

have less ability to respond to requests for assistance from other agencies than we had previously. It is the administrative operations appropriation that provides the funds necessary to support the technical and management competence in our laboratories and headquarters operations. In addition, these administrative operations funds provide for the operation of our unique facilities and equipment that we have established in our Government laboratories.

In those cases where industrial groups are interested in using certain of our facilities and capabilities, we would make such opportunities available if the work fits properly within our overall program and capabilities and if the resulting information is to be made generally available. Under these conditions, we would fund for the normal operating costs involved, but would require that the industry provide the special equipment and special out-of-pocket costs over and above those that are required to maintain our operating capability. In certain cases where industry has requested special tests in our facilities for their information and use, they have appropriately reimbursed the Government for normal costs incurred.

As we see it, our laboratories are a national resource available to assist other agencies as well as we can, while still carrying out the responsibilities with which we are charged. We believe that it is our responsibility to retain that capability as an effective, advancing, competent, highly motivated resource. We believe we must fund for it. We do not believe that it is appropriate to charge other agencies for operating costs incurred as we apply that resource to support these other agencies. We do not believe that a stable operating capability could be retained in our laboratories if we required reimbursement for every task performed for another agency and became a job shop operation. We believe the country's scientific and technological strength would suffer in this case.

In summary, there are several points I would like to reiterate:

1. NASA is a research and development agency depending primarily on its laboratories for the technical competence to permit it to effectively carry out the aeronautical and space programs with which it is charged.

2. NASA's laboratories are a national resource that has applied its skills to ever-changing problems and to ever-changing goals and has, therefore, retained and attracted competent, highly trained, highly motivated scientists, engineers, and management people. This competence can be applied in other program areas.

3. NASA is continuing to adjust its laboratory discipline and skill distribution and its research emphasis in recognition of the changing character of its programs.

4. Within its overall areas of responsibility and competence and within the limits of its resources available for carrying out its own programs, NASA is supporting other program needs and is prepared to provide more of that support if its resources, its current workload, and its program requirements permit.

5. NASA does not believe that laboratories established and developed over long periods and with great difficulty and at great expense should be converted to job shop operations, but should rather be retained and supported and adjusted to permit these laboratories to take on new missions and new assignments as the need for such work develops.