

January 15, 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Reconnaissance Aircraft

In response to your memorandum of November 24, 1962, a comprehensive study of the USAF requirement for a second reconnaissance system to supplement currently programmed intelligence collection resources has been undertaken by a group under my direction.

It was apparent at the outset of this study that the A-12 aircraft currently being procured for the Central Intelligence Agency would figure prominently in our deliberations. It also rapidly became apparent that this aircraft and its conceivable derivatives would not fulfill the complete Strategic Air Command requirement for a reconnaissance aircraft for the post-1970 period. The study effort therefore evolved into a two phase approach:

- a. To determine the most effective way to use the technology already developed for the A-12 program;
- b. To define the total USAF requirement for a useful Strategic Reconnaissance Aircraft.

In pursuing the first goal, several design, development, scheduling and cost exercises were conducted to explore the potential of various versions of the A-12 in performing the Strategic Reconnaissance mission. These exercises covered the basic A-12 without modification, a two-man 140,000 lb. maximum growth version of the aircraft and four designs lying in between these two extremes.

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I am submitting herewith a preliminary program plan for an R-12 design that represents, in my opinion, a logical derivative of the A-12 for the job in question.

This program plan describes an air vehicle having the basic A-12 configuration with the addition of a second crew member, provisions for increased fuel, increased structural strength, and increased payload to permit incorporation of multiple sensors and penetration aids. It represents a solution in the direction of the maximum growth of the A-12 design.

The plan is paced by the J-58 engine schedule and is based on a January 1963 go ahead for a six prototype test aircraft program. Delivery of the first prototype R-12 is proposed for July 1964. It is contemplated that, upon receipt of go ahead, a 90-day program definition phase would be entered during which detailed specifications and a partial mockup of the air vehicle would be accomplished. Concurrently, materiel orders for long lead time items would be placed for the test aircraft. Additionally, a limited competition in the sensor area would be conducted. Subsequent to this 90-day definition phase, a detailed development and production plan including firm cost estimates would be prepared.

Cost of the six test aircraft program is initially being estimated at approximately (b)(1)1.5c of which (b)(1)1.5c would be required in FY '63 and (b)(1)1.5c in FY '64. This estimate includes design, development, test and support effort necessary to attain a proper operational weapon system status. An additional option is available to provide the six test aircraft four months earlier at an additional FY 1963-64 cost of approximately (b)(1)1.5c

For planning purposes, production schedules and estimated costs for a 25 aircraft program and a 50 aircraft program are also included in the plan. The FY costs are included on an incrementally funded basis. Full funding estimates will be provided the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) separately. To maintain the proposed 1966 operational date, funds must be committed to certain long lead time items in

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the third quarter FY 1964 although production go ahead would not be required until the start of FY 1965. There is also an option to accelerate the operational availability of the 25 aircraft by five months with an increase in FY 1964 costs of approximately (b)(1)1.5c

Management aspects of the proposed program have been studied in some detail, particularly regarding the program interface with the CIA. The results of these studies will be forwarded to you separately.

A preliminary documentation of the USAF Phase II requirement is in the final stages of preparation. This document will establish the overall strategic reconnaissance requirement and will relate this requirement to forecast technology.

Parametric studies and analyses of the Phase II requirement will be conducted over the next several months. I anticipate that the results of these studies will be available for consideration prior to any commitment of funds beyond the six prototype Phase I aircraft.

*signed*

Joseph V. Charyk

Encl.

Preliminary program plan

cc: Depy SecDef

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