

APOLLO SOYUZ TEST PROJECT

PRIME CREW PRESS CONFERENCE

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Participants:

Brigadier General Thomas P. Stafford
Vance D. Brand
Donald K. Slayton
Dr. Glynn S. Lunney, Technical Director, ASTP

Public Affairs Officer: John E. Riley

PAO Good morning. We are pleased to present to you today the United States Crew for the Apollo-Soyuz Test Project. For the record for the transcript I'll introduce them. I'm sure you know them all. We also have Dr. Glynn Lunney, the technical Director for that project. At my right, Brigadier General Thomas P. Stafford, the Commander of the crew. Vance Brand, the Command Module Pilot, and Donald K. Slayton, the Docking Module Pilot. We'll start with some remarks from Dr. Lunney. Then each one of the crewmen will say a few words, then we'll go to Q&A. Glynn.

DR. LUNNEY Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I'm very pleased to be here this morning. I think it's a very symbolic, and indeed, very important that we're at this stage of our work in the Apollo-Soyuz Test Project. The naming of the crew of course, is always an exciting time for us in the Manned Space business and I think especially in this project and at this time it indicates the degree of commitment that has been made and the progress that has been made on the planning for this activity. It started, of course, about two years ago with some general discussions about where we might go in the future and about a year ago the work began to consider the possibility of a test mission, to test the techniques we would have for future rendezvous and docking systems. And in the last year considerable progress has been made both internally in the United States in both the planning and preparing the hardware for such a flight and in our dealings with the Russians in terms of the level of detail that we have gone to. We have moved from fairly general discussion about how things could be done to, in our last series of meetings, very, very detailed discussions about connectors, wire sizes, the lengths of cable, et cetera. We have completed the first testing that we have conducted between the two countries last month in the testing of the two-fifths scale docking mechanism. And that was done in Moscow. At Downey, California, the command service module is being prepared for test. The docking module is being prepared and I looked at the components of the docking system, the new docking system that we will be testing that we'll be testing during the mission. So, in deed, the progress is building up, and as a matter of fact, is beginning to accelerate. We have another meeting with the Soviet Delegation scheduled for March here at the Manned Spacecraft Center. And I think we looked forward to the work we have to do for the rest of the project. And, again this morning I'm pleased to be here. At this kind of introduction it is important and symbolic and I would like officially to offer my congratulations to the crew. I think it's going to be a lot of fun working on this project. I know I'm looking forward to it. Tom.

STAFFORD Thank you, Glynn. Well, it's always great to be named to a crew, and for myself, it'll be good to get away from some of the paper work for a while and get back to simulation and training. However, that will be a ways down the road. The mission, the Apollo-Soyuz Test Project, is probably going to be one of the difficult the manned space flight team has ever undertaken because it involves a different country, a different language, different operating techniques, and

it's just a slow and painstaking detail to work out all these efforts. But, it can certainly open the doors for future cooperation between the countries, can enhance our capabilities to do joint progress together, and I think it's a real challenge. Needless to say, I'm very happy with the two great individuals that I'll be flying with on the mission. Vance.

BRAND Thanks, Tom. Well, I'll really happy to get on this mission. I think as we look back years from now, it'll be regarded as a very historic thing. It's a follow through on having the doors open between the Soviet Union and the United States; and continuing with a cooperation and program of good will. I think there are a lot of technical benefits that are going to be interesting in looking at this new docking system and how you work the Soviet Space Program and the American Space Program together, and do something together. Now, I'm in Skylab at the moment and I think one of the best things that I can do to train for this will be to continue on with Skylab and keep gaining expertise in operating the command module and all that sort of thing. And at some time downstream transfer a hundred percent over to learning Russian and all the important things will have to be done in the year and a half or so before the mission. I think having worked with people from other governments in the past that I really look forward to this. It's going to be a lot of fun and one of the most interesting things that any of us in the office could be doing. So with that, I'll turn it over to Deke.

