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Correspondence between the Kremlin and LBJ regarding exchange of
photographs of the moon during various space flights (both Soviet and
American) (1964-1966)

August 6, 1964

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Dear Mr. Chairman:

On July 31, 1964, cameras of the United States Spacecraft Ranger VII successfully photographed the surface of the Moon from close range. These photographs represent a very great extension in our knowledge of the Moon. The detail of our perception has improved more in this one step than in the three centuries of evolution of the earth-bound telescope. Having dedicated their efforts to the exploration of outer space for peaceful purposes, the people of the United States hope that this knowledge -- and what is learned in the continuing explorations of the future -- will work to the ultimate benefit of mankind in all lands.

It is, therefore, an honor and a privilege to present to you and your people on behalf of the people of the United States this special set of photographs of the Moon taken on the historic flight of the Ranger VII. These photographs symbolize the continuing desire of the United States that the benefits of this age of scientific discovery may be shared among all nations and all peoples for the cause of peace and human progress.

Sincerely,

Lyndon B. Johnson

His Excellency
Nikita S. Khrushchev
Chairman of the Council of Ministers
of the Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics
Moscow

August 26, 1964

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for the letter with which you sent me pictures of the lunar surface made by the American spacecraft "Ranger VII".

We are glad that now, following Soviet scientists who back in 1959 photographed the other side of the moon, American scientists have made considerable contribution to common efforts of states in the research and exploration of outer space.

I share your opinion that the fruits of scientific discoveries should be enjoyed by all peoples in the interests of peace and progress. The Soviet Union seeks that outer space serve peaceful purposes exclusively.

Sincerely,

N. Khrushchev

His Excellency
Lyndon B. Johnson
President of the United States
of America
Washington

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF LANGUAGE SERVICES

(TRANSLATION)

LS NO. 44635
T-103/R-XVII
Russian

Moscow, The Kremlin, March 9, 1966

Dear Mr. President,

It gives me great pleasure to send you photographs of the Moon's surface received from the Soviet automatic station "Luna 9" which, for the first time, made a soft landing on the Moon on February 3, 1966.

The successful completion of this new and, in its complexity, exceptional space experiment represents another step by mankind in the exploration and conquest of outer space.

The Soviet Union did in the past and will in the future exert efforts to utilize the achievements of space science, as well as science as a whole, for peaceful purposes exclusively, so that these achievements be placed in the service of creation and progress rather than that of destruction.

Respectfully

[Signed]

N. Podgorny

Chairman of the Presidium of the
Supreme Soviet of the USSR

His Excellency

Mr. Lyndon Baines Johnson,

President of the United States of America

Washington, D. C. The White House

Incoming Message

In connection with the successful completion of the soft landing of the spacecraft Surveyor I on the moon, please accept, Mr. President, our congratulations for the American specialists who ensured the success of this flight.

Respectfully,

N. Podgorny
Moscow, Kremlin
June 3, 1966

Copy to Mr. [unclear]

White House
Washington

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THE PRESIDENT

THE WHITEHOUSE WASHINGTONDC

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CENTRAL FILES

Friday, June 10, 1966

Mr. President:

This proposed draft letter thanks Mr. Podgorny for the Luna 9 photographs he sent you recently and for his congratulations on the successful Surveyor I landing. It also transmits to him, with appropriate sentiments, the folio of photographs you are sending to the other chiefs of state. The text of the letter is a blend of the acknowledgment drafts proposed by the State Department and the language you have already approved for use with all chiefs of state.

BKS for

W. W. Rostow

orig. incoming to President

Ms
Checked by Gift Unit

June 11, 1966

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Dear Mr. Chairman:

I was most pleased to receive the pictures of the moon's surface taken by the Soviet automatic station Luna 9 as well as the medallions commemorating this significant event that were enclosed with your letter of March 9, 1966, which recently reached me. I was also happy to receive your June 3 message of congratulations on the successful flight of the Surveyor I spacecraft and its soft landing on the moon. I thought you might want these copies of photographs of the surface of the moon taken by the Surveyor I spacecraft.

These and other photographs will be distributed to the scientific community of the world in the hope that they will contribute to our combined knowledge of the lunar surface.

The successes of Luna 9 and Surveyor I were indeed landmarks in mankind's exploration of outer space. The information obtained by these and other probes into the vast unknown regions of outer space by both our countries can be of inestimable value to this and future generations, particularly if we share this information freely with all.

The American people and my Government have a deep commitment to the peaceful uses of outer space, for it would be a great tragedy if mankind's achievements in this field were only to create a new threshold of terror. The United States Government stands ready to cooperate with the Soviet Government through all possible channels to create the preconditions for peace in outer space which have so often been lacking here on earth. In this connection I was most gratified to learn of

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CENTRAL FILE

Copy sent to Mrs. Serio

Foreign Minister Gromyko's letter to Secretary General U Thant calling for a treaty governing the exploration of the moon and other celestial bodies. As you know, I made a proposal on this subject in a speech in Texas on May 7 of this year. In my view, the speedy conclusion of a treaty regulating the activities of states in outer space is one of the most important tasks facing the world community, for such an agreement would do much to ensure that man's advances in this field proceed in a peaceful atmosphere. I believe that we should work together towards this goal so that a treaty can be concluded as soon as possible. I have the strong feeling that if we are wise and earnest, what is happening in outer space can help us live better together on earth.

Sincerely,

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LBJ

His Excellency
Nikolai V. Podgornyy
Chairman of the Supreme
Soviet of the Union of Soviet
Socialist Republics
Moscow

LBJ:CEJ:feg