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14 December 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts, and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space.

1. Major McCarthy phoned on 11 December to state that he had discussed SAFSS and SAFSL's proposal for special treatment for manned space ships in the subject Agreement (see attached copy of memo), with Air Force General Counsel's office, which said in effect:
 - a. "It would take a lot of humanitarian reasons to get language of this kind accepted by all participants." U. S. has tried before to get special treatment for manned space ships, with no success.
 - b. The basic Outer Space Treaty really covers this point anyway, in that it refers to "space objects or component parts thereof."
2. Major McCarthy also referred to the difficulty of making effective proposals in the US-USSR bilateral discussions because of the scheduling of meetings on short notice and the fact that the word on such meetings is not always available in time to make good use of it.
3. I discussed the above with Colonel Ford and we agreed that in view of the circumstances we should not push our proposal further at this time, but, at the same time, we should make a plea for getting in the loop earlier in the future. I phoned Major McCarthy to this effect and he said he would attempt to improve the situation for future reviews.
4. Subsequent to the above series of events, Major McCarthy forwarded a copy of Capt Valentine's memo on this subject with a later draft of the A&R text agreed to by the US and USSR in the bilateral discussions which began in September 1967 (copy attached). Article 5, Return of Objects now refers specifically to a "space object or its component parts," which is preferable to the old language which referred only to space objects. SAFSS and SAFSL felt that the latter language could be interpreted to mean space fragments.
5. The draft A&R agreement is scheduled to go before the Legal Subcommittee 14 December and an attempt will be made to clear it through the General Assembly before 19 December when the GA is scheduled to adjourn.


Harry W. Hean

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