SLAYTON Well, I'd like to - I guess it will take me a little too long as an introduction - to explain how I feel about it so I'd just like to start in by acknowledging a couple people who are responsible for my being here, which I think is appropriate and I'd like to start in with Dr. Bill Douglas and Dr. Bob Gilruth, who about 12 years ago put their careers on the line to get me into space and didn't quite make it, and I didn't make it. But they've been with me ever since. And if I had no other reason to fly this mission, I'd want to fly it to vindicate their good judgement. And secondly, I'd like to thank Dr. Charles Berry, who with the strong help of Dr. Hal Mankin up at the Mayo Clinic, got me back on flying status, which again, it would have been impossible to fly this mission without those two gentlemen. I think Chuck has probably got the best record of any flight surgeon in the world because we've had three guys in this program with maladies that by the definition of the experts were irretrievable. And he's got two out of the three of us back into space. So that's a pretty good record. I don't think anybody can beat that one. And third, of course, and not last, I think on behalf of all the crew I'd like to thank Chris Kraft for putting us on the flight. I think Chris had a tougher decision in getting the crew on this flight than I ever had picking crews for flights because we've got 39 guys over there. All of who would have liked to have commanded this one and were available to do it, and all who would have liked to have flown it. And I know Chris had a tough decision to make. I think we're all very happy that he picked us to do the job and I know we're going to do it right. And of course, we need also to thank George Low, Dr. Fletcher, and Dale Myers for concurring in

Chris' decision. With those comments I guess we'll open up the questions.

PAO Arthur Hill.

QUERY I guess this is for Glynn or for whoever can answer. What have you heard from the Russians with regards to crews persons might be and I wonder if Vance can explain what he meant by saying he had worked with other governments before? I didn't follow that.

BRAND Ah, so far in the discussion, of course, the Russians have not named a crew for the flight. We did agree that about two years before the flight, a key, operational personnel, including astronauts and cosmonauts would probably need to be identified in order to help those people together to establish the kind of communications that we have grown to feel is necessary in order to conduct a good and a safe flight. We do not really have any indication of who the cosmonauts might be for this flight. But I expect that some time this year they will be named, if not, the prime and backup sense like we do as least as a group of candidates. Vance.

BRAND Okay, for my part of the question, from 1964 to 1966 I worked with the people from the German Government in southern France. We were testing F-104s and other airplanes down there at that time.

PAO Bill Cromie.

QUERY Tom Stafford. Tom have you been to Star City and and seen the kind of equipment they've got there and what - have you got any idea of what kind of training you'll be going to in the fall?

STAFFORD Well, I've been to Star City and flown in their simulators; both their mission simulator, their docking simulator. An initial training really can be termed as really indoctrination familiarization because as of today, in the summer we will not have any mockups or detailed procedure, but we can discuss systems in the same way that when the American astronauts that are available to go over to Star City late this fall. The real going to a step by step time-line will probably take place in the following year. But their mission simulator was somewhat similar to ours. Has a digital computer that drives it, instructor's console, and it's a high fidelity mockup in simulator.

QUERY Two questions for Deke. Number one, how is your Russian; and number two, what does the docking module pilot do?

SLAYTON Well, number 1, my Russian isn't very good. I studied a little bit through the summer when we had the SMEAT crew working on it. I guess I got 25 or 30 hours, but I think based on that brief experience, I need about ten times that much to get very proficient. I don't speak very good English to begin with. And secondly, the functions of the docking module pilot, since this is the first time there's been one, I guess I find it a little difficult to describe, and we could say you had your choice between being the 31st commander in the manned space flight or the first docking module pilot, I guess I'd have a tough time to tell you. But I think that if you find a job that's primarily associated with the systems on the docking module, environmental control system part of it and the docking part of it, and I assume it'll be my responsibility to be intimately

familiar with all the details of this to be able to handle all the malfunctions that might possibly occur, and certainly be the expert on those systems, sort of in the concept of the lunar module pilot in the lunar program. Certainly I will also have systems responsibilities on the command module as we've always had there. I would assume I'd probably be responsible for part of that transfer between two visits.

QUERY (Inaudible)

SLAYTON I think I'd have to defer to Tom on that subject. He's been studying this whole project for our director for the last year, and he's more familiar than I on what we might do there.

STAFFORD Well, as outlined, we have a series of dockings to test the total system. The one docking we'll start with for the two day's activities and at the end we're proposing the details have yet to be worked out. The series of dockings at that time are envisioned that everyone - each one of the three crewmembers would have a opportunity to do it, since it's like a test mission and a test project and you have different test pilots, you know, fly the aircraft to evaluate. And to go through all our modes to test the total system, we are going to need more than one if we have a few available on other items.

