

CLASSIFICATION NOT EVALUATED

Dr. DRYDEN. No; this is not my responsibility to evaluate the desirability. In fact, the policies on classification of such information I believe are carried out at the very highest levels of the Government.

Mr. REID. There, of course, is where personally I——

Dr. DRYDEN. The President himself has an advisory board on such matters.

Mr. REID. I know, I have been a little familiar with some of this.

Dr. DRYDEN. Yes.

Mr. REID. But it seems to me NASA has a responsibility that it must assume in relation to the Congress and the American people.

I think you have to give some kind of an evaluation as to whether the judgments of the intelligence community are valid. If you just abdicate that responsibility and say you will accept the judgment of the intelligence community in this Government of ours, the tendency always will be to resolve everything in favor of the intelligence side.

I sometimes think it is more important for the American people to know certain things than for them not to be told with some attendant risks, perhaps.

But what you are saying is that you have made no evaluation from the standpoint of your responsibility and that of Mr. Webb's and NASA, which as I understand it is a clear statutory——

Dr. DRYDEN. As to what should be released. We have no responsibility for collection, classification, or release of the intelligence information.

Mr. REID. My distinguished colleague, Mr. Porter Hardy, is just coming in, and he developed this concept I thought with considerable clarity at the last meeting, and it was my understanding of his comments that his interpretation of the statute that NASA did have a clear responsibility to evaluate for the Congress and the American people. If you take no responsibility for trying to analyze the——

Dr. DRYDEN. I said we do take that responsibility, but it must be done without the detailed release of intelligence information.

Mr. REID. But you have just indicated that this is so comprehensive in character that it rather drastically limits what you can do.

My query therefore is to the extent that it does limit your opportunity to evaluate this. Why can you not sit down with the intelligence community and evaluate their judgment as to whether the release of some of this information would really prejudice the intelligence collection? In the absence of your evaluation of that, it seems to me that——

Dr. DRYDEN. We have participated in such discussions in the cases where exceptions have been made.

Mr. REID. But you have just said that the net result, as I understand it, of all of this is that the American people are not informed of any Soviet space failures, except under two conditions. A, as the Soviets may announce it and B, as there may be special instances of——

Dr. DRYDEN. Of release through appropriate channels of government.

Mr. REID. Such as the release which occurred following the letter of September 5.

Dr. DRYDEN. Yes.