

August 15, 2016



Central Intelligence Agency  
Agency Release Panel  
c/o Michael Lavergne  
Washington, DC 20505

5-page letter

AUG 25 2016

(b)(6)

**RE: MDR Appeal of Case EOM 2016-00530, the "Space Event Report: Luna 8—3 December 1965 (issued 3 November 1966)."**

Greetings Michael Lavergne.

I am appealing the withholding of materials in the above MDR case. The withholding reasons cited are 3.3(b)(1) and 3.5(c) of the Executive Order.

This should be relatively simple to provide argumentation documentation for further release. Materials come from the CIA itself, from NSA and DIA on uncrewed lunar missions, as well as other materials, including those (for example, *NORAD Weekly Intelligence Reviews*) declassified by ISCAP.

**Special note: A CD-ROM—with 13 documents burned onto it—is included with this MDR appeal packet.**

However, I must tell you Michael that it seems to me that the processing of this document for public release was very poorly done. The factors that result in this conclusion should become obvious as you go through the materials I am going to highlight here in my document argumentation for more content release. Please keep in mind this is meant to be representative, and not exhaustive.

**--The map where Luna-8 impacted the Moon (page 15) is completely redacted. Are you kidding me?** I can tell you that maps in Top Secret codeword documents that display in graphic form where Soviet spacecraft landed/impacted the lunar surface have been released prior to. This includes both CIA and NSA documentation.

a)—Office of Intelligence's *Weekly Review* from 10 December 1965 (acquired via CIA's FOIA electronic reading room on the Web) shows an unexpurgated map of where Luna 8 impacted the Moon. On page 5.

b)—In a document released to me by NSA from 19 October 1972 (there are no identifiable classification stampings, but most likely "Top Secret Zarf Umbra") on the Luna 18 mission (which also crashed on the Moon) you can see on page 5 of the attached PDF that not only Luna 18's trajectory and impact point, but also also Luna 15's crash point and Luna 16's successful landing zone.

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What this means is that maps showing lunar spacecraft trajectories to impact or landing on the Moon's surface can be released.

**--Launch time of Luna 8 already disclosed.** Via ISCAP decision, a batch of *NORAD Weekly Intelligence Reviews (WIR)* have been declassified and released to me. In the 10 December 1965 edition, it states that "Luna 8, Soviet lunar probe which was launched from Tyuratam at about 1040Z[ulu], crashed into the Moon on 6 December..."

**--Rocket system to launch Luna 8 previously described.** The same aforementioned 10 December 1965 *NORAD WIR* states that it was the SS-6 with a "heavy Venik third stage, and injected into a transfer trajectory toward the Moon by the Soviets' fourth deep space stage."

**--Tyuratam launches detected by RADINT from both Diyarbakir and Shemya Island.** In the *NORAD WIR* for 15 October 1965, there is a listing ("Missile Range Firing Log") from Tyuratam (Earth orbital, lunar—like Luna 7, and missile testing), and it states at the bottom of its notes, "Diyarbakir & Shemya RADINT."

**--How lunar windows are derived.** An article by James Burke entitled "Seven Years to Luna 9" that appeared in the Summer 1966 issue of CIA's *Studies in Intelligence* (acquired via the CIA's FOIA electronic reading room on the Web) devotes a lot of its exposition on how these "windows" were derived. Indeed, a number of the *NORAD WIRs* that I have enclosed have mentions about upcoming lunar windows for anticipated launches towards the Moon, and their length duration.

**--What happened to Luna 8.** Stating that the spacecraft "crashed" is not the end of the description. I will be pointing out CIA, *NORAD WIR* and DIA materials that discuss what happened.

a)—The *NORAD WIR* from 11 February 1966 has a table entitled "The Soviet Lunar Record" (page 33 actual) where we read for Luna 8: "Impacted on Moon, apparently at desired speed, but its transmissions ceased at, or shortly after, touchdown." In the 1972 *DIA Fact Book on World Communist Forces*, we read for Luna 8: "Impacted Moon, but transmissions ceased shortly after touchdown."

b)—In the forementioned Weekly Review of 10 December 1965, we read that the Soviet attempted to contact the spacecraft: "Efforts to contact Lunas 7 and 8 after impact suggested that these two came close to success."

What this means is that Luna 8 impacted the Moon, perhaps near the desired descent rate, and began transmitting for a few seconds from the surface before ceasing. Soviet authorities attempted to revive/contact the craft without success. All of this can be released by CIA's declassification authorities in the Luna 8 "Space Event Report."

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**--Characterstics of Lunar Missions (specific/generic) that have been released previously.** In this section, I will be detailing SIGINT/TELINT materials that have been released on Soviet lunar spacecraft missions.

a)—**Intercepted telemetry/SIGINT during preparations and ascent.** The complete start-up and launch sequence (up through fourth stage MECO/payload separation) for another Soviet lunar mission (Luna 20) shows the capability of American SIGINT intercepts. This particoular report was received from NSA by me, and it is dated 5 December 1972. Such intercepts began well prior to Luna 8, as evidenced via a discussion by Burke in his forementioned *Studies in Intelligence* article that (page 4) for the October 1960 launch attempt, "Intercepted telemetry showed that the loaded upper stages weighed more than thirty tons..." Furthermore, another NSA document released to me (originally issued in February 1972) about Luna 20 that it was recognized by US analysts that the Russians engaged in electronic "on-pad simulations" prior to actual launching to make certain all the equipment was operating properly. In this report it states the electronic on-pad simulation took place on 2 February, and the actual launching on 14 February.

