



THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY  
(RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT)  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20350

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HEXAGON

18 August 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR DIRECTOR NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE

SUBJECT: Deep Sea Recovery of HEXAGON Reentry Vehicle

REFERENCE: Your Memo of 10 August 1971

1. The referenced Memo describes the loss of one of the HEXAGON reentry vehicles near Hawaii on 10 July 1971 and advises that CDR E.E. Henifin, USN (Op-232) has been primary point of contact for preliminary discussions on recovery.

2. Navy is pleased to assist in this recovery effort.

3. Present planning for this recovery operation includes:

a. Employment of USNS DESTIEGUER, a survey ship capable of towing a search "fish" to more than 20,000 feet;

b. The services of Dr. Fred Speiss and a team of experts from the Marine Physical Laboratory Scripps Institution of Oceanography to provide the search fish and direct the search operation;

c. The use of TRIESTE II, with support ships and divers, capable of lifting the lost reentry vehicle and securing it for safe transfer to port;

d. Search operations by DESTIEGUER are now scheduled to commence about 1 October 1971 for some ten days;

e. Recovery operations by TRIESTE could commence after 5 October 1971.

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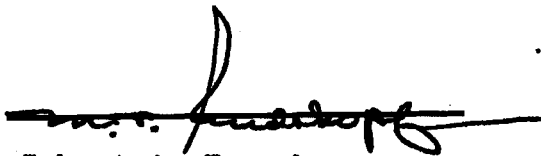
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4. The success of the operation depends upon location of the reentry vehicle, by no means a certainty. Bottom conditions are believed reasonably favorable, but the small size of the package and the accuracy of the reported sinking position make location a difficult task. Recovery can be effected if location is achieved.

5. Funding as stated in your Memorandum is probably adequate and presents no problem at this time.

6. Discussions are continuing between Mr. Patterson and Op-23 on details of the operation.

7. I shall keep you advised as planning progresses and hope that the operation can be terminated successfully.

  
for Robert A. Frosch

Copy to:  
Mr. Patterson, CIA/OSP

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