NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

PRESS CONFERENCE

FOR

ASTRONAUTS AND COSMONAUTS

10:00 A.M.,
Monday,
October 13, 1975

Auditorium 6026
400 Maryland Avenue
Washington, D.C.

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. DONNELLY: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. We are about to begin the press conference on the ASTP Good Will Mission, the United States leg. As you know, we have just completed a 2-week tour of the Soviet Union.

I would like first to introduce the principals. Then before we move into the press conference itself we will have a brief presentation by the Forest Service to the commanders of both crews.

On my far right, Valeriy Kubasov; Commander Aleksey Leonov; General Tom Stafford; Deke Slayton; Vance Brand. I would like to introduce my colleague on my left, Dr. Simonov, who is deputy chief of the press section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

I would like now to take this opportunity to introduce the deputy chief of the Forest Service, Mr. Max Peterson, who will make a presentation to both crews which will be accepted by Commanders, Leonov and Stafford. Tom and Aleksey, would you step up to the mike?

MR. PETERSON: The Forest Service men and women were extremely proud that we were able to provide the superior tree seeds that the astronauts presented to the cosmonauts on the Apollo Soyuz flight. Now we would like to make that symbolic gesture more personal by presenting to the astronauts and cosmonauts seeds that they may plant near their homes.

The purpose of exchanging these superior tree seeds and

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the special boxes that they are in is to point out that this primary renewable resource of trees is important throughout the world and that there is a worldwide effort to make forests more productive so they can meet the needs of tomorrow. These superior tree seeds will produce trees that are hardy, that are fast growing, of exceptional height and shape, and highly resistant to attacks of forest insects and diseases.

The boxes that these seeds were packaged in for exchange in space are themselves an important breakthrough in the use of wood. The top of this little box is made of walnut that has been specially treated so that it will not shrink or swell. It is highly resistant to decay and is a very superior use of a natural product. The bottom of this little box was made from discarded municipal waste from a city municipal waste system in Madison, Wisconsin. It was made by our laboratory there.

Now, in order that they may know more about these seeds we are going to present along with this, two books. One is, Knowing Your Trees, a publication of the American Forestry Association, which will contain pictures of the trees. Another book which is called, Seeds of Woody Plants in the United States, has pictures of the small seeds in it; so you may look at the seeds now and see what they will be like when they grow into trees.

If I may now then present the two boxes that have the trees. This one is for you and this for the cosmonauts that were with you. This one is for you, General Stafford, and your men.

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Thank you very much. It is my pleasure.

COMMANDER LEONOV: Thank you very much.

COMMANDER STAFFORD: Thank you so much.

COMMANDER LEONOV: Ladies and gentlemen, there was an author by the name of Chekov, as you may have heard. He said in one of his writings that if each man on earth planted at least one tree, can you imagine how beautiful our earth would be. In our country we have a wonderful tradition that whenever we have dignitaries or important people or people that we like come to our country, they are requested to plant a tree.

The American astronauts had an opportunity to plant each one of them four trees in our country. Right now we are given the opportunity to take some of these seeds with us back to the Soviet Union and to plant a whole orchard, just as Tom Stafford can plant the same thing in the United States. I want to invite you to visit this forest.

(Applause.)

MR. PETERSON: It is our hope that as these trees grow they may indicate a growing friendship between the two countries involved. Thank you.

QUESTION: Before you go, could you tell us what the seeds are and how long they will take to grow?

MR. PETERSON: There are six different seeds. They have been specially selected to grow in the hometown of each one. In other words, we checked the climate and we checked the elevation

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and so on. There are six different seeds: the Jeffrey Pine, the Jack Pine, the Yellow Birch, a Serbian Spruce, and a special BristleComb Pine that comes from the world's oldest living tree in California.

MR. DONNELLY: Ladies and gentlemen, there is a press release that provides additional details on the tree seed exchange. That information is available in the back of the newsroom for you. Thank you very much, Mr. Peterson.

Ladies and gentlemen, the format of this press conference will be as follows: We will ask Commander Leonov to begin with an opening statement, followed by a statement by Commander Stafford, after which we will proceed immediately to questions and answers. During the question and answer session I would ask that you observe the following guidelines: Please wait for the microphone. When the microphone reaches you, identify yourself and your affiliation before asking your question.

