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ORD-1102-76

5 MAY 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Barry D. Kelly, NIO/SA

SUBJECT: TACANA/TCT

1. Based on a detailed review of the history, progress, and current status of the TACANA/TCT R&D program, it is the firm opinion of ORD that some changes in the program direction and scheduling should be put into effect at this time. As outlined below, we believe it is not practical to plan for operational use this fall.

2. A number of problems have been encountered in the course of the program, the impact of which causes a projected delay in the completion. In order to attempt to reduce the full impact of this delay, it is planned that the work scheduled for the [redacted] area be deleted from the program. In using this approach, it is planned that at the completion of the Oklahoma training phase, all program efforts will be transferred to the Washington, D.C., area. Specifically, it is planned to have a kit of no more than six birds housed in the East Building of the OTS complex. An additional group of up to 24 birds will be housed in a remote rented facility (location to be determined) in the Washington area. Both groups will be trained against simulated targets in this area, but in no event will they be permitted near [redacted] The kit of birds taken to the East Building will be brought into the area under [redacted] conditions to demonstrate the feasibility of coping with this operational requirement. This same kit will be trained for release by covert techniques such as "coat pockets," etc. The training of the other group of 24 birds is required to assure that many of the behavioral unknowns in this potential application will have been examined to some degree. When the birds are conditioned for the [redacted] demonstration, a notice will be provided to those interested parties that wish to witness the test.

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3. As some background explanation to provide you with some insight into delays incurred in the training, it should be pointed out that there were three major factors, all of which were unanticipated.

a. A number of birds contracted an illness.

b. High winds and tornado weather lasting over an extended period were encountered in Oklahoma.

c. Most important, it was determined upon analysis that the successful A-B-C flight demonstrations in California were due to the birds becoming acclimated to the terrain features rather than to the targets and thus it is felt that additional reinforcement is required to specifically train the birds to the target devices.

Item c is related to one of the reasons for moving to Oklahoma, an area in which the target location can be moved on a daily basis, whereas in California, because of the metropolitan area in which the work was being carried out, such relocation was considerably restricted.

4. The Office of Research and Development believes that although the goals of the program are still very difficult, significant program progress has been made so far. Based on these results, there is a reasonable probability of achieving the desired behavioral training for the denied area operation.

[redacted]

Donald L. Haas
Director of Research and Development

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