DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON

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OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY

June 30, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Critical Review of the Utility of Various
Intelligence Activities

Our current review of the submission of the
Program Change Request for the Consolidated Intelligence
Program, and the Consolidated Cryptological Program,
together with the briefing on peripheral airborne
reconnaissance brought to my attention what may be an
uncontrolled proliferation and growth of sundry
intelligence activities. Attempts to understand the
requirements which generate all the activities almost
always fail for reasons discussed later. Usually the
conclusion is drawn intuitively that there is a great
deal of duplication: - that although many activities
make some useful contribution, the additional intelligence
gained by individual activities has long passed the point
of diminishing returns.

The following is a typical breakdown of the
flights conducted each month.

RECONNAISSANCE OPERATIONS

ACTIVITY SUMMARY   (FEBRUARY 1969)

Type Mission	Sorties	Theater Requirements	National Requirements
Photo	2250	2154 (96%)	96 (4%)
ELINT	37	27 (73%)	10 (27%)
COMINT	239	36 (15%)	203 (85%)
ARDF	951	951 (100%)	-
Re-Entry	1	-	1 (100%)
WX Recon/Sampling	868	430 (50%)	438 (50%)
Avg Weight/Effort	4346	3598 (83%)	748 (17%)

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The large number of Southeast Asia photo missions
have been frequently questioned. Much more imagery is
collected than is interpreted. Millions of feet of film
are exposed each month, more than can be examined. Attempts
to determine what percentage is exploited properly can
not be answered. It is significant to note that all
three services (as well as intelligence agencies) have
numerous projects to automate or otherwise improve
exploitation of photographic imagery. The justification
for these projects always cite the disparity between the
huge amount of imagery collected and the relatively small
percentage fully exploited. Many study groups have
recommended reducing the amount of imagery collected and
have indicated there are ways to carry out photographic
reconnaissance missions in a more selective manner.

Similar observations have been made about
infrared and high resolution radar missions. Several
observers have observed that little or no useful informa-
tion is derived from many of these flights, but they are
scheduled on a route basis.

Analysts have attempted to determine the need for
all the missions in Southeast Asia. The missions are
planned from target lists drawn up by various agencies
and also from requests from many sources for area coverage.
Each target and area has a desired frequency of coverage.
Users prepare the lists and specify the coverage frequency.
The reconnaissance specialist attempts to satisfy these
requirements as far as collection is concerned. It is
difficult to determine whether intelligence is derived.
It is possible that it would be better if, instead of
specifying collection, the intelligence desired be specified.
At present, the reconnaissance requirements are considered
met if a film is exposed over the target.

The users are seldom motivated to reduce the
number or frequency coverage of targets reconnoitered.
Further each user makes his own list, so that many target
decks exist.

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TOP SECRET

Despite the huge collection, the requirements in Southeast Asia are more easily accepted than some of the "national" requirements. Of all the national requirements, photographic requirements are the most easily understood. On the other hand, ELINT requirements (validated by the JCS) or DIA) are much more difficult to justify in view of the growing productivity of the KH materials. Individual service requirements for ELINT further complicate the requirements confusion. Most observers reach the conclusion that duplication and marginally productive efforts are prevalent.