QUERY For Tom and anyone else that may want to answer. The pressures of space flight are pretty great as they are just in a flight, but on this one there are going to be some additional pressures, that of international politics. How do you think you're going to be able to handle that problem?

STAFFORD The word is diplomacy not politics, isn't it? Well, in our work in negotiations to this date the cooperation and hospitality from the Soviet Union has been outstanding. They have different meanings for different words like than we do. It's just a long and tedious painstaking effort. Certainly there is far more than, say, just a regular mission it would have as far as Apollo because it is looked at by both countries. In fact, people around the world as a means of cooperation between the countries, can be even further missions, further enhancement, or reducing of tension certainly. And this is all part of the problem.

QUERY Deke, I don't know about the rest of my colleagues, but I've got all the time you want to take to talk about your feelings about this mission.

SLAYTON Well, it's a little complex, you know, I could just say great and leave it at that, but I guess I was in this same relative position about 12 years ago in relation to a flight, and got dropped off of it about 11 years ago. And, of course, I guess I felt that I was as competent as anybody else to command every flight that has flown since. And I missed them all, so that's been a thorn, obviously. But on the other side of the coin, I was also equally qualified to hit Ted Freeman's goose and have C. C. Williams' bum airplane and be in spacecraft 12 in place of Grissom, Chaffee, or White. So on balance, I think I've been pretty fortunate. And I don't believe in looking back at the past too much except in relation to what benefit it will give me in the future. I think we've got an outstanding flight ahead of

us here; we've got a long ways to go to get ready for it. We've got some of the best guys you can imagine to work with here, and we've got somemore of them just like it across the parking lot that are going to be working with us on this flight that's going to be outstanding as far as I'm concerned. But I guess based on past experience, I'm not going to display any raucous enthusiasm until I hear somebody tell us that we're go for the first orbit. And at that time I'll probably express myself.

QUERY A couple of questions for whoever. Are the cosmonauts going to learn English and then, you know, if they do learn English and you learn your Russian, who is going to talk in what language? And then secondly, beside just rehearsing docking, what are you going to do in togetherness in the spacecraft?

STAFFORD Well, I've worked on most of these negotiations, Mary. The basic area we've worked on the premise today is that each country could speak in its own language, but the crewmen of the other country would have to understand. Now we are compiling a series of special terms for this mission, but it's just too early to have those put together. As far as the joint activities, we've agreed that when we're in the Soyuz we'll eat their food and vise versa. In fact, we'll even use their hygiene facilities.

QUERY I really don't know what you're going to do besides start.

STAFFORD There's a whole series of experiments that are being proposed both by the Soviets and ourselves, and these are being in a review status right now, and it's just too early to tell exactly what those will be.

QUERY (Inaudible) any one thing or a general thing you think you're going to do?

STAFFORD Well the project manager had a list of twenty five -

LUNNEY Yes, we're in a process of reviewing a whole set of candidate experiments that we might take on the flight, and we really have not made any decision or really any narrowing down of large lists. The Soviets will also have some ideas that we will discuss in March. And we probably won't have a much - we can't say very much to you that is definitive until we have those kind of discussions, both to finish our consideration of ours and then finish up our discussions with the Russians in March. So it's still going to take a couple of months for us to pin that down.

QUERY Tom just said that each crewmember will have a chance at docking. Does it mean that will dock and undock repeatedly? And the other part, after the joint mission is over I understand you intend to stay up for a while. What are you going to do?

STAFFORD Well, on the first question, to completely test our system for the active, passive, and the backup release mechanism that we have, requires a series of dockings, and if

the consumables are available and the mission timelines can be worked out, we're proposing a series of these. This has to be finalized yet in our negotiations. Now, as far as the total length of the mission, we are proposing - right now we have a baseline of six days, but we can extend it to twelve, and the difference would be the experiments. And these just haven't been defined yet.

QUERY How many transfers are you planning? Does everybody get a chance to go on to the other persons?

STAFFORD Da!

