

Noted and discussed an oral briefing by the Director of Central Intelligence on the subject, with specific reference to recent Soviet ballistic missiles activity; and the situations in Indonesia and the Near East.

3. U. S. OBJECTIVES IN SPACE EXPLORATION AND SCIENCE  
(NSC Action No. 1859)

General Cutler introduced Dr. Killian, who stated initially that the reports to be given by himself, Dr. Purcell and Dr. York were in the nature of informal reports and would not contain specific recommendations. Next, Dr. Killian undertook to explain the main motives behind the development of space technology and space exploration. These he listed as, first, natural human curiosity about the nature of the universe; secondly, military considerations; third, U. S. prestige vis-a-vis the Soviet Union and other countries; and fourth, scientific observation and experiment. Space travel, thought Dr. Killian, may or may not have material and practical values, but the space programs that would be discussed at this time must, all of them, be based on the above-mentioned four motivating factors.

Dr. Killian then indicated that various programs of differing size, shape and cost would be presented to the Council in order to provide the basis for a subsequent choice of a U. S. national outer space program. Dr. Killian, in this context, pointed out the need for a balanced outer space program—one which would take into due account the other great national security programs, inasmuch as any effective outer space program was bound to prove very costly.

Thereafter Dr. Killian called on Dr. Purcell, who discussed with the Council his views on space science and the objectives of space science. At the end of his discussion, these objectives were summarized on a chart which was divided into three time-periods: Early (first years), Later (two to five years), and Still Later (five to fifteen years). Dr. Purcell concluded his remarks with comments on the military application of space exploration. He listed on a chart (1) communications; (2) reconnaissance (optical, radio, infrared); (3) early warning; (4) meteorological.

At the conclusion of Dr. Purcell's remarks, the President inquired whether Dr. Purcell thought it would be a good idea if there could be more public education with respect to the matters in his report. The general view seemed to be in the affirmative.

The President then inquired of Dr. Purcell whether the distant planets of which he had spoken rotated on their own axis as did our earth. Dr. Purcell replied that most of them did, but that there were some we could hardly see and could not determine whether they rotated or not.