

Dr. Simpson was before us about the speed with which NASA——

Dr. DRYDEN. Yes. He is not familiar with the background of it. As a matter of fact, I was not personally involved. I happened to be in London at that time.

But I do know what went on, and have been involved in similar incidents including one that I mentioned that is happening today.

There was a meeting at the highest levels of government, and a discussion of the release of this information. I do not know the background of all the reasons that entered into this decision.

As you know, we had had some failures in our own program in the Ranger series. I suppose this is one element of the matter, I do not know. At any rate, this was considered at the highest level, and this particular form of release was chosen.

I think you and I know the letter was written one day and NASA's the next. I would prefer not to put that—this record is not open?

Mr. MOSS. This is an executive record.

Dr. DRYDEN. I will tell you what this is, that this is not a letter written in answer the next day. This is a method adopted for the release of that particular information.

In other cases another method may be chosen. The Secretary of State is doing it with reference to the U.N. registrations, so I am completely frank with the committee on this, I hope.

Mr. MEADER. Another thing that bothered me was the six episodes reported in the letter of September 5, 1962, which seemed to have quite a good deal of detail. For instance, No. 1 says:

October 10, 1960:

An unannounced attempt to send a probe to Mars failed before a parking orbit was achieved. Had this probe been successful it would have reached Mars in about 230 days.

And then the episode which apparently prompted the inquiry, No. 5 on the list:

August 25, 1962:

A third attempt to send a probe to Venus was made on this date. The payload was successfully placed into its satellite parking orbit, but apparently could not be ejected. Had this shot been successful, the probe would have arrived at Venus on or about December 7, 1962, ahead of the U.S. Mariner II. It appears that the normal flight time of 112 days for this was intentionally shortened to 104 days by sacrificing spacecraft weight. This launching attempt has not yet been announced by the Soviet Union.

It seems to have a great deal of detail in it.

Dr. DRYDEN. Yes. Much of that detail, however, is obvious. You can only shoot for Mars and Venus on certain dates within a few days really, a month at the most, and the window occurs about every 2 years. So that the purpose of these particular flights can be determined from the date at which they are launched.

The same way with the Moon. You have to launch at the Moon at certain times of the month. We can figure, ahead of time, what days are optimum for the Russians to send something to the Moon, knowing the location of their launch site and the location of the Moon. It can only occur at certain periods.

Now a manned space flight can happen at any time. You can't tell about that. So much of the detail that is apparently in there is obvious from the dates. Now some of the rest of it, I think, is pretty