LUNNEY Let me say something about it too. The reason that we planned to do three because that was the best we could fit into this timeline. But in our last set of discussions, the Soviets proposed and agreed that they would operate their ship at a lower pressure. And that allowed us to save two hours out of every transfer, which now enables us to have a total of four round trip transfers, which really gives every man flying an opportunity to visit in the other ship.

QUERY Two questions, one for Tom. Tom, you're a real believer in Skylab, and don't you regret being transferred?

STAFFORD Sure I'm a believer in Skylab, but I have no regrets as far as having being assigned to this mission, believe me. And, but, I think I'll have been fortunate to be Deke's deputy to furnish support - administrative support on Skylab.

QUERY Question for Deke. Is this the first - well, wait a minute, outside of the crew and the astronaut office you out rank Tom. How do you feel about taking orders from him?

SLAYTON I see absolutely no problem with that at all. I think there's a lot of precedence in the country on this particular subject. Anytime you have a guy flying an airplane in the military service, he's a second lieutenant and you got the highest general in the Air Force. The commander is the commander. And there's no doubt in this flight who's going to be the commander. It's Tom Stafford. Now when we're on the ground working the other programs and the other problems, then obviously, we've got a normal and working relationship. But I see absolutely no problems at all and I'm responsible to Tom to be ready to fly this flight and he's responsible to me to see the crew's ready to go. (Laughter)

QUERY A question for Deke, and a delicate one. Deke, could you address yourself (noise) do you feel like Y. A. Tittle making a comeback?

SLAYTON Well, no. I've always been a slow starter, I guess. For some people life starts at 40 and for me it's going to be more like 50, but I guess I'd rather be a 50 year old rookie than a 50 year old hasbeen. That's one way to put it. Doesn't bother me at all. I'm in as good physical shape as about anybody you can find around here and I intend to stay that way.

BRAND Catch him running around the track all the time over here at the gym.

SLAYTON You never could catch me. (Laughter)

SPEAKER Could I pursue that, I was present at the original news conference in Washington when you seven described in some hideous detail, the physical exams you went through at the time and if that time a 50 year old was never even considered. What's changed in the space flight program that now a fifty year old man can make it without problems?

SLAYTON I don't think anything's changed all that much. I don't think it was ever all that big a deal to begin with, except that it was an unknown quantity in those days and I think we had to fly some flights to prove that it really wasn't. But I think these guys can correct me, but in my opinion the biggest physical work we've had in Apollo flights has been associated with the lunar surface operations. It's certainly not launch and reentry. And it's certainly no big deal here. We're talking about a shuttle here in the future that we anticipate being able to haul everybody up then as a standard passenger. And we certainly wouldn't expect to run everybody through a full nine yards of physical exams to any more than you would to go out and fly on a 747 from here to Tokyo or some place. I don't think I consider the physical part being all that big a deal.

PAO Barbara Van Der Meyden.

QUERY Do you have any expectancy of life TV during the whole program and if so, how much can you say yet?

LUNNEY We are planning to carry a television camera, of course, in our spacecraft as are the Soviets. And we've also made arrangements that with cable such that our television camera can be operated in the Soyuz and then remoted through our communication systems. So on the ground, in effect you will see television like you've seen from our command module, either from our command module or from in the docking module or be Soyuz spacecraft. The Soviets will have a reciprocal kind of system.

STAFFORD We also have the tape recorder on board.

SPEAKER Yes.

STAFFORD Skylab tape recorder so it will be long periods of time.

PAO Mark Cramer.

QUERY I understand lately there's been some question about whether or not observers from the U.S. team will be in the Russian Mission Control and vice versa. Have you any word on how that will be resolved?

LUNNEY Yes, I do. And there has been some discussion of it that I've read. The situation is that we are early in the game of deciding and discussing really how we would best establish and maintain good understanding between control centers. We have found in our programs that it is really vital that the people, both on the ground and in the air, understand each other very well. We've been looking for ways to establish that kind of understanding between the two control centers, and one method proposed is that we have a small staff of people in each others control center who would be available for consultation. Where you could bring the fellow and talk to him about something that might be going on. We have not yet agreed to that as the technique that we would use, but it is under active consideration and discussion.

PAO Go ahead, Wally.