The ELINT collection activities show a huge growth, most of it in the NRO. There has been no indication of cutbacks elsewhere or has there been any real, hard-nosed look at the utility of all the ELINT programs, whether within the NRO, the CIA or the services.
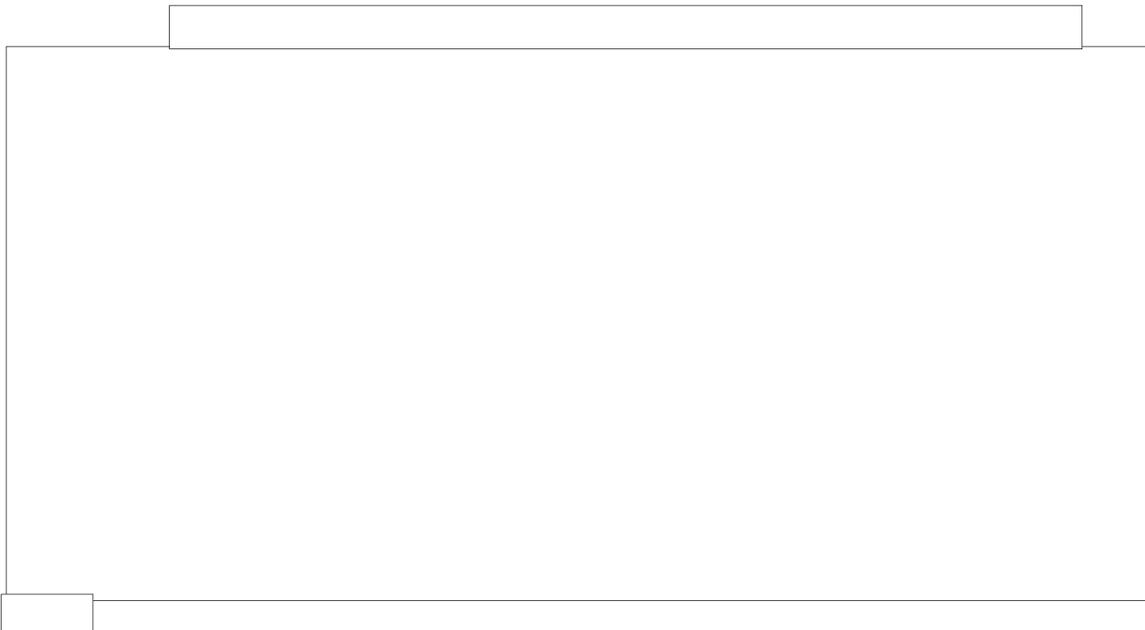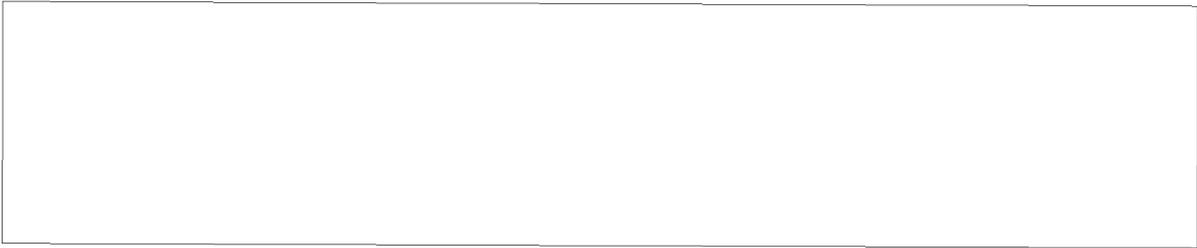
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COMINT requirements are also not clear, generating uncomfortable feelings that the area is not well controlled or managed. The difficulty in identifying the need for the _____ is an example. The national agency and the JCS did not have identical aims nor identical understandings.

The large number of weather reconnaissance flights appear excessive. Attempts to find the justification for them end up in statements of requirements and validations by various agencies, agencies not responsible for funding or managing the acquisition process. Weather reconnaissance is typical of other areas. The requirements are generated by users who have no programming or operating responsibility, are validated by a higher echelon of users or managers and finally are usually satisfied by a third party whose measure of success is frequently how large a program he manages.

To make matters more complicated, many of the users who write specific collection requirements (and the validators as well) do not have knowledge of KH capabilities. They specify non-satellite collectors although the need is already being satisfied by KH material.

Mapping, charting and geodesy is another illustration of the loose links between the requirement writer, the validator, and the collector. It also illustrates the duplication possible when users, validators, and collectors do not know about KH capabilities.

Attempts by knowledgeable observers to question the requirements always reach a blind end. If the requirements are validated by the JCS, or by the DIA, the search by persons in the services is ended since these requirements come from agencies at a higher organizational level than the services. If the requirements are generated by the national agencies, no one is in a position to question them. Sometimes the requirements are generated by the user who is also the validator and finally the system developer. The rationale for this type of requirement is most difficult to discover.

