

UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE

FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON

June 30, 1971

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Defense - Mr. David Packard
 - Mr. John McLucas
 CIA - Mr. Richard Helms
 NSA - Dr. James Fletcher
 ACDA - Mr. Philip J. Farley
 White House - Mr. Henry A. Kissinger
 - Dr. Edward David
 NASC - Col. William Anders

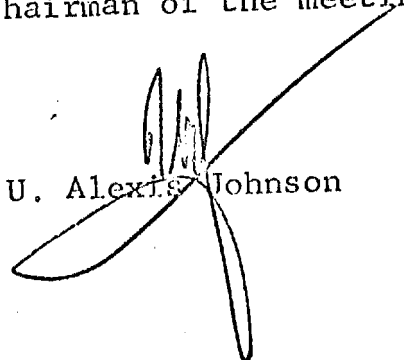
SUBJECT: NSAM 156 Committee

I am enclosing a memorandum of June 24 from Henry Kissinger together with a self-explanatory memorandum of May 20 from Jim Fletcher.

To review this matter and prepare a response for consideration by the principals, a staff-level meeting will be held on Thursday, July 8, at 10:00 a.m. in the conference room adjacent to room 7244, the Department of State.

I would appreciate your designating an appropriately cleared member of your staff to attend this meeting. The name of your representative should be provided in advance to Mr. W. E. Gathright (State Department telephone number 632--1009), who will serve as chairman of the meeting.

U. Alexis Johnson



Enclosures:

No NSC Equities As stated.

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NRO, NASA and State
Department review(s)
completed.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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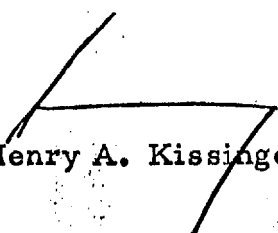
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Dear Alex:

The attached letter from Jim Fletcher suggests a fresh look at our policies on earth sensing space technologies to see if any changes are in order.

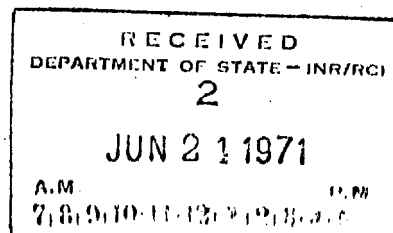
In view of our expanding programs in the area, you may wish to convene your 156 Committee to review these matters.

Warm regards,


Henry A. Kissinger

The Honorable U. Alexis Johnson
Under Secretary for Political Affairs
Department of State
Washington, D. C. 20520

-Attachment



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NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20546



OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

MAY 20 1971

Honorable Henry A. Kissinger
Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20500

Dear Dr. Kissinger:

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In our letter of April 14, 1971 [redacted] we requested approval for unclassified design and procurement of an earth terrain camera for possible use on Skylab in 1973. I recognize that such an approach may be taken to represent a de facto change in policy, and that you and your Committee may not wish to take such an action without an extended review.

It does appear to me that the national policies controlling the deployment of earth sensing space technologies, last examined in detail by the 156 Committee in 1966, should be thoughtfully reviewed again in the near future. As foreseen in 1966, the international and internal environment has evolved over the past five years, the technologies related to earth observation are advancing dramatically, and the recognition of the potential values of space systems for civil applications has grown world-wide. It seems to me certain that continuing civil earth and ocean surveys from space are inevitable, first for research and later for operational missions. We must therefore consider the overall policy framework within which these capabilities should be developed.

In Skylab, we propose to carry an earth terrain camera that will return photography for civil earth resources survey investigations that is expected to have a measurable ground resolution of between 10 and 20 meters. This quality is better than the currently accepted policy limitation of 20 meters that was laid down in 1966 but is required for selected

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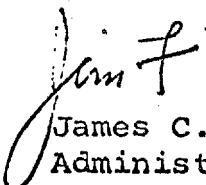
geological survey investigations and for the kind of inter-comparison studies desired by the Office of Science and Technology.

The problem we face today is one of schedule and leadtime. In order to meet the engineering schedule for the Skylab workshop, we need to initiate lens procurement and detail installation design no later than the end of May if we are to meet the electrical system test scheduled for August. Delaying initiation until the fall results in higher costs and higher risks of failure, both of which we wish to avoid. We want to carry out our contracting on an unclassified basis; classified contracting would cost more, would interfere with the management of the whole rest of the unclassified Skylab program, and would highlight undesirably the existence of a U. S. imposed constraint on civil R&D programs.

We need appropriate authorization to proceed with unclassified development of the earth terrain camera. We recognize that a policy review might result in a decision not to acquire data of the quality expected from this camera; in that case, we can arrange its removal from Skylab prior to flight without perturbing the program. On the other hand, without a procurement go ahead, we would lose the option to acquire 10 to 20 meter experimental earth resources photography as part of Skylab.

I therefore propose to authorize the unclassified procurement and installation design of the earth terrain camera at this time, reserving any public announcement or commitment to flight operations until the policy issues have been resolved. I would appreciate your agreement with this course of action which, though not ideal, is made necessary by engineering schedules.

Sincerely,


James C. Fletcher
Administrator

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