchise for near-earth MERCURY-type operations.

It was Dr. McMillan's thought that a Memorandum for Record would serve (over and above the usual purpose) as a useful device for bringing the whole NASA reconnaissance problem to Mr. McNamara's attention at an appropriate time. Dr. Hall delegated the preparation of this memorandum to Brigadier General Harry Evans. General Evans re-delegated the job to Majors Cohen and ^{TOUSC} asking me to assist them as appropriate. This memorandum was finally rewritten, revised by Dr. Hall and appears in our file.

Today, Dr. McMillan asked that we furnish him a proposed memorandum addressed directly to Mr. McNamara on the same subject. The attached draft was written late this afternoon and will be used by Dr. McMillan to prepare a longer paper on the same subject.


PAUL E. WORTHMAN
Colonel, USAF

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23 June 65

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT:

Since the introduction of the Manned Orbiting Laboratory, it has become increasingly clear that NASA is accelerating its efforts to establish an exclusive manned satellite franchise, even going so far as to announce its intention to make near-earth manned observation flights. I am concerned because of the potential effects of this type of activity upon the security of the National Reconnaissance Program as well as the gradual infringement of NASA upon roles and missions which, hitherto, have been clearly within the military domain.

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I believe it is to the mutual advantage of both NASA and the Department of Defense to consider carefully the effect (the effect on both agencies) of  I am

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of course, primarily concerned about the effect of NASA's reconnaissance-related programs upon the security of the NRP. However, from a national and international viewpoint,

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As regards the effect upon the NRP, I foresee continued pressures eroding the security of our satellite reconnaissance programs and running directly counter to the national policy expressed in NSC Action 2454, which prohibits disclosure of "the status, extent, effectiveness, or operational characteristics" of the NRP. We will also lose "strict control over public statements and backgrounding concerning reconnaissance satellites."

With NASA's compulsion to publicize its activities to gain public and budgetary support, I anticipate a steady increase in the pressure to permit disclosure of satellite reconnaissance results -- those of the NRP as well as NASA's. I believe that we must start now to prepare to resist such pressure and to seek support for continuation of the present firm national policy on security of satellite reconnaissance activities.

As a necessary first step in determining actions necessary to protect sensitive NRP programs, I recommend that the DOD and NASA

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stipulate those near-earth orbital observation missions which are civil (such as meteorology or space technology which could fall in this category) and those which are military (such as all intelligence-useful activity). Action could then be initiated to insure continued comprehensive security protection for sensitive program elements of military missions.

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