

Mr. FULTON. What budgetary circumstance would cause these unusual circumstances where it would not be assigned—a project would not be assigned to the Air Force?

Secretary HITCH. Well, sir, my own understanding would be that these unusual circumstances——

Mr. FULTON. I would rather have the official understanding, not your own.

Secretary HITCH. Yes, sir.

My understanding would be that these unusual circumstances would be connected with roles and missions and not with any budgetary consideration.

Mr. FULTON. So actually on this particular directive, then, you felt it did not apply to the Comptroller's Office or the budget, and you just took no position really one way or another. Isn't that just about it?

Secretary HITCH. No, sir, that is not quite it. I didn't say that it did not apply.

Mr. FULTON. Then will you tell us how it does apply? I am trying to determine how your office is connected.

Secretary HITCH. I felt that the primary responsibility here lay with the General Counsel who has been assigned responsibility by the Secretary for organizational changes.

This is clearly an organizational change. Among the offices of the Secretary of Defense it is the primary responsibility of the Director of Defense Research and Engineering. The interests of the Comptroller in this particular order were quite secondary.

Mr. FULTON. In order to know what the background was which your office was working with at the time it made its approval of this directive, did your office or any member of it know that General Lemnitzer, as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on March 2nd, 1961, just prior to this directive, had submitted a statement, and it was in opposition to the draft directive on the assignment of space development?

Secretary HITCH. No, sir; we did not know that, and our own concurrence was sent in on that same day, on March 2nd.

Mr. FULTON. What time did your office have to make the concurrence from the time you were first submitted the form of draft director?

Secretary HITCH. I can't give you that answer offhand, sir. I would be happy to provide the answer.

(The information reported is as follows:)

A preliminary version of a proposed DOD Directive pertaining to "space" referred for review under date of February 23, 1961, was received by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) on February 24, 1961, and the ASD (Comptroller) comments and recommendations thereon were submitted to the General Counsel by memorandum dated March 2, 1961 and delivered to the Office of the General Counsel on the evening of March 2, 1961.

Mr. FULTON. Was it important enough to check with you in the hospital to give you the opportunity to say "Hold it until I get back"?

Secretary HITCH. No, sir. Many things were checked with me, but this particular one was not.

Mr. FULTON. Do you think this is of high importance in the Department of Defense because it does change the structure of operation