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



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

August 10, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY FOR  
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT: Deep Sea Recovery of HEXAGON Reentry Vehicle

On July 10, 1971, the third reentry vehicle from the first HEXAGON photo-satellite mission was lost in the vicinity of Hawaii due to parachute failure during descent. Based on informal discussions between elements of the NRO and the Navy staff, it is our understanding that the Trieste II will be deployed in the general vicinity of the impact area over the next few months and could probably be made available to effect recovery of the reentry vehicle if its exact location on the ocean floor can be determined.

We also understand that the services of Dr. Speis of the Scripps Institute of Oceanography could be made available to locate the RV on the bottom if NRO funding support is provided in the approximate amount of \$100K.

I would appreciate your assistance in arranging the necessary Navy and Scripps support to accomplish this salvage effort. If break-up of the RV did not occur on impact, there is a good chance that much of the imagery on the film will survive the salt water immersion. Recovery of the film would be most desirable since the imagery recorded was from a particularly productive portion of the mission. Additional information as to the nature of the parachute failure might also be obtained.

Our initial contact with the Navy has been through CDR E. E. Henifin (OPNAV 232). If you agree, we will proceed with further discussions with this point of contact as regards the detailed planning for the search and salvage operation.

*John L. McLucas*  
John L. McLucas

Copies to:  
CDR Henifin, OPNAV 232  
Mr. Patterson, CIA/OSP ✓

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