

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : CB/All Astronauts

DATE: July 22, 1969

FROM : CB/Eugene A. Cernan

SUBJECT: Meeting Cosmonaut Major General Beregovoi in Helsinki, Finland

Between 12-15 July I was in Helsinki, Finland to receive, on behalf of the Apollo VIII Crew, the gold medal for space presented yearly by the Federation Aeronautique Internationale. Major General Beregovoi, Soyuz III, was also present at the opening days of this conference to receive what is now recognized as the second international award for achievement in space--the Gagarin medal.

During the $2\frac{1}{2}$ days we were in Finland together there were six different occasions at which we were the focal point of the moment. We jointly attended two official receptions of the FAI; held a press conference together; gave separate talks at a luncheon; officially received the space achievement medals at the opening of the FAI conference; and had one semi-private meeting.

At all of the above meetings General Beregovoi was most impressive. He wore his uniform at all but the final reception. He is the oldest of his group at 47, but was obviously in very good shape. He is very much of an extrovert with a good sense of humor and for the most part very sincere. During the serious moments of the $2\frac{1}{2}$ days when he was called upon to respond to an audience, his thesis was very obviously built around the motherhood statements of working together in space, peace for the world through cooperation and that the great Soviet effort in space is an effort for mankind.

At our private meeting I presented him with ten pictures from Apollo X-- of the launch, both spacecraft, and earth-moon scenes. He was ecstatic over receiving these pictures and they stimulated a great deal of mutual discussion. He was most interested in the moon and it was difficult to recover answers about their spacecraft and procedures. His stock answer was "oh we do it in a different way". He did talk about training and his disorientation on his spaceflight. They do use the zero-g airplane but don't feel, as we do, that it is a true picture. However, he talked as if a great deal of water training is done by their crews.

It was apparent that the doctors still hold a very decisive hand in their program. He spoke with almost a fearful respect for the power they yield. On his flight he had to count the number of fine closely



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spaced lines on a piece of paper as soon as he achieved orbit. He was able only to count 30 out of 40 actually there, and he readily admitted to me his mental disorientation and a definite requirement for a period of adaptation. His description of his own problems sounded to me much like vertigo. It is a bit strange especially in light of his aviation background, because nowhere have we had any similar problem in our program.

At our press conference on 13 July his statement concerning the mission of LUNA 15 was "we have the capability to land but our mission may be a high speed reentry test--our scientists have not yet decided." When I was asked to make a statement about the LUNA 15 upstaging Apollo XI in the world prestige market, I included a comment about man vs machine in space. He openly agreed, contrary to the Soviet stand, that man can accomplish more than machine, and that the significance of manned spacecraft in the future far outweighs that of the unmanned.

I had the distinct feeling that he understood English very well although all our verbal exchanges went through one of his two interpreters. He always had two other (not English speaking?) men with him at all times.

On the night of our final meeting I managed to get a picture of the two of us--he in civilian clothes with an Apollo X patch pinned to his pocket. He was quickly advised by his interpreter to remove the patch!

It was an educational and very worthwhile exchange. I sum Georgy Beregovoi up as a pleasant, gregarious, and sincere individual. I had the feeling he wanted to sit down and just talk about mutual experiences without the obvious restraint to which he was forced to adhere.



Eugene A. Cernan