Impact on Foreign Policy

The Soviet Union's space program is intended to demonstrate, inter alia, what can be achieved under its form of government. To this end, the Soviets have made political capital out of their guest cosmonaut program: a number of cosmonauts from Soviet-bloc countries—Czechoslovakia, Poland, East Germany, Bulgaria, Hungary, Vietnam, Cuba, Mongolia, and Romania[65]—were ferried to Salyut 6 for short-duration working visits. A French spationaut was transported to and from Salyut 7. Preparations are underway to include a crewmember from India in early 1984, and other countries may be invited to participate in future missions. How valuable is the guest program? At a minimum, it supports Soviet propaganda aims, and the scientific exchange, particularly with the French, may be of significant value. In any case, the Soviets clearly believe that the program is worth the relatively small investment required.

These international activities suggest the Soviets have decided to make their space program somewhat more open. Recently, they have also begun to announce some launch dates and to allow outsiders to observe payload processing, to view launches, and to access scientific data more quickly,

In contrast to the United States, the Soviet Union, in the view of some, is much more aggressive in deploying its space program as an important element in its foreign policy. Increasing openness may be the forerunner of greater cooperative efforts, particularly in the use of more instrumentation from Eastern European sources. The cooperative Soviet-French venture to probe Venus and Halley's Comet, for example, will incorporate more sophisticated technology than the Soviets have previously used, thus increasing its chance of success. "

Whereas the Apollo-Soyuz Test Project (ASTP) came to fruition as a product of detente, similar joint U.S.-Soviet ventures involving space stations are viewed by many as out of step with current political realities. Others suggest that such ventures are technically logical and diplomatically feasible." There is also a possibility that cooperative space ventures could become polarized: the Soviet Union might increase its working relationships with Eastern European countries and, perhaps, France, while the United States works with Japan, Canada, and Western Europe.[68] Future Salyuts could incorporate "internationalized" modules dedicated to specific scientific research or commercial application.

The impact of an evolving Soviet space station program on U.S. space policy is unclear. Many observers agree that a U.S.S.R, pronouncement that a "permanent presence in space" had been achieved would do little to reshape U.S. civilian space objectives. Even bolder announcements of Soviet intentions to send human beings to the Moon or to traverse interplanetary distances to establish a human presence on Mars, might have little influence on U.S. pursuits. Creation of a significant and obvious military installation in orbit, however, might well dictate an American response in kind.

In the end, a U.S. response to any new Soviet space project would be heavily influenced by public opinion and the circumstances of that moment. It is impossible to predict with much assurance just what Soviet activities might trigger an important American reaction.

[65] The last six are in Cyrillic alphabetical order. See J. Oberg, *Red Star in Orbit.*

"'French, Soviets Weigh Venus Mission, " *AW&ST, Nov.* 22, 1982, pp. 79-80.

[67] See, for example, "Hitch Up With a Red Star, " James Oberg, *OMNI,* March 1982, p. 20.

"'NASA Mulls International Effort on Space Station, " *A W&ST* Mar. 1, 1982, pp. 20-21.

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