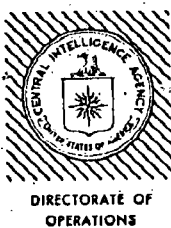


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Domestic Collection Division
Foreign Intelligence Information Report

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COUNTRY International

DCD REPORT NO. [Redacted]

SUBJECT MARISAT-MAROTS Cooperation in Technical Areas

DATE DISTR. 21 JUN 1976

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

SOURCE [Redacted]

1. During the last week of January 1976, representatives of the European Space Agency (ESA), and the European Conference of Post and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT) met with representatives of the Communications Satellite Corporation (COMSAT) in Paris to discuss the establishment of a structure through which MARISAT and MAROTS could be made technically compatible. The meeting was inspired by the realization that INMARSAT would not be ready for international operational use until COMSAT was scheduled to launch its third generation MARISAT satellite. The Tripartite Working Group agreed to hold a technical and operations conference in the US in mid-May 1976 to discuss the question in greater detail. In the intervening period, however, the West Europeans did not act in the same cooperative spirit, which suggests that they intend to be the dominant factor in future maritime communications satellites.
2. In mid-May 1976, a meeting was held in Washington, DC, between the technical representatives of COMSAT, the developers of MARISAT, and representatives of ESA and CEPT, the developers of MAROTS. The CEPT delegation was headed by A E Baker of the UK Post Office Services in his capacity as the Technical Sub Group Chairman of SMT, the body within CEPT responsible for the development of the MAROTS system. Others in the CEPT group included D G Pope, also of the UK Post Office Services, J A Audstad of Norway, A Dasilva Curriel of the Netherlands, and M Monnot of France.
3. It was evident from the outset of the meeting that the West Europeans were seeking to establish technical parameters for the future INMARSAT maritime communications satellite system prior to and outside of the structure of the International Conference on the Establishment of an International Maritime Satellite System (INMARSAT). It was clear from the meeting that the technical people were operating in parallel with the policy arm of the CEPT, and that this procedure did not represent a breakdown in communications within CEPT. It was equally clear that the UK was playing a major role in encouraging the separate development of a West European satellite system; it is anxious to see Hawker Siddley and Marconi play a significant role in the development of MAROTS and INMARSAT, in addition to its desire to see INMARSAT headquartered in London. No agreements were reached at the May meeting, nor did the parties agree to hold another meeting.

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- 4. Timing is of vital importance to both COMSAT and the West Europeans. The final agreement on INMARSAT is expected to be signed in September 1976, at which time a working group will be constituted to establish the technical parameters for the INMARSAT system. Should the working group decide that INMARSAT ought to proceed with the development of a separate satellite system, such a system could not be operational until 1985. A more likely conclusion of the working group would be to contract with either the MARISAT or MAROTS system to provide services for INMARSAT. COMSAT will have two maritime satellites in operation by the end of 1976, one over the Atlantic Ocean and one over the Pacific. These satellites can be expected to provide services through 1980, at which time a second generation MARISAT system would be launched and remain operational through 1985. MAROTS, on the other hand, will not have its Indian Ocean satellite in operation until 1987. COMSAT hoped, at best, to obtain European agreement to proceed with the development of the second generation maritime satellite system in cooperation with the West Europeans, or failing this, obtain their agreement to install MARISAT equipment in at least one of the MAROTS shore stations to permit joint utilization of the two systems. Such an agreement is likely to have a significant effect on the sale of shipboard terminals for commercial use.

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