What this means is that materials regarding telemetry intercepts on the launch pad, including electronic on-pad simulations prior to actual launching for Luna 8 can be released.

b)—**Intercepted telemetry/SIGINT in transit to, and at lunar distances.** In the aforementioned Burke article, it states that Asmara, Ethiopia was used to monitor Soviet lunar probes going outwards to the Moon, and was in the business of interceptings signals (that is, telemetry) from the Soviet spacecraft. On page 17, we read: "Luna 5 gave the Asmara station its first real chance to perform. The station inercepted both of the two spacecraft signals several times during the mission, and both Asmara and Jodrell Bank [UK] were listening during the final approach to the Moon. The telemetry data were like those from Luna 4, with minor changes..." Additionally, a July 212, 1969 memorandum from Kissinger to Nixon states the following about the Luna 15 mission: "SIGINT has revealed that the attempted soft landing of Luna 15 this morning was a failure. Signals from the spacecraft ceased just prior to touchdown indicating a hard landing. Attempts [by the Soviets] to activate the craft failed."

What this means is that all discussions about telemetry intercepts from Luna 8, whether in transit to the Moon, or during its descent sequence to the lunar surface, can be released.

c)—**Yevpatoriya (in the Urkaine's Crimea) identified as the deep space tracking facility for the USSR for lunar missions.** There are exceptionally numerous reports that one can acquire via the CREST facility (in College Park, Maryland) on Yevpatoriya and its connection with the lunar program. I typed in "Soviet deep space tracking network" and many titles came up via the search engine on the CIA's FOIA electronic reading room on the Web. Indeed, in the 18 June 1965 WIR (page 14) we read: "The amount of time that

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Luna 6... would be visible from the Soviets' tracking facility in the Crimea was less than it would have been for any of the lunar launches of 1963 and 1964 and the first two of this year [1965]..."


d)—***Soviet lunar chronologies previously released.*** The following NORAD *WIRs* have a continuing updated set of Soviet lunar chronologies. These include 18 June 1965 (last page), 15 October 1965 (last page), 11 February 1966 (page 33), 25 February 1966 (last page).

e)—***Reason(s) to use 51-degree parking orbit for Luna 8.*** In the 3 December 1965 *WIR*, it states the following: "The Soviets, if they do launch a probe on 2 December, may inject it into a 51-degree parking orbit, as they did with their 3 Venus probe attempts in November, instead of the customary 65-degree orbit. Use of a 51-degree instead of a 65-degree reduces thrust requirements by only a miniscule amount, but it does make it more difficult for the US to detect and track the vehicle on its initial (Zero) orbit...." In the 10 December 1965 *WIR*, it confirms that the spacecraft's "parking orbit has an Equatorial inclination of 51.8 degrees instead of 65 degrees noted on previous Soviet lunar probes... the lower inclination permits a slightly heavier payload and better tracking from the deep-space tracking facilities in the Crimea."

I think I have provided a superlative amount of evidence that the Agency Release Panel should be able to declassify extensive swaths of this Space Event Report on Luna 8.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Sincerely,

  
Peter Pesavento  
Attachment—CD-ROM

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On the CD-ROM:

- Kissinger H. "Memorandum for the President. Subject: Luna 15." July 21, 1969. [Special note: All NORAD *WIRs* released by ISCAP]
- NORAD *Weekly Intelligence Review*, 6/66, 11 February 1966.
- NORAD *Weekly Intelligence Review*, 25/65, 18 June 1965.
- NORAD *Weekly Intelligence Review*, 42/65, 15 October 1965.
- NORAD *Weekly Intelligence Review*, 50/65, 10 December 1965.
- NORAD *Weekly Intelligence Review*, 49/65, 3 December 1965.
- NORAD *Weekly Intelligence Review*, 8/66, 25 February 1966.
- National Security Agency. [Title redacted, but on the results of SIGINT processing of the Luna 18 mission] 19 October 1972. 5 pages.

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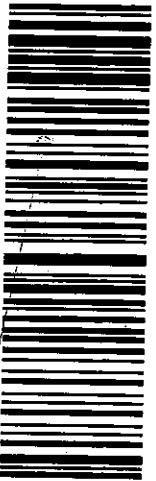
**CD-ROM contents, continued:**

- National Security Agency. [Title redacted, but on the results of SIGINT processing of Luna 20 mission] 26 December 1972. 14 pages.
- Central Intelligence Agency. Office of Current Intelligence: "Soviet lunar probe fails to soft-land." *Weekly Review*, 10 December 1965. pp. 4-5.
- National Security Agency. [Title redacted, but on the results of SIGINT processing of the Luna 18 mission] 19 October 1972.
- Defense Intelligence Agency. *DIA Fact Book on Communist World Forces*. (Excerpt of "Spacecraft Luna") 1 October 1972.
- Burke J. "Seven Years to Luna 9." *Studies in Intelligence* (Summer 1966), pp. 1-24.

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SUPPORT DOCUMENTATION  
FOR MDR APPEAL

EOM-2016-00530

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13 PAGES

