

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON 20330



OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

July 24, 1968



Act
MEMORANDUM FOR DR. FLAX

SUBJECT: AFWTR Range Ships - LONGVIEW and SUNNYVALE

I understand Gen. Berg discussed the problem with you and that you will be getting a briefing from SCF and/or Gen. Martin on July 31.

I have reviewed the situation with Gen. Hedrick and Gen. Bleymaier. The probability of the ships' usefulness in their currently assigned recovery tasks seems to me to be very low. The requirements, other than SAFSP, listed in Gen. Hedrick's memo do not appear to be strong enough to substantiate the retention of the ships. They are not suitable for the MOL insertion ship task, which may be solved by scheduling one of the Apollo ships. Gen. Bleymaier, however, in his recent discussions with the Navy, has found that it will be difficult to get Navy support for emergency recovery operations at the 40° South latitude (south of Easter Island). On the other hand, it turns out that either the LONGVIEW or the SUNNYVALE with the two helicopter pads is perfectly suitable for Gemini B emergency recovery. This recovery support would be needed only during MOL launch. With round trip steaming time, this would tie up a ship for 30 days. Since overlap of other flights with MOL is not expected, this ship could be available for its other normal recovery support operations.

Based on this, I would recommend that one of the two ships be mothballed after inquiring whether the Navy may not have a use for it. The other ship should be retained for joint MOL/SCF recovery operations. I suggest that the final decision be deferred until the proposed briefing.

M. I. Yarymovych
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