

JUN 20 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. FLAX

SUBJECT: NASA Interest in MOL

Attached is the letter I received from Mr. Mathews earlier this week requesting information on MOL. I have assured him that NASA is welcome to any and all information on MOL (he recognizes that NASA must accept appropriate security classifications), that we would be willing to study in reasonable depth any NASA questions not pertinent to the present MOL Program, etc. I have repeated this offer of assistance to both Mr. Luskin (AAP) and General Smart this week.

I met with Mr. Luskin to-day with regard to the Mathews letter. He indicated that NASA was including MOL options in their budget considerations for possible use before, after, or even in lieu of the Orbital Workshop. He personally, at the moment, desired information on MOL potential (no DoD payload) and availability at the earliest possible date. Some of the highlights of our discussion follow:

1. I indicated all subsystems looked reasonable, as is, for 60 days or slightly longer, with the exception of the fuel cells (and we were considering a change in that area).

2. Extension of lifetime (using the "B" model "wafer" in the unpressurized expendables compartment) to 45 days was relatively straightforward, and 60 days (sans payload) might not be too difficult a first step.

3. We had not given serious consideration to very long lifetimes (6 mos - 1 yr), on-orbit resupply, etc.

4. We had not seriously studied modifying ETR facilities for MOL, but should be able to estimate reasonably the cost well based on experience with the SLC-VI at VAFB.

5. Joint use of the SLC-VI at VAFB was certainly possible from a launch capability standpoint, since MOL probably would operate on 5 month or longer launch centers, but some additions probably would be necessary in the check-out/simulation/training area to permit NASA "open" operations and still properly safeguard DoD payload information.

6. The MOL Program was \$30-40 million short (if \$530 is the FY 69 MOL allocation) of maintaining a Summer, 1971 first launch.

7. That a NASA MOL (sans all DoD payload) probably could be built and provided at an early date in the program -- perhaps even before the first DoD manned launch, but that this depended on many factors -- DAC involvement in NASA experiments, test flow, etc., and that I would object to any completely parallel FV-3 for DoD/FV-3A for NASA production scheme on the basis that DAC could not do both simultaneously and do a good job.

Mr. Luskin and I both clearly understood that this was an informal exploration, and I understood quite clearly that this is a NASA budget-option exercise (albeit, a rather serious one).

We agreed to a meeting at DAC Huntington Beach next Tuesday, with the morning as a Government session wherein the MOL Systems Office would try to answer as many questions as possible, and identify any reasonable areas which required some further analysis and study on our part. During the afternoon, the NASA technical people would be free to query DAC on the basic MOL design, subsystems, and capabilities. Appropriate security measures will be taken.

JAMES T. STEWART  
Major General, USAF  
Vice Director, MOL Program

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a/s