

CONFIDENTIAL

VOSTOK III and IV

The Prime Minister sent a personal message from Ottawa to Mr. Khrushchev on the occasion of the first Soviet space flight (see IAS 41/16 - Flag A). A further message was sent after the second flight, but Sir Frank Roberts only recommended this second message because all his Commonwealth colleagues favoured this, though they agreed that messages should not necessarily be sent on subsequent occasions (see NS 2311/52).

FLAG 'B'

2. I think it would be better for the Prime Minister not to send a message on the present occasion, for the following reasons:-

- (i) as far as is known at the moment the present achievement differs from previous ones only in that two flights have been staged at the same time and that they have lasted considerably longer. Admittedly the synchronisation has been excellent and great accuracy of orbit has been achieved, but we do not want to be too free with our messages. There will be many more striking achievements before man reaches the moon.
- (ii) President Kennedy has not sent a personal message, and it would therefore be inappropriate for the Prime Minister to do so.
- (iii) There is at least a suspicion that the present exploit has been timed so as to distract attention from the anniversary of the Berlin wall.

3. If the present achievement turns out to be more spectacular than is anticipated, i.e. if the two space ships are brought together and both astronauts return in one of them, we should need to think again, but the implication of Moscow telegram No. 1502 is that on present showing there is no need for a personal message.

FLAG 'C'

4. I attach a draft telegram to Moscow.

R.C. Hope-Jones

(R.C. Hope-Jones)
August 14, 1962

Mr. Bullard, Northern Department

Mr. Wilson

Copies to: I.P.D.
News Department.

I do not endorse the suspicion referred to in para. 2(iii), and have deleted this thought from the ^{Yorkshire} telegram. If the P.M. had not been in [Scotland] I should myself have been slightly in favour of a message, but as it is I agree with the draft.

J. Bullard 14/8

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