

TO:

FROM: CB/W. E. Thornton

SUBJECT: The Phillipine Trip
of my

The following are some/personal comments and observations on the recent trip by D. K. Slayton, J. A. Lovell and myself to the Phillipines. Everything that I said in the letter both to you and Washington turned out to be true and then some. This is a third world nation that is very much interested in remaining a staunch ally and is also very much a centerpiece in the Far East. The Russians were in fact there with a delegation of eight people plus two cosmonauts, who I was assured had paid their own way. The trip was given national prominence from the moment we arrived until we departed. There was one period of 1½ hours which I called my own, and then by staying in the hotel room. We were meet at the airport by the national media, both TV, radio, and newspaper, and were covered throughout the stay. In addition, the Phillipine government gave us every bit of hospitality at their disposal, often to the extent of personal embrassassment. For example, we were each given personal security at all times, at least one member of the presidential security detail, a limousine and police escort. The appearance at the international congress was really just an excuse for a week of visits to universities, various local areas, numerous press conferences and TV appearances, including 1½ hours with the President and Mrs. Marcos. Under the circumstances, it was rather hard to explain to our host why the difficulties in acceptance and the absence of our wives, in the case of Deke and I, for whom numerous preparations had been laid. In spite of this, we were afforded every hospitality by a country who very much wants to remain allied with the United States, but who at times has difficulty in understanding many of its actions, while its not for me to comment on Washington's or NASA's actions. This was a trip to an area in which we should be vitally interested which was given national prominence and in which we had more coverage and exposure than we get in a year's appearances by anyone of us in the United States. It is hard to see why NASA does not fund accordingly. It is impossible for us to understand why Washington wanted to turn down a free gift such as this, in any event, being as impersonable as possible. Your effort to make it possible for us to go should be sincerely appreciated. At the larger level for

being as impersonable as possible. Your effort to make it possible ~~xxxx~~ for us to go should ~~xxx~~ be sincerely appreciated. At the larger level for (a) I believe we ~~we~~ accomplished a great deal, and (b) shutter to think what it would have been like had the Russians had the entire field to themselves. N.B.--understand that the local papers gave a garble account of invitations to the President's son~~e~~ to become an astronaut or some such. ~~xxxx~~ ^{while} ~~why~~ I always pass this question on to the more senior astronauts, neither they nor the cosmonauts ~~xxxx~~ made any invitations or promises.

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