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~~187~~ NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

THE NRO STAFF

August 2, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. McLucas

Dr. McLucas has seen.
WLS

SUBJECT: UN Activities of Interest to the NRO

As you are aware we maintain liaison with OSD (ISA) and State on matters of interest to the NRO relating to issues before the Committee on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COSPAR).

Historically, mainly to protect various interests, there has been a tacit policy of "gentle obstructionism" whereby the Soviets and the U.S. have stalemated attempts to bring to the General Assembly through the COSPAR such issues as definition of outer space and marking of spacecraft for liability purposes. This tacit policy has been in the best interest of the NRO in helping to protect our reconnaissance effort (and the Soviet's) from spotlighting and third country challenge.

It appears now that a general Liability Convention is near. Negotiations on the Liability Convention have figuratively tied up the COSPAR over the past several years. With this Convention out of the way, there is expected to be activity which will focus on several issues which bear on our operations. A resolution has been passed which would lead to examining means of identifying and registering space vehicles; looking at the legal and ethical parameters of earth resources satellites; and defining the boundaries of outer space.

We are interested in these issues because of their potential effect on the maintenance of the philosophy of legality and peacefulness of satellite reconnaissance operations.

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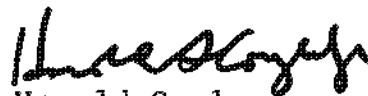
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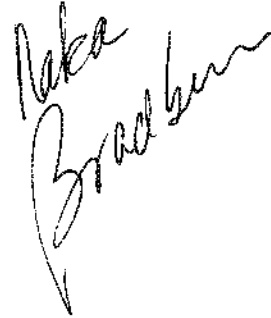
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Accordingly, we have invited Mr. Herb Reis, the principal State negotiator on space law to meet with us sometime in August to discuss these issues and their potential impact on the NRO. We will also take this opportunity to further acquaint him with the NRO environment.

This memorandum is for your information only.



Harold Coyle
Major, USAF



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