

October 10, 1969

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Participants: Dr. Thomas Paine, Administrator, NASA
Mr. Arnold Frutkin, Assistant Administrator for
International Affairs, NASA
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger
Mr. William Watts

Place: Dr. Kissinger's office

Time and Date: October 10, 1969; 11:45 a. m.

Dr. Paine called in advance of his forthcoming trip to Europe for a general discussion with Dr. Kissinger on space activities and international space cooperation.

Kissinger started the discussion by saying he hoped there was no misunderstanding concerning his clearance role related to Astronaut travel. The purpose of this is to make sure that when senior NASA officials do go abroad, and particularly when they visit such countries as the Soviet Union, they check with Kissinger to get a briefing on key policy developments and general guidance.

Specifically, as concerns the Soviet Union, Kissinger noted we are not encouraging any high level travel there, with the idea we want the Soviets to understand we expect them to be more cooperative on Vietnam before we deal with them in other areas. The Soviets seem perfectly happy to have Vietnam continue as a bleeding sore for us, and we wish to bring home the idea that activities in other areas are inter-related with the Vietnam issue.

Paine noted he is going to Europe to visit England, Germany and France to undertake very preliminary discussions on areas of cooperation in space activities. There is much frustration in many quarters of Europe, as well as Japan, over the slowness of their advances and indeed their more noticeable failures. This, coupled with the astonishing American successes, has put a crimp on interest in investment in space activities.

NIXON - NSC AGENCY - #249 - "NASA - VOL I"

- 2 -

Paine said it was NASA's approach to try to get other countries to buy into our effort on a cooperative basis -- not necessarily with cash but with technical and other cooperation in kind (including the supplying of Astronauts). For example, in establishing our manned orbiting laboratory, the Japanese may build a giant telescope for placing in the laboratory -- something all scientists want.

Kissinger said this sounded precisely right and would be something we could dangle in front of the Soviets to whet their appetite and push them into being more cooperative in other areas.

The President, Kissinger stressed, is prepared to support this kind of cooperation fully. Among other things, such achievements help divert attention away from other problem areas.

Beyond this, Kissinger asked, how do you go about internationalizing the space program -- developing multiple country activities with all the impracticalities involved.

Paine suggested it might be necessary to come up with some brand new ways of thinking. Why not consider that we must, in effect, create a new nation in space, the price of entry to which would be to pay for the 17,000 mile per hour velocity increase in order to get there. This new nation could ultimately develop its own economic balance sheet. It would handle much TV broadcasting, most data processing exchange, communications and weather. It could set precedents for internationalizing problem solving here on Earth.

Returning to Paine's forthcoming European trip, Kissinger asked him to come in with a specific proposal upon his return for cooperative space ventures which would include foreign participation. Kissinger reiterated the President's strong interest and a desire to get something going by the first of the year. It is this kind of major achievement and peaceful goal that can help to unite the country and give its citizenry--particularly young people--something to get excited about and something which will spur them into genuinely creative efforts in other areas.

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