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THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

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Authority: EO 13526  
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS  
Date:

JUL 20 2010

Honorable James C. Fletcher  
Administrator, National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration  
Washington, D. C. 20546

Dear Jim:

(U) This is in reference to your March 18, 1975 letter on GEOS-C,  
and SEASAT.

(S) I am pleased that we have been able to work out an equitable  
agreement on GEOS-C and that the launch of this space experiment  
need not be delayed. The document, "Mission Operation, Data Acquisi-  
tion and Data Distribution Plan for the GEOS-C Program", defines a  
satisfactory approach by which NASA can provide reasonable protection  
of militarily significant data against foreign exploitation.

(U) We agree to your suggestion that an action group be set up to  
resolve the SEASAT problem. Mr. J. W. Plummer, Under Secretary of  
the Air Force, will be the DoD lead member with assistance from  
Mr. John Walsh of Dr. Currie's staff.

Sincerely,

Signed  
WILLIAM P. CLEMENTS JR.

*Sec Def Cont No X0952*

*Doc 1*

DepSecDef

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DIRECTOR OF DEFENSE RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

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- Apr 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: NASA SEASAT and GEOS-C Space Experiments -- ACTION  
MEMORANDUM (U)

(S) On 4 March 1975 you advised Dr. Fletcher that the radar altimeter data from the NASA experimental oceanographic satellite GEOS-C had military importance and should be encrypted. However, as an alternative to encryption, it was stated that limiting the collection of data over certain specified ocean areas would be acceptable to DoD. You also requested that the GEOS-C launch, now scheduled for 12 April 1975, be delayed until this matter is resolved, and that altimeter data from the follow-on ocean dynamics experiment, SEASAT, scheduled for 1978 launch, be encrypted.

(S) Dr. Fletcher, in his 18 March 1975 reply, did not agree to any of the above requests. He did express a desire to meet with the Secretary of Defense on GEOS-C and to establish a high level action group to negotiate an agreement on the SEASAT issue.

(S) My staff has now worked out an agreement with NASA on handling GEOS-C data, which I outlined to you last Thursday and which I believe is equitable and adequately protects DoD interests. Dr. Low, speaking for NASA, finds the agreement acceptable. My staff has discussed the agreement with the JCS staff and received no substantive objections. I spoke with Secretary Schlesinger last Friday about this matter and he agrees that this approach is the proper one.

(S) The key points in the agreement are summarized as follows:

- o GEOS-C data release, rather than data collection, is restricted in militarily significant areas--defined as ocean areas that are between 2,000 n.mi. and 5,000 n.mi. range from U.S. missile sites.
- o In this annulus area (between 2,000 n.mi. and 5,000 n.mi.) data release will generally be limited to 5° (300 n.mi.) ground track separation.
- o A determined effort will be made by NASA to satisfy French, Australian, and Canadian investigator's needs by providing data outside the annulus or along the 5° ground tracks.

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- o Each investigator, domestic or foreign, will be provided only the data actually required for the specific investigation.
- o NASA will maintain a log of all data distributed, and re-release of such data is prohibited.
- o Data transmission in the mid-Atlantic will be accomplished only through a satellite-to-satellite link to prevent French telemetry stations from acquiring data.

(U) The specific agreement is attached. A meeting between SecDef and Dr. Fletcher does not appear to be necessary.

(S) In regard to the high level action group suggested by Dr. Fletcher to resolve our differences on the SEASAT problem, I suggest that Jim Plummer be the lead DoD member, with John Walsh of my staff also participating. Jim Plummer is now engaged with NASA in working out agreements regarding their earth resources imaging satellites (LANDSAT, ne ERTS); and SEASAT, with its imaging radar as well as its radar altimeter, should be considered in such agreements.

(U) I also recommend that you sign the attached letter to Dr. Fletcher, indicating DoD concurrence on the GEOS-C agreement and naming Jim Plummer as the lead DoD member to resolve with NASA the SEASAT problem.

Malcolm R. Currie

Attachments

Prepared by RSCOOPER, X77825

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DIRECTOR OF DEFENSE RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE UNDER SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE

SUBJECT: SEASAT

~~(S)~~ Dr. Fletcher, in his letter to the Secretary of Defense dated 18 March 1975, suggested that an action group be set up to examine alternatives to encrypting SEASAT radar altimetry data. SEASAT, as now planned, also has a coherent imaging radar experiment aboard which may pose additional special problems to DoD. In view of the fact that you are now working out an agreement with NASA on LANDSAT, I have recommended to the Deputy Secretary of Defense that you be the DoD focal point for SEASAT coordination with the NASA group proposed by Dr. Fletcher as well. You should rely on John Walsh and Bob Cooper of my staff to help you in the SEASAT negotiations. Dr. Fletcher has taken steps to hold open program options on SEASAT for a short time while these issues are negotiated. Available program alternatives which would be responsive to our concerns need to be examined rather quickly if we are to avoid impacting SEASAT unnecessarily.

(U) Attached for your information are copies of Dr. Fletcher's 18 March 1975 letter, the reply which I have proposed for Deputy Secretary of Defense signature, and the agreement which we have reached with NASA on GEOS-C data distribution.

s/ Malcolm R. Currie

Malcolm R. Currie

Attachments

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