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A recent example in the mapping charting and geodesy area is our recent attempt to find whether the requirement for the SI camera was worth $90M. It had been justified at a $30M level. The requirement was based on the need for large scale maps, the scale desired being 1/50,000. It was clear that these maps were necessary. To make these maps, good detail is necessary. The KH-9 panoramic camera could furnish all the detail - in fact, it can furnish the detail for the 1/25,000 maps they prepare. The panoramic camera would not give high metric accuracy, however, but the requirement for high metric accuracy could not be pinned down. Conversations with knowledgeable observers indicate they are skeptical whether the high metric accuracy made possible by the 12" SI camera is necessary. Further, the issue is not confined to mapping projects since if we need to improve accuracy of artillery fire, tactical air strike and ballistic missiles by means other than maps (always subject to human error) we should be working on these alternatives.

Human intelligence, or HUMINT is another area where observers have stated our efforts are ineffective and duplicative. The CIA has a large staff and is doing a fairly creditable job according to these observers. A few service organizations also produce intelligence, however the bulk of them are not productive. They send out questionnaires to Government laboratories and some commercial organizations requesting them to state what information concerning foreign technology is needed. The scientists fill out the form and do not receive any feedback until the next year when new requests for desired information are sent out. The reasons for the failure of the system are known, however the remedy is difficult.

Clear Sky,

Persons with more objectivity than the DIA panel (who are proponents) should look at these efforts and the Vela Program.

Intelligence production, including the Intelligence
Data Handling System is larger than $100M in the Air Force
alone and may be approaching, or even exceeding, one
half billion dollars among all Government agencies. The
requirements and the efforts appear duplicative. Attempts
to reduce them always encounter the understandable
desire for each organization to perform its own intelligence
production. We should permit a certain amount of this,
but economies by concerted effort appear possible and
necessary.

Scientific and technical intelligence may not be
as confused as other areas but there are duplicative
efforts which could stand examination.

There have been several attempts by groups at
high level to bring order to what may be a chaotic
situation. They have not been effective because they did
not attempt to probe deep enough. Instead they attempted
to remedy the situation by management adjustments. Manage-
ment changes can help, but not too much. In fact, manage-
ment changes may boomerang if one believes Parkinson, or
Murphy, or whatever author claims for himself the discovery
of the inexorable process of bureaucracy.

What can we do? First we should not jump to
conclusions without facts. So we must gather facts.

First we should plot the ten year cost and
manpower growth of each of the elements in the CCP, CIP,
NRO and other agencies. We should break these down into
the various types of collection, processing, dissemination
and usages. The charting of the elements should show
whether they are managed by the Army, Navy, Air Force, NSA,
DIA, NRO, CIA or other agencies. Another chart should
show how the costs are distributed according to the source
of the requirement. Another should break the costs versus
year plot by element according to the validator.

After this information is gathered, knowledgeable
experts should be asked to investigate intelligence require-
ments, validation systems to determine the utility, possible
duplication and cost-effectiveness of all the activity. The

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experts should be assembled in groups. A group of ELINT
experts could consist of persons like Professor Rambo,
Stanford University, Dr. Fubini, consultant, or Mr.
Brown of PSAC. COMINT experts could be men like Dr.
Sheingold, Dr. Lauterdale, Mr. Frank Lehan and Dr. Fletcher,
President, University of Utah. Photo experts could be
Dr. McDonald, Dr. B. Billings, Mr. Katz of Rand, and Dr.
Augenstein of Rand.

HUMINT and scientific and technical intelligence
experts could be assembled from various sources. Dr.
Zirkind of Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn, Dr. Koslov
and some members of the Library of Congress are candidates.

Intelligence production experts could be assembled
from several sources. Dr. Ruth Davis of the Department
of Health, Education and Welfare, could recommend experts.

Before the groups are called or assembled, we
should carefully prepare material and an agenda. We
should organize an overall group to monitor the entire
exercise. They could call together several panels of
experts for each individual area in intelligence collection,
processing, dissemination and utilization.

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