

~~TOP SECRET~~

Policy: MOL
Security: Policy ✓
STIC: MOL

Classify @ DIA

8 September 1965

Dr. Edward C. Welsh
Executive Office of the President
National Aeronautics and Space Council
Washington, D. C. - 20502

Dear Ed:

Your letter of August 26, 1965, addressed to Al Hall before he left the Government service, suggests a briefing on MOL to members of the Armed Services and Space Committees.

The manner in which information on the MOL program should be released was a major point of consideration in relation to the decision to proceed. The August 24, 1965, Memorandum to the President from Mr. McNamara recommends that MOL be operated within the guidelines of existing security policy on military space programs. The relationship of the policy to MOL was detailed in the "Policy on Public Information Aspects and International Reactions to the Manned Orbiting Laboratory," a copy of which is inclosed.

Protection of security in a "Secret" level briefing would have some serious problems. A frank discussion of the principal objectives of the program could not be given and the unavoidable evasions might cause antagonism in the absence of a plausible explanation.

The list of individuals now briefed on MOL includes several key Senators and Representatives. To some extent, the need for providing information in Congressional channels is thereby fulfilled. We may be able to handle any difficult situations by working through these cleared individuals. I would prefer not to volunteer any briefings at the present. As the program proceeds, the means of passing on more information can be worked out.

Sincerely yours,

Harold Brown

H. A.
TCS-250988/65

Incl.

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KEYHOLE CHANNELS
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Covering Brief

To: Director of Defense Research and Engineering

From: Deputy Director (Strategic and Space Systems)

Problem: To advise Dr. Welsh against providing a classified MOL briefing for representatives from the Armed Services and Space Committees.

Discussion: Dr. Welsh's letter (Tab A) makes such a proposal. We do not believe we could protect security in a "Secret" briefing, since we could not invoke normal military security. Tab B is a reply explaining our position. A copy of the MOL Policy on Public Information is also forwarded.

Recommendation: That you sign Tab B.

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