QUERY I guess this is for General Stafford. Is there any reason to assume that Yeliseyev and Nikolayev stand a greater chance of being on the crew than any of the other cosmonauts.

STAFFORD I would hate to take a second guess though what's the selection choice of the Soviet Union. (Laughter)

LUNNEY It's difficult enough.

PAO Bill Cromie.

QUERY This one's to Deke. Deke do you feel that your age will be any problem as far as cardiovascular deconditioning during the flight is concerned and as far as adaptation of l-g after the flight is over?

SLAYTON I don't anticipate I'll have any different problems than anybody else and I'm - I would expect that there is probably no one - more is known about my cardiovascular system than anybody in the world. (Laughter)

PAO Darrel Mack.

QUERY Deke, do you consider yourself a rookie in this flight. You've been around so long, I don't know - I mean I don't, do you consider yourself one?

SLAYTON Oh, I guess I have to consider myself sort of a mature rookie. I don't know any other way to approach it. I guess you're a rookie in this business till you've flown.

PAO Mary Bubb.

QUERY Do any of you have any idea, first of all, whether the Russians might possibly consider allowing western newmen in for the launch seeing as how it's a cooperative effort; and secondly Glynn, now that you're really into negotiations for the first cooperative effort, has there been any clues that there will be further cooperative efforts beyond that.

LUNNEY Well, on the first one, we have not got to that point in the discussions. We have agreed that both sides would conduct their part of the public affairs in keeping with their own customs and traditions. So what we end up doing relative to television of the Soyuz launch really remains to be seen. I really can't predict for you what will happen there. You asked me a second question.

QUERY Whether or not now that you are in this discussion for cooperative efforts, whether you really see any definite clues for future things.

LUNNEY This actually, for those of you who may not know it, we started off these discussion working on future spacecraft. The project evolved out of the work that is - is still going on to make our future spacecraft compatible in a rendezvous and docking sense. For either the purpose of just enhancing somewhat the capability to rescue someone or for opening the door to future planned cooperative missions. This is the bedrock that we are working on two years ago. The project developed out of that work in a sense that it is a test of that work and really the first exercise of it.

What this will lead to in the future, I think really remains to be seen. For my part, I think it depends on the success that we have on this project. So our attitude is to keep our eyes focused on the work that we have to do to make this succeed while continuing the longer term negotiations on the designs of systems to be compatible in the future. I think the future will then take care of itself.

QUERY There's one point on Mary's question, I think one thing that the Soviets probably could not comprehend is one of those launch day hats she wears. (Laughter)

PAO Abby Brett.

QUERY Could you go into a little more detail about the major training you will have this summer and fall, and the for Vance Brand and for Tom Stafford, how much Russian have you had?

STAFFORD Well, again, we'll use the word familiarization because, Abby, we don't have the time-line finalized or our checklist, so you can't really have quote "joint training". We will have a familiarization for them, you know, for systems descriptions of our docking module and to look at some of the systems in the command module - just basically instruction and show how we operate over here so it's more familiarization in the same, so it's really not training for us, as such as it is, you know for them. The same way is true when the astronauts that are available to go to the Soviet Union late this fall. But after then, as late as 1974, it will be a real quote "joint training" as we have the complete checklist, the complete mockups and we can go through a complete sequence. And as far as Russian, we had a familiarization course that we somewhere between 40 and 50 hours. Vance.

BRAND Abby, I've had 30 lessons on the side, sort of as a hobby in the last few months. I know I used to speak a little bit of German. My wife's quite good at French.

PAO Nick Chriss.

QUERY Glynn, do you have any idea how many cosmonauts will be coming over this summer, and about how long they will remain here?

LUNNEY Right now we are in the process of laying out, that is the men in Tom Stafford's and Deke's directorate to plan their training. They're laying out a detailed daily plan and for the exercises we would go through this summer and we don't really have it laid out how long it would be. I anticipate though, that it would be on the order of a month or perhaps a little longer than that. And I also to answer your question, don't know how many cosmonauts would come, but we are expecting - we'd have to expect and plan for a number up to ten or so. Now, I can't tell you that there would be that many. There might be half that.

PAO Jay Russell.

