

Comment

This recommendation is essentially a reiteration of a statement made in the 23d report by the Committee on Government Operations, titled "Missile and Space Ground Support Operations" (H.R. 1340). In commenting on that statement, we pointed out that the role of an executive agent in Government is not an unusual one and should not result in difficult challenges to his ability to make fair and impartial decisions in matters affecting his own organization. We reiterate our understanding that this arrangement was fully considered when the assignment of responsibilities was made in the organization of the national communications system. We believe that the national communications system planning and coordination efforts are proceeding in an orderly and effective manner under the present arrangement. The testimony of Mr. Horwitz and Mr. O'Connell in the recent committee hearings stress the very close cooperation and coordination that exist between the Office of the Executive Agent, NCS, and that of the Director of Telecommunications Management. Further, Mr. O'Connell in his testimony (p. 348 of the hearings) expressed the view that his office should not logically be the executive agent for the NCS, and that it is quite proper and most effective to have the Department of Defense as the executive agent. In view of the foregoing, no compelling need for a change from the present arrangements and relationships is seen.

NO. 13, DEFENSE MANAGEMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS

"The Secretary of Defense has delegated his administrative responsibilities as executive agent of the national communications system to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Administration. The Director of the Defense Communications Agency serves as general manager of the system and has, in addition to his responsibilities for managing the Government-wide system, the management of the defense communications system. From the standpoint of other Government members of the NCS, it is often difficult to tell which layer of authority is controlling, and what authority the executive agent or the general manager in the Department of Defense has over the civil agency head in matters of procurement affecting his own agency. Pending a redirection of responsibilities as recommended in 12 above, and to clarify relationships within the Department of Defense and between the Department and NCS members, the committee recommends that the Secretary of Defense redefine by written directive his responsibilities for telecommunications management, the several delegations of these responsibilities, and the procedures for dealing with other NCS members."

Comment

The basis for this recommendation is not clear, either from the hearings or from day-to-day experience. As far as we know, none of the NCS agencies have experienced difficulty in identifying the proper channels for NCS matters. Certainly, none have advised the NCS management of such difficulty.

The procedures and working relationships for the NCS are set down in an attachment to the August 21, 1963, Presidential memorandum establishing the NCS. This was addressed to the heads of all executive departments and agencies. DOD directives 5100.41 and 5110.1 make clear within the Department of Defense the delegation of functions therein which pertain to the NCS generally. The White House memorandum of March 26, 1964, makes clear to all major agencies of Government the designation of the Secretary of Defense as executive agent, NCS, to arrange with COMSAT for the procurement of satellite communications services for the NCS. It is believed these definitions are clear, but if questions develop the necessary further clarification will be given.

NO. 16.—SATELLITE POWER FOR THE FUTURE

"Future space systems for satellite communications such as the military tactical system and direct television or voice broadcasting to home or community receivers, and for other purposes, will require greatly increased electrical power supplies in the space segment. One of the most promising potentials for more powerful space systems is in the nuclear field. The Atomic Energy Commission in collaboration with NASA has invested large amounts in research and development for space nuclear power devices, both isotopic and reactor, but the using agencies have not defined requirements nor instigated sufficient exploratory programs to maintain progress in this field. The committee recommends that the matter of Government research and development in nuclear space power be