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submitted technical specifications to COMSAT. With so little time to study these specifications, the meetings themselves could prove to be meaningless.

- 3. The effort to write MARISAT out of a joint venture, and eventually out of a major voice in INMARSAT, seems to be headed by the British Post Office (BPO). The BPO is hoping for a major voice in INMARSAT, and would like to see it headquartered in London. INMARSAT was to have reached final agreement at the February 1976 meeting, but the question of maximum participation was not settled then, and final agreement must now wait until the September, 1976 Intergovernmental Meeting. This means that the technical working group that was to have been formed within INMARSAT in February, 1976 will not begin to function until some time after the September meetings. This, in turn, has provided the West Europeans with more time to lock themselves into MAROTS-oriented technical parameters to the exclusion of any cooperation with COMSAT and MARISAT.

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Domestic Collection Division
Foreign Intelligence Information Report

COUNTRY International

DCD REPORT NO. [redacted]

SUBJECT MARISAT-MAROTS Cooperation in Technical Areas

DATE DISTR. 26 MAY 1976

NO. PAGES 2

REFERENCES [redacted]

DATE OF INFO. April 1976

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

SOURCE [redacted]

[redacted] COMMENT: In the last week of January 1976, representatives of the European Space Agency (ESA) and the European Conference of Post and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT) met with representatives of the Communications Satellite Corporation (COMSAT) in Paris to discuss the establishment of a structure through which MARISAT and MAROTS could be made technically compatible. The meeting was inspired by the realization that INMARSAT would not be ready for international operational use until COMSAT was scheduled to launch its third generation MARISAT satellite. The Tripartite Working Group agreed to hold a technical and operations conference in the US in mid-May 1976 at the conclusion of the generally favorable discussions held in January.]

1. The generally cooperative atmosphere surrounding the January Tripartite Working Group Meeting appears to have been dissipated, and there now is some question about the true intentions of the West Europeans regarding the interfacing of the MAROTS and MARISAT maritime satellites. It is too early to determine whether this change is the result of policy level decisions, or whether it merely reflects a breakdown in communications between the policy formulators and the technical levels within ESA/CEPT. The West Europeans may have elected to stall a cooperative effort with COMSAT while at the same time proceeding as quickly as possible with the finalization of MAROTS' technical parameters in the hope of having them accepted as INMARSAT's parameters, to the exclusion of MARISAT.
2. It would appear that, at least at the working level, the West European countries are attempting to lock technical parameters into the MAROTS system that would make it incompatible with MARISAT. CEPT has begun to submit these parameters to CCIR Working Group 8 as required by international agreement; as submitted to date, they clearly would not permit the operation of a MAROTS/MARISAT system. In spite of the fact that the Technical/Operations Tripartite Working Group is scheduled to meet in the US beginning on 12 May 1976, the West Europeans have not yet

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