COMMANDER LEONOV: Ladies and gentlemen, in the past 3 years the crews of Soyuz and Apollo have been preparing for the first international space flight of the two spacecraft. In July this flight was completed.

During this flight we have carried out several scientific experiments, joint and autonomous. But the principal experiment that was carried out was the docking of our two spacecraft. Five scientific experiments were carried out jointly by both spacecraft. Right now I can tell you for a fact that the Apollo Soyuz Test

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Project has been completed with success. There is a lot of credit to be given for this success to the scientists of both the United States and the Soviet Union.

I can say for both crews that are sitting at this table at the present moment that we are extremely lucky to have been entrusted with the job of flying these two spacecraft and doing this job. I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to my colleagues, Tom Stafford, Deke Slayton, and Vance Brand, for having worked with us and cooperated with us so successfully in the 5 days that we worked together.

According to the agreements that we have we are supposed to begin working toward some future projects. First is the preparation for flight. Second, is the flight itself. Then, the visit of the American astronauts in the USSR after the flight. Fourth, is the visit of the Soviet cosmonauts in the United States. Right now, three of these points have been completed. Now we are completing the fourth one. There is no question but that we are very happy that the program was very successful. On the other hand, we feel a certain sadness because of the fact that we have to part with those colleagues and the friends which we have made in the preparation for this flight and that we have to complete it. But I am sure that our joint project, Soyuz Apollo, is only the beginning of our future cooperation in space.

Today I have a good opportunity to say with warmth to the American people that for 3 years in the Soviet Union and the

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United States, a lot of workers and scientists and engineers worked very hard to make our flight possible. Just now I can say that our joint flight or joint project was completed successfully. Therefore, I want to say thank you very much for your job.

COMMANDER STAFFORD: Aleksey has summarized a lot of our feelings. This is the first time we have been together with both crews for the American press. We feel that the entire mission was carried out very successfully as the result of a lot of hard work over a long period of time. We have just finished a great tour of the Soviet Union, our American crew and their families. We were very warmly greated every place we went in all the various parts of the Soviet Union. We are looking forward now to returning the hospitality and letting the cosmonauts and their families see some more of America than what they have seen before. So with that, I think we can proceed on to questioning.

MR. DONNELLY: Thank you, Tom. We will begin with the questions and answers now. I would like to remind you again to please identify yourself and your affiliation. We will take questions from the press only.

QUESTION: Are the families of Mr. Kubasov and General Leonov here? If so, would they stand up so that we can get a look at them?

MR. DONNELLY: They are not here.

QUESTION: But they will be on the tour with --

MR. DONNELLY: They will be on the tour. The families

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of both cosmonauts and the wives of the astronauts will be on the tour.

QUESTION: I wonder if any of you can say whether or not you have given serious thought to the next cooperative project you would like to do between the USSR and the USA?

MR. SLAYTON: I think we have all given thought to it. Personally, I can see a couple of future areas to work in. Of course, the Space Shuttle is the next thing we have going as far as NASA is concerned in this country. That is an obvious vehicle to continue doing operations with. But looking at it on the long haul it is my opinion that this planet is going to want to go to the planet Mars some day with a manned expedition. Again, it is my opinion that this is a natural for an international mission as opposed to any national type mission.

QUESTION: I guess this question is for all of you but especially for the commanders. We have heard a lot about the debriefings in each country. We have heard a lot about the good will tours. But did you ever have a chance to have a joint debriefing like the mission was?

COMMANDER STAFFORD: As of today we haven't had a -- I don't think so. Everything was carried out. There will be a meeting in Houston of all of the technicians and the managers in November. We have each written our reports and the reports are being exchanged.

MR. DONNELLY: Is it correct to say, Tom, that there will

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be a joint summary of the report issued?

COMMANDER STAFFORD: There will be a joint report issued, a summary debriefing report issued.

QUESTION: What advantages can a joint exploration of space by Soviet and American astronauts bring to both countries and maybe to the whole humanity?

MR. DONNELLY: Who do you want the question to?

QUESTION: Maybe to Leonov or Stafford.

