



NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20546

JUL 31 1970

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR.

Academician M. V. Keldysh
President, Academy of Sciences
of the USSR
Leninsky Prospect 14
Moscow, U-71, USSR

Dear Academician Keldysh:

We were encouraged to learn of the inquiries by your Embassy to the National Academy of Sciences regarding possible discussions of compatible docking arrangements in space. I had mentioned the subject to Dr. Handler as a possible item for consideration by NASA and your Academy prior to his recent trip to the Soviet Union.

As the government agency responsible for civil space activities, NASA has direct responsibility for any discussions with Soviet officials regarding actions we might take together to assure compatible docking systems in our respective manned space flight programs. If you agree that this subject should be discussed between us in the meeting which we have had in view for some time, we will be glad, in order to facilitate adequate mutual preparation, to receive two Soviet engineers at our Manned Spacecraft Center in Houston in the very nearest future to examine NASA's current spacecraft designs for docking purposes and to discuss future docking techniques. In the next step we would propose to proceed with the responsible Soviet officials to discuss our respective views with regard to the achievement of compatible docking configurations and techniques. If we can indeed agree on common systems, and I foresee no particular technical difficulty, we will have made an important step toward increased safety and additional cooperative activities in future space operations. This is particularly timely in my view as we proceed toward the initial experiments leading to the orbiting space station.

You may already know that I have submitted my resignation as Administrator of NASA to the President for personal reasons. This, of course, will not change the policies and interests of NASA with respect to international cooperation in space. Thus, you should understand our past and current correspondence as official rather than personal, although this matter has my wholehearted personal support. I regret very much that I will not have the opportunity to carry through personally our discussions with you to fruition, but am optimistic that much can be accomplished and hope that we can continue to make progress in the next month.

Sincerely,



T. O. Paine
Administrator