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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

April 6, 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY,
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT: Manned Orbiting Laboratory

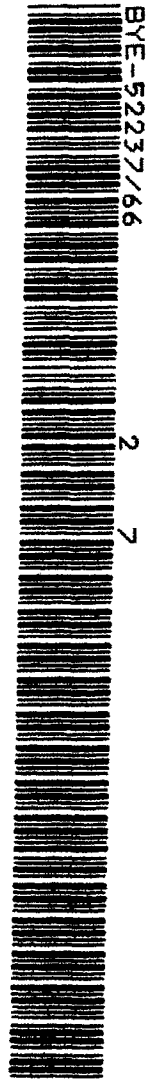
This is in reply to your memorandum of February 23, 1966
(BYE-43009-66) on the same subject.

Although an experiments program such as the one to which you refer was studied in the earliest days of MOL, it was not approved. Consequently, this effort, which included such experiments as pointing, tracking, and the assembly in space of large antennas, has not been continued as a part of the MOL program.

The only approved and funded mission of the MOL program is that of very high resolution optical photographic reconnaissance in support of National Reconnaissance Program objectives. All photographic and SIGINT reconnaissance tasks in the MOL program are being conducted by the NRO.

Two additional missions are presently being studied, but neither of these has yet been approved. These missions are sea surveillance and a specific SIGINT task in which it appears possible that man's contribution may be significant. The strict criteria that there be a reasonable expectation that man can significantly contribute to the mission and that the potential value of the mission be sufficiently high to justify the cost of both development and implementation will, of course, be applied in the consideration of any additional missions.

As you are probably aware, the NRO staff as well as the field activities on the West Coast include representatives of the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, NSA and other government agencies. However, all of these personnel are assigned to specific positions and retain no formal connections with the organizations from which they originate except for administrative and personnel matters.



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All of the aspects of the approved MOL program in which you have expressed an interest fall in the area of NRO responsibility. If you desire to assign additional Army officers to the NRO under the conditions which apply, as described above, I would be pleased to explore further specific positions which may be open.

Alexander H. Flax

Alexander H. Flax
Director
National Reconnaissance Office

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Sen. A. C. ...