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5/3/68

Approved For Release 2005/03/30 : CIA-RDP71R00510A000300190004-9

Anne → Hold for Carl A

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

U.S.S.

DATE: May 1, 1968

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[Handwritten signatures and initials]

SUBJECT: The Future of Space

PARTICIPANTS: Mr. James E. Webb, Administrator, NASA
Mr. Donald R. Morris, Acting Assistant Administrator for International Affairs, NASA
Mr. Charles E. Bohlen, Deputy Under Secretary for Political Affairs, State
Mr. Herman Pollack, Director, International Scientific and Technological Affairs, State

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Mr. Webb opened by indicating his hopes to devote more of his time and effort to NASA's international activities which previously his staff and deputies have handled. Suggesting that it was necessary to get Western Europe moving on space, and especially England and Germany, he asked Mr. Bohlen's advice on whether he should attend the upcoming Munich meeting of EUROSPACE. Mr. Bohlen indicated his doubts whether an industry group provided the proper forum for fruitful discussion, and suggested that the UN Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in Vienna in August might be more suitable. Mr. Bohlen also stated that this was not a propitious time for the United States to make a major effort in Europe and that it was more important for the Europeans to get together with each other than with us.

In response to Mr. Webb's query as to whether conversations with the Soviets on space cooperation might not be opened up if a settlement in Viet-Nam came about Mr. Bohlen stated that there was no reason not to talk, but he cautioned that there were still major obstacles, besides Viet-Nam, that would be encountered.

Mr. Webb then turned the discussion to the future of space. He referred to a 3-year project Foy Kohler had undertaken, under NASA contract, to analyze what the U.S. and the Soviets get out of

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-2-

their space programs. In Mr. Webb's view space technology offers great opportunities as well as threats to mankind and this is not well understood by senior officials of the State Department. Decisions will soon be required regarding space in the 1970s which the Department should be considering now. Mr. Webb indicated that the State Department paper on the Post-Apollo space program was "not very good" and missed the main issues. Mr. Bohlen urged Mr. Webb to put his points in writing so that they might be studied by the Department's officials.

Mr. Bohlen indicated his interest in visiting some of NASA's facilities and it was agreed that an appropriate program would be worked up.