QUERY For Glynn. Glynn, an earth orbital mission is nothing new, and we've flown several of them as have the Soviets. And I would anticipate over the next couple of years, there are going to be some people that tag this mission as just being another space spectacular and a little international diplomacy is at work. What is the real value of flying

another earth orbital mission? What are we going to get from this mission our dollar?

LUNNEY Well, let me again try to describe how it evolved. We are trying to develop for our future spacecraft, and eventually for space stations, docking systems, radio systems, techniques for crew transfer, that would be compatible enough so that ships from either country could visit the other countries' spaceship or spacecraft for either planned purposes or in the event that someday one needs to be rescued in that fashion. This project represents, then, a test of those ideas, those systems as to how well they're going to work in the real world. But probably in a larger sense, it's really a test of our ability to cooperate in what is really a fairly difficult exercise. I know that to the viewer, rendezvous and docking, it looks like a piece of cake. But to the men who have to build the machines to do it, to the men who have to fly it, it is still a difficult and demanding task. Ten years ago, less than that, when we flew Gemini 7/6, Tom Stafford on the flight, it was the first time that we had rendezvous and we put a tremendous effort into preparing for that flight, in studying the techniques and the men on the ground and in the air learning how to do it. And in a few short years we've come to the point where we are trying to put those techniques together with another country and another language. And, indeed, I think it's quite a large step over what we did on Gemini 7/6, which indeed at that time was and still is a very major step in spaceflight. Maybe Tom would like to comment some more on that, too, since he was and will be involved in both of those efforts.

STAFFORD Well, I want to go back to the Gemini 6 of the first rendezvous in space and what we had to revert back to the 7/6 mission and in the Apollo/Soyuz, it's the same thing as the first. Anytime it is the first of any step, it's difficult. The second is much easier and third and fourth and this is of a different step. One of the great benefits, I think, is come out of it after you see later on down the line is the docking mechanism and where they've taken the best ideas of both countries and both countries have got together and built a better mousetrap. This docking mechanism is definitely better than what we had on Apollo; it's better than what they have on Soyuz. So this alone is a benefit. It is going to be difficult to get all the operations and techniques out to do it. However, it certainly can lead to further missions and cooperation and reduce cost.

QUERY Tom, you've been in some very important missions before as far as getting to the Moon and so forth, do you consider this the climax of your career, or do you consider it as important or more important than the 7 and 6 and the Apollo missions that you flew?

STAFFORD Everytime you have a liftoff, that's the climax of your career, I'll tell you. But, no, each one is in a separate phasing and, as I say, I'm just very honored and happy that I can be on the mission. And it certainly is important as far as our total space effort just like each one of the one I've been on in the past.

QUERY Glynn, at what stage now is the docking module, and what is North American using in the way of plans of the Russian spacecraft hook up?

lunney Okay, let me answer the second part of that first. And I think it's important to understand this. The kind of work that we are engaged in is to try to agree on what in our program we would call interface type of agreements. And what that really means is, in the case the docking system, for example, the dimensions that are critical to having both mechanisms mate together, dimensions, loads, temperature, etc. We try to agree on those, which in effect, specify the kind of design you have. But then in each country, we build the hardware in our own way with our own techniques that we've developed ourselves, so that we are agreeing with the Soviets, in effect, on requirements on design. I'm talking about the docking systems. This is true of all the other systems. We agree on the requirements and then each in our own way with our own equipment and techniques the systems are built in their own country. We do not try to manufacture each others equipment. The docking module at this point is very far along in terms of the definition of its design. As a matter of fact, a week ago Tom Stafford and I and others were at North American holding what we call a critical design review, which is fairly late in the engineering release cycle, engineering release of the drawings that the docking module will be built from. And we found a very little problem with it. It's going very well, stayed on the schedule the whole time that we have layed out, and we're very pleased with it in that we think we are able to make it very rugged and very reliable, and also we are able to make it simple to operate, and I think we have a mockup which we have been building and it is at various stages of fidelity, but Tom was in the docking module mockup at Downey last week, and again, that seems to be coming along pretty well and indicates the progress that's being made on the docking module itself.

QUERY Deke, a while ago you thanked Dr. Berry and the administrative people on the program for their help through the years and for putting on the flight. Was there a time when you thought they were wrong, and you felt intuitively that regardless of the murmur, you could fly? Did you think they were wrong at one point?

