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3.3(h)(2)

6.2(d)

SECRET

ORD 2957-74

9 July 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Contractor Site Visit, [redacted]

1. In general terms, the overall program is progressing as planned, within the limitation of current facilities and personnel. However, it was mutually agreed that the training activities should be accelerated. Obstacles to increased training activity are weather factors and limited commuting access to San Clemente Island. Additional training sites being investigated include the Naval Missile Center, Point Mugu; Anacapa Island National Monument (Department of Interior); private facilities in the Ventura County coastal region; and [redacted] In the interim period, prior to the acquisition of additional facilities, [redacted] will attempt to modify procedures so as to best utilize limited time and favorable weather conditions at San Clemente. Such procedures will include simultaneous boat transport of several birds with release of specific individuals for flights to target site at distances appropriate to their particular phase in the training program. Other methods of enhancing the utilization of facilities, favorable weather, and on-site personnel will be investigated.

2. Additional observations and subjects discussed during this visit included:

a. [redacted] has recently acquired a new bird housing facility in the [redacted] which includes five separate buildings with surrounding isolated terrain areas in which training for land operational scenarios may be accomplished. This

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new facility was inspected by the California Fish and Game Service representative who indicated that it was probably the best designed facility for care and housing of birds of prey in the country. Although the acquisition of this new facility was not considered at the time of contract negotiations, it will considerably enhance the research program.

b. [redacted] was contacted in regard to delineation of the work to be accomplished with the $7.5K additional funding provided by the partial return of funds from SOD which were to be utilized in support of the "summer cruise" operation. In spite of the 30 June deadline, [redacted] indicated that he would be able to modify the contract so as to incorporate the newly available funds into the R&D program.

c. Unfortunately the raven that has progressed to the six mile point in the training program was attacked by other birds and lost to the program. In spite of prolonged search on land and by boat, the bird could not be located after the attack. Such events are indeed disheartening but must be accepted as a calculated risk when dealing with living vehicles, and also accentuate the need for sufficient back-up birds. We do have an ample bird inventory which will soon be supplemented by the addition of three Peale Falcons and perhaps others, depending upon negotiations that are currently underway. However, bird availability does not negate the necessity for means of tracking the bird in flight over the twelve mile course. The Navy boat which was to be utilized at midpoint in the flight path was not delivered until last week, approximately two months after the promised delivery date. Utilization of a light beacon during the daylight hours does not seem feasible. [redacted] of OT/ORD is taking required action to utilize modified radar (transponder) equipment for bird tracking. As a supplement, [redacted] of LSR/ORD will attempt to assemble a simple radio beacon system, transportable by the bird and which will transmit over the 12 mile course.

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d. [redacted] has obtained a group of "band tail" pigeons which are very strong flyers and quite different from the domesticated variety. He has tested them with a 50 gram package and it appears that they have the capability for transport. In the near future [redacted] will evaluate these birds in terms of training and other factors required for a reliable vehicle. If these birds prove to be satisfactory many of our procurement and bird security problems would be eliminated.

e. Considering the fact that the use of birds for reconnaissance and emplacement vehicles has far greater operational application than for use against the SA-5 radar in the TACANA project, [redacted] is making some short film clips to demonstrate the feasibility and bird capability for meeting a variety of other operational requirements.

f. The hawks have completed training for the land based penetration project. During the next month an evaluation of this capability will be made utilizing a [redacted] and perhaps other denied areas, as covert photoreconnaissance targets.

3. As mentioned previously, a reasonable degree of program reliability will require a fairly large inventory of birds in various stages of training and maximum use of training time and facilities. This will necessitate the addition of one and perhaps two additional [redacted] personnel assigned to the program, which of course will proportionately increase the program funding support. As soon as definitive information is obtained regarding facility location and personnel requirements [redacted] will incorporate this information into the follow-on proposal.

[redacted]

LSR/ORD/DD/S&T

Distribution:
Original - Circ., LSR File
1 - OT/ORD [redacted]
1 - WCPO ([redacted]
1 - LSR Chrono
1 - ORD Chrono

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