COMMANDER LEONOV: In the last 15 years of manned space flights we have accumulated a considerable of experience in the launch, in the orientation and the control of the spacecraft in space. The same type of experience in the past 15 years has been accumulated in the United States. Each country conducted its work independently of each other. Therefore, I think that the very first step of cooperation between the two countries is an exchange of the experiences which both countries have accumulated. We have been doing this for quite a while even before the ASTP.

The second important step of this cooperation are the combined efforts of the scientists of both of our countries in the development of space systems. But of course it is known to all of us that this type of development, be it manned flights or unmanned flights, demands a considerable input of funds. It seems like it would be a shame and totally incorrect for both countries to run a parallel effort in trying to achieve the same goal.

Space exploration should be built in such a manner that

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the experiments in space be done at one time and would go to the benefit not only of the Soviet Union and the United States of America but to all of the people on Earth. I have pointed out three specific points in this case. However, on an independent basis, both countries have their own programs and unlimited field of exploration that they are conducting at the present time.

MR. DONNELLY: Tom, did you want to respond to that?

COMMANDER STAFFORD: Well, presently they are in effect, our agreements as far as biomedicine experiments in space; exchange of meteorological data; exchange of data on the environment; and prsently NASA is conducting meetings with the Soviet Academy of Science as far as future endeavors. So, Apollo Soyuz was only one of many efforts that we have going at present. Of course, it was the only manned effort.

QUESTION: Could you tell us in some detail about the scientific results of the joint flight?

MR. KUBASOV: As is known, during this flight we had five joint experiments. At this present stage the results of these five experiments are still in the process of being analyzed. The final analysis of these experiments is not going to be finished that soon. Apparently it is going to take approximately 1 year. However, already now we can tell that we are going to obtain some very important and interesting results from these experiments.

I can give a few examples. For example, the experiment on the artificial solar eclipse. To date, all of the scientists

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who are working with the results of this experiment are very happy with the results and actually are jumping for joy for some of the results that have come up. They are very happy about all of the results that we have brought with us, all of the data. If it was possible in the past to take a solar corna as the result of an eclipse, we have been able to increase the quality and the quantity by 15 times of what was done from Earth.

Also, we had some very interesting results with the multipurpose furnace, especially with the cartridges and ampules that were taken out in the Soyuz. The scientists are expecting to get very interesting results from that. Specifically, one example that semiconductor crystals in weightlessness grow in a certain direction much better and much faster than they do on Earth. This gives an indication to the effect that in the future we will be able to in space and in weightlessness, grow the type of crystals which are going to be far better and far more effective than those we are growing here on Earth.

These are just a few examples, but really, the final results and detailed information and data on all of these experiments is going to be given out in approximately 1 year. It is almost impossible to answer you in a couple of words as to the results and the data obtained from all of the experiments. I think that we will have an opportunity to talk on this subject quite a few times in the future.

QUESTION: For General Leonov, Mr. Slayton has just said

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that the Space Shuttle is the obvious American vehicle for a next joint space flight. What type of spacecraft might the Soviet Union have for such a joint mission, say in the early 1980's?

COMMANDER LEONOV: At the present time we see the possibility for unmanned spacecraft which would be examining and exploring the environmental control around the Earth. Also there is a program of manned space flights. The main one is the manned space station of the type of Salyut. We obtained very excellent and needed information from it, connected with exploration of Earth, of the Sun, of the Sun's system, the planetary system, and planets farther out.

Very recently some results have been brought back by Klimuk and Sevastianov from the Salyut. It will take probably more than a year to develop all of the data which we received from it. The Salyut space station has several excellent systems, among them a sun telescope, a star telescope. We will be continuing these flights.

QUESTION: For Commander Leonov: In response to an earlier question you spoke of the expense of parallel efforts between the Soviet Union and the United States in space exploration. Do you foresee an increasing pressure of cost to force more cooperation -- that either it is going to be a cooperative effort or a very diminished effort on the part of either or both countries?

COMMANDER LEONOV: My answer is this way. If, some time ago the Queen of Spain had not sponsored the journey of Columbus,

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we would not have had an opportunity to meet here in this hall with you. Science demands a considerable amount of expense from anybody who is engaged in it. Without that, we would not be able to do any of it.