SLAYTON Well, there wasn't a time I thought that. It was all the time. Wasn't ever any question in my mind that it was wrong from day one. And there wasn't any question in a lot of other peoples' minds either, but it took a little longer than I expected to prove it. Like ten years.

QUERY Question for the forgotten man. Vance, you're sitting between the two highest brass in the astronaut program, and on the flight you're going to be sitting in the same position. How do you get along with these two veterans?

BRAND Super. I have no complaints. We all get along fine. They're - I respect them a lot for their ability as pilots and as administrators, both.

QUERY Speak of them being brass, Deke and Tom, whenever you get accelerated training for this flight, who will sit in your positions while you're gone, or will you just do both jobs as chief of the crew and so forth.

SLAYTON I think, looking at the schedule at this point in time, we'll both do basically what we're doing right today, at least, for another year until we get through Skylab. We still have that as a number one program and number one priority, in my mind at least, to accomplish. And we have plenty of time to find a conclusion of Skylab and then drop off and go to work full time training for this mission. We'll be doing some work on it part time, obviously, in between. And at that point, of course, then somebody will have to pick up and do our jobs. But that's far enough off, so there's no imminent decision necessary.

QUERY Deke, because of the problems you've had, why have you stayed when many of the other astronauts have left? Why have you stayed with the program and why are you here now, even?

SLAYTON I'm here to fly. That's what they hired me for in 1959. I haven't done it yet, and I'm going to do it. And I expect to do a couple more after this one, as a matter of fact. I don't have anything else I'd rather be doing. I've had the best job in the world, I think, for the last 20 or 30 years I've been paid to fly, which is the thing I love the most. And as long as I can do it, I'm going to stick around and do it. And I guess when there reaches a point I can't do that, I may as well go play golf or something.

PAO Okay, thank you very much.

END OF TAPE

COMMUNIQUE ON RESULTS OF APOLLO-SOYUZ

TEST PROJECT MEETINGS

July 9-20, 1973

A meeting of Apollo-Soyuz Test Project specialists of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration was held at the Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center, Houston, Texas, U.S.A., July 9-20, 1973.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss technical matters, continue development of trajectories and flight plans, tentatively agree upon the scientific experiment program and familiarize cosmonauts assigned to the joint 1975 space mission with the design and operation of the Apollo spacecraft.

The project technical directors, the flight crews, the Mission Model and Operational Plans working group, and representatives of the Control and Guidance working group took part in the discussions.

A review of project milestones was completed by the technical directors, Prof. Konstantin D. Bushuyev for the U.S.S.R. and Dr. Glynn S. Lunney for the U.S. They reaffirmed that major milestones are on schedule.

The cosmonauts attended a series of lectures and demonstrations which provided them a basic understanding of the Apollo spacecraft and its systems, particularly life support and communications systems. They were briefed on the docking module, and they participated with the working groups in discussions on the crew activities plan for the mission.

Further progress was reported by the working groups on the details of the crew activities plan, control center operations, trajectories and other operational aspects of the joint mission.

Agreements reached in particular include:

- Familiarization of U.S. flight crews with Soyuz equipment will take place in November in the Soviet Union.

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* A preliminary schedule of crew training aims for cosmonaut training in the United States in April, 1974 and in February, 1975, and astronaut training in the Soviet Union in July, 1974 and in March, 1975. Duration of training sessions will be agreed upon after the astronaut familiarization visit to the U.S.S.R. The training plan is expected to be completed at that time, and all flight procedures are expected to be finalized by the end of 1974.

* The final selection of joint experiments will be in October, 1973.

* Reports will be exchanged on an assessment of the safety of the flight based upon tests performed in the course of manufacturing and checkout in preparation for the flight.

The U.S.S.R. side stated that the Moscow Center of Control of Manned Space Flight near Moscow, will be used by the U.S.S.R., and Cosmonaut Aleksey S. Yeliseyev will be the flight director for the Soviet Union.

On July 14, part of the Soviet delegation, including the heads of the delegation and the cosmonauts, toured the assembly and checkout facilities at the Rockwell International plant in Downey, California, where the work on ASTP is carried out.

The U.S. technical director and several of the working groups will attend meetings in the Soviet Union in October, 1973.

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