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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

TOP SECRET

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May 1, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
THE DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT
AND BUDGET
THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: Study of the National Reconnaissance Program

The National Reconnaissance Program (NRP) has served the nation well in producing intelligence vital to our national security interests. Its utility in future years holds even greater promise. However, organizational changes in other areas of the Government whose functions impact on the NRP, the enormous advances achieved in space technology, and the persistent need to ensure that our intelligence is the best available, warrant that a comprehensive, contemporary analysis be made of this important resource.

The central role of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board in the establishment of the NRP more than a decade ago and in stimulating and influencing its subsequent progress is well known. I have, therefore, directed the Board to conduct a thorough study of the NRP and to report their findings to me within six months. Their study is to examine the structure and organization best suited to fulfill the purposes of the NRP now and for the future.

Your full cooperation with the Board in this endeavor is essential to its success.

NRO review completed

OSD review completed

cc: Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

NSC/PFIAB REVIEW
COMPLETED

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MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

TOP SECRET/CODEWORDACTION

March 29, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: SECRETARY KISSINGER

FROM: RICHARD OBER ①

SUBJECT: PFIAB Proposal to Study National
Reconnaissance Program (NRP)

Admiral Anderson's letter (Tab B) to the President, dated March 27, 1974, proposes that PFIAB conduct a comprehensive study of the NRP in order to recommend to the President the management best suited to fulfill NRP's mission in the future. Admiral Anderson has prepared a memorandum (Tab A) for the President's signature notifying the Secretary of Defense, Director, OMB, and the DCI that he has directed the study of NRP and asking their full cooperation.

Admiral Anderson is concerned that the management of the National Reconnaissance Office is "being eroded through a process of gradual 'regularization'". PFIAB considers it unlikely that any single element of the Intelligence Community could bring to bear the "perspective and understanding necessary for an objective appraisal"; PFIAB, therefore, proposes that it conduct the study.

PFIAB would like an answer before the Board meeting (April 4-5).

BACKGROUND

There have been changes since the mid 1960's when this highly vital covert program was set up under the supervision of EXCOM which included the DCI, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, and the Science Advisor. Since the departure of the Science Advisor, EXCOM consists of the DCI and Dr. Hall (ASDI). We understand that Mr. Colby is satisfied with the management structure, does not anticipate problems with Dr. Hall, and may not be enthusiastic about the proposed study. We believe, however, that Defense will operate as independently as it can, and that the DCI may need more reenforcement in the increasingly difficult times ahead as the NRP becomes more visible and more expensive. It is a good time, therefore, to take a hard look and to make sure that the management structure of NRP is the best possible to ensure the continuation of this vital program.

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- 2 -

General Scowcroft has been in touch with Wheaton Byers of PFIAB on this matter (Tab C).

It is recommended that you forward the PFIAB letter to the President for his signature.

Mr. Kennedy concurs.

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign the memorandum (Tab I) to the President recommending that the President sign the memorandum (Tab A) to the Secretary of Defense, Director, Office of Management and Budget, Director of Central Intelligence drafted by PFIAB.

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MEMORANDUM

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ACTION
April 24, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger *HK*
SUBJECT: Proposed Study of National Reconnaissance Program

Admiral Anderson has proposed (Tab B) that your Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board conduct a comprehensive, six-month study of the National Reconnaissance Program (NRP). Admiral Anderson is concerned that the management structure of the National Reconnaissance Office is being "eroded" through "regularization". The purpose of the proposed study is to recommend to you the management best suited to fulfill the mission of the NRP.

I fully agree with the Board's assessment of the vital importance of the NRP, and believe that an impartial examination of the NRP management structure would be useful. I also agree that the Board is the most appropriate element to conduct an objective appraisal of this program.

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign the memorandum (Tab A) to the Secretary of Defense, Director, Office of Management and Budget, and Director of Central Intelligence.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT'S FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE ADVISORY BOARD

March 27, 1974


Dear Mr. President:

Your memorandum of November 5, 1971 on the Organization and Management of the U. S. Foreign Intelligence Community, directed retention of the present management structure of the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO). For reasons which appear to be less a result of intention than of changing circumstances -- reorganization of the government agencies impacting on reconnaissance programs -- we perceive that the management structure is being eroded through a process of gradual "regularization."

We consider it appropriate and timely that the situation be carefully assessed so that whatever changes are warranted can be made as a consequence of careful, informed decision-making at the highest level. Since the National Reconnaissance Program management structure includes many agencies of the government -- the NRO, CIA, NSA, civilian components of DOD, Air Force, Navy, and the Office of Management and Budget -- it is unlikely that any single element of the intelligence community could bring to bear the perspective and understanding necessary for an objective appraisal. We propose, therefore, to conduct a comprehensive study of the NRP as it exists today in order to recommend to you the management best suited to fulfill its mission in the future.

To facilitate the Board's efforts and to underscore once more your personal interest, we further recommend that you sign the attached letter notifying principals of this undertaking.

Respectfully yours,


George W. Anderson, Jr.
Admiral, USN (Ret.)
Chairman

The President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

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PRESIDENT'S FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE ADVISORY BOARD

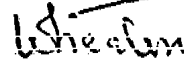
March 27, 1974

Dear Brent:

Many thanks for coming over this morning;
it was helpful.

Attached is an abbreviated form of the
memorandum you read. If possible, we
would like to have an answer prior to the
Board meeting next week (April 4 - 5).

Regards,



Wheaton B. Byers

Maj. Gen. Brent Scowcroft
Deputy Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs

Enclosure: Ltr to the President on
PFIAB Study of NRP

PFIAB

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