As Dr. Fletcher stated in a speech to the Congress not too long ago, the industry has had an opportunity to profit by the developments which have been made in space; for example, cryogenics and various integrated circuits that were developed strictly for space flights. One thing can be said right now for sure. Whatever expense has been made in order to accomplish these flights has been brought back many many times by the profits and the returns which the industries in the countries received from these flights.

For example, we are now accustomed to the idea of space communications and communications between countries by virtue of space. This was something which was developed by scientists working for space. An estimate can be run on the amount of money that is being taken from that kind of a result. It will show to be far greater than the expense that went into the space effort.

QUESTION: Mr. Leonov, after receiving worldwide recognition and the relative openness of your mission compared to previous Soviet flights, such as coverage of launch, joint crew activities and splashdown, does your country plan to follow this practice on future Soviet flights?

COMMANDER LEONOV: This was my second flight. My first

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flight was on the Voskhod. The second one was on the Soyuz, as you know. Valeriy Kubasov has had two flights on the Soyuz. We compared notes on this subject. We found that due to the fact that everybody knew about it and it had worldwide publication, the amount of preparation and the type of preparation that we had for this last flight was considerably harder and longer and more difficult than for the previous flights.

This was caused not only by the country itself, it was the families, it was the journalists, the press in general who wanted to have all of the details about everything we did in the preparation for this flight. We actually had less time in order to prepare for this flight because of it.

If I were asked would you like to be shown the way you were before this last flight, I would say definitely not. I would much rather be shown and seen in general at the completion of this flight. This is just my opinion.

QUESTION: On the itinerary I notice an item for next Friday evening at 8:30 p.m.: arrive at Harrah's, Lake Tahoe -- no activities scheduled. I am wondering if the American astronauts have apprised the Soviet cosmonauts of the type of unscheduled activities they may encounter there and in short what you fellows propose to do at the gaming tables on Friday night.

MR. DONNELLY: Vance, do you want to handle that one?

MR. BRAND: You know, we are going to sample a lot of places in the United States. We are going to see a lot of different

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things, ways of life and local traditions and local forms of amusement. I think when we get out there the cosmonauts and us will have our choice. We can probably pick the gaming tables or we can pick something like horseback riding or fishing like Deke likes to do.

QUESTION: At 8:30 at night?

MR. BRAND: It is like everywhere else. A person can find whatever they are looking for. I guess it will be interesting to see if gambling appeals to any of us.

QUESTION: Could we get a response, if any, from General Leonov and Mr. Kubasov on the attitude toward the gaming tables and the unscheduled action that is likely to be encountered at Lake Tahoe on a Friday evening?

MR. DONNELLY: Bill, it is going to be a pretty tiring trip and I am sure they will all be ready to go to bed at 8:30 at night.

MR. KUBASOV: We actually prefer to play tennis. Because of that we are trying to spend all of our free time someplace where we can be outside, with some sports and not behind gaming tables.

COMMANDER LEONOV: I have never once in my life played a game of chance of this sort with cards or anything so I have no idea as to what it is. I actually consider that this is killing time unnecessarily.

MR. DONNELLY: Aside from which I don't think they take

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rubles.

QUESTION: How do you feel about not going to the Cape or Houston this trip? Are you looking for some specific place or city to visit in the United States? How do you feel not having had any holidays in Hawaii for 10 days?

COMMANDER LEONOV: Our colleagues have approached us with much concern about this and knowing their own country have offered us to see whatever we may like best. Before our joint flight we discussed this schedule. Tom Stafford and Deke and Vance invited us to visit the United States after our flight. They suggested to us these cities. We agreed with you.

QUESTION: I would like to ask both Donnelly and Simonov the differences between the public affairs relationships between the Soviet Union and the United States and maybe a reaction from both sides.

MR. DONNELLY: Okay, we will take a crack at it. Actually, this is a press conference for the astronauts and cosmonauts. I think it is fair to say that during the mission we agreed on a method of procedures as to how each side would handle its public affairs activities. The letter of the agreement was met in every respect as far as I am concerned. We have a good mission. It was well publicized. With that, I turn it over to Dr. Simonov if he wishes to add anything to it.

DR. SIMONOV: I agree with you.

MR. DONNELLY: We will confine the questions to the

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astronauts and cosmonauts.

QUESTION: The question is if you had the mission to do all over again, both in duration and in technique, would you make any changes next time?

