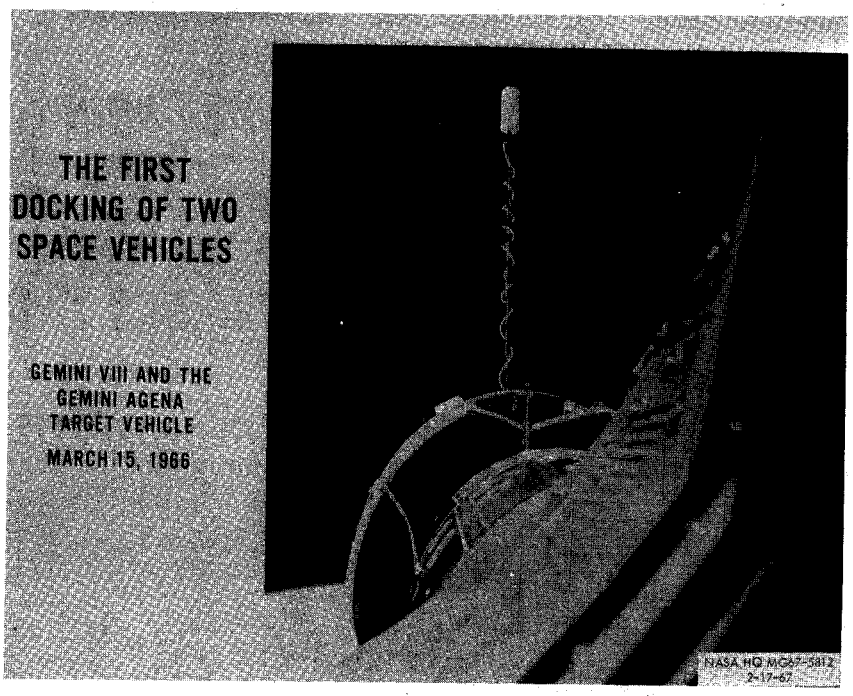

FIGURE 1

Open-ended mission concept

You will recall that the Gemini VIII flight was terminated early as a result of a short circuit in the wiring to a spacecraft thruster. Nevertheless, the primary mission objectives had been met and a philosophy which I described to the full committee on March 7 as the open ended mission concept continued to evolve with that mission. This concept will be implemented upon Apollo and Apollo Applications flights.

All future Apollo/Saturn missions will be open ended; that is, the duration of each mission and the operational sequences attempted will not be rigidly limited by the flight plan. This concept of open ended flight tests essentially says that we will continue a flight toward the ultimate mission goals so long as either there is no problem with the crew or the basic hardware or so long as we have sufficient expendable supplies for continued operations.

At various points during the mission the decision can be made to proceed to the next decision point or to terminate the mission, depending upon its current status. In this way, the accomplishments of each mission will not be limited to predetermined levels, and we will be able to take full advantage of success as it occurs. At the same time, we will have the option of terminating the mission at any intermediate decision point because of problems or operating limitations encountered.