

Mr. HARDY. That is an entirely different matter. Nobody has ever suggested that NASA had a right to declassify something that the Department of Defense had classified. Of course, it doesn't.

Dr. SIMPSON. I am sorry; I took the question too literally.

I don't see how we can make an assessment, if I understood your question correctly, how can we say how we stand with reference to the Russians, that would not be related to classified information.

PUBLICATION CONFINED TO UNCLASSIFIED DATA

Mr. REID. Well, as I understand it, on September 1, 1962, NASA suspended release of all data on Soviet space activity, presumably as a result of a DOD decision that this information was to be restricted in its entirety.

Dr. SIMPSON. Yes, sir.

Mr. REID. And subsequently on April 19, 1963, there was further discussion, apparently with DOD, authorizing NASA to publish certain Russian launch data, and specifically Russian launches which, (a) have been announced by the Soviet Government, (b) have been made known by the Soviet Government to the U.N. registry, and (c) those launches cleared for releases as I understand it by Mr. Sylvester of the Department of Defense.

This seems to me to be a different policy than existed prior to that time. It would seem to me that there has to be a release by NASA of information on the Soviet space effort broader than this.

This is, as you said earlier, essentially elaborating the obvious. It is pretty clear from an exchange of letters that has occurred, and I refer to a letter of September 4, 1962, to Director Webb, from Congressman George Miller, then chairman of the House Committee on Science and Astronautics, and Senator Robert S. Kerr, chairman, Senate Aeronautical and Space Sciences Committee, and a subsequent reply to those gentlemen of September 5, 1962, by the Administrator, Mr. Webb.

It seems clear from this exchange that for a period—and it seems to me to be a continuing period—certain material was not released with regard to either successes or failures, and perhaps notably failures in certain aspects of the Soviet space effort.

I think what we are trying to determine here is—does not NASA have a clear responsibility, as the chairman has pointed out, under the statute, to release information relevant to Soviet space launches, both failures and successes, and most particularly those that do not have any precise military application.

Obviously some of the Soviet effort is supposedly peaceful in character.

Dr. SIMPSON. Yes, sir.

Mr. REID. And therefore how do you define what your present responsibility is to inform the American public with regard to Soviet space launches?

Dr. SIMPSON. We define that by publishing those data that are furnished to us on an unclassified basis.