MR. SLAYTON: Sure. We would make it longer.

QUESTION: How much longer?

MR. SLAYTON: About 2 or 3 months.

COMMANDER STAFFORD: As far as the capabilities of the spacecraft and what we were sent out to test, as far as the testing of the docking mechanism and of the joint techniques on rendevous, having to start with the same premise I think it would probably go about the same way. Perhaps some of the time lines we would have altered a little bit back and forth. Does anybody want to take a crack at this?

MR. BRAND: I think looking back, I am amazed at how well the planning worked out. If we had this last mission to do over again I can't think of anything significant that I would want changed in the way of how we did it and how we got ready to do it. I think we especially were wise to spend as much time as we did as crews training in each others countries because for example, in this respect, when we got in flight everybody was relaxed and knew what was coming off. We really learned a lot that we can apply to a next step, a next flight, which of course to justify itself would be more complicated than the first step and try for more objectives, more complicated and enriching objectives than

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we tried in the first step.

MR. DONNELLY: Aleksey, would you like to add to that?

COMMANDER LEONOV: I agree with just about everything. We could change the design of the spacecraft, the arrangements in the spacecraft, the duration of the flight. But one thing I will not agree with, that the crews are changed.

MR. DONNELLY: Any further questions?

QUESTION: I noticed on the agenda that you are going to be meeting with a few groups of students throughout the country in a couple of locations. I wonder if you would comment on the kinds of things you might be discussing with them or future educational programs in general with regard to this kind of future cooperation in science and technology?

MR. DONNELLY: Who was the question for?

QUESTION: Mr. Stafford.

COMMANDER STAFFORD: In the discussions that we will have with the students in several places we will describe in certain ways how the mission was put together and how we worked out the problems of language. Also, the idea that the future of man depends upon the further exploration of space and how that relates into improving the situation for mankind right here on the Earth. I think that is going to be the main theme.

QUESTION: General Stafford, would you compare the level interest that you have found among the Russian citizenry and the American citizenry in this cooperation in the flight?

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COMMANDER STAFFORD: I think for one thing we probably won't know until we have finished the tour. We haven't had really a chance , at least our crew, to go around the country and see about it. When you are flying upstairs in space it is hard to look at the total interest except what the control center would read up to you from the newspapers and the television media.

I do know that in the Soviet Union everyplace we went we were nearly mobbed by the people. It was very heartwarming to see there. We will have to see how this tour goes here. There is no doubt that a manned space flight to the people of the Soviet Union we have seen and talked to is a very viable program that occupies a lot of their interest. I would say right now probably more so than we have in the United States, but again, we will have to see how this project was taken when we finish the tour.

MR. BRAND: Can I add something to that? The only thing I would add to that -- like Tom, I agree that we haven't had a chance to experience the reception around the United States very much with one exception. I went to my hometown in Longmont, Colorado and there was a tremendous reception and interest. I just can't say enough for the interest in that particular part of the country.

MR. DONNELLY: Do we have any further questions? Last chance for questions. I would like to point out that we are on a tight schedule here. We are not going to be able to hold a mini-press conference after the conclusion of this formal press

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conference. So if you do have any questions or items to be discussed with either of the crews --

QUESTION: I would like to ask the Russians for their reaction -- I know they were in the space program at the time -- for their reaction to the United States' landing on the Moon in 1969? What was their reaction, not only for us but for their own program at that time?

COMMANDER LEONOV: I remember this day very well. I remember having watched, just as the rest of the Soviet Union people watched on television, the first step taken on the Moon by Neil Armstrong. Also I remember watching on television the flight of Borman around the Moon. All I can say is that that accomplishment was greeted with an extremely large amount of heartwarming wishes to the people who were accomplishing it.

Our media had very wise coverage of this particular flight and the Moon landings. After the flight, Neil Armstrong visited the Soviet Union and he was able to feel himself the warmth and the well wishing of the Soviet population.

MR. DONNELLY: Thank you. With that, this will conclude the press conference. As I started to mention, I wish you would help us respect our schedule. We do need to get out of here, go back to the hotel, pick up the families of the astronauts and cosmonauts, in order to make an appointment with the President. So we will not be able to linger here. Thank you very much.

(Thereupon, at 11:00 a.m., the press conference concluded.)

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