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Sally K. Ride Papers - Ride's statement before House of Representatives, July 1987 on Report

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This would launch in 1998. It takes about six years to get to Saturn, six or seven years. Once it got there, the mission would start a three-year comprehensive study of the Saturnian system, the rings, the magnetosphere, and also a very detailed study of one of Saturn's moons, Titan, which is a very, very interesting body, as was revealed on the Voyager flights. That is the mission that would give us information on the outer solar system class of bodies, the outer planets.

The centerpiece of this mission is a Mars rover sample return. It's a mission that would also require a heavy lift launch vehicle in this initiative. It would launch for Mars in 1996, would land a soft landing on the surface of Mars, would send a very smart rover around on the surface of Mars to collect a variety of geologically interesting samples from Mars, bring them back to the ascent vehicle, and the ascent vehicle would return them to Space Station, probably to a quarantine facility on the Space Station, in 1999, and we'd have samples of Mars back here on Earth to study by the year 2000. I think that that is certainly the centerpiece, as I said, of this initiative and the one that I think would draw the most public interest.

That gives you a pretty good description, I think, of the three components of the initiative. The general idea is to adopt a broad strategy for systematic solar system exploration by covering each of the three important types of bodies in the solar system and doing it before about 2005. That's the culmination of the Cassini mission, is in 2005.

I think that gives you a pretty good idea of that one.

Mr. NELSON. You don't address the question of the international participation on the retrieval of the sample from Mars.

Dr. RIDE. We did not directly address that in this study, but there are studies going on at NASA now that are looking into the Mars rover sample return mission in quite a bit of detail, and one of the things that they are looking into is the feasibility of international participation and the feasibility of a joint mission with the Soviets, looking at it primarily from the technology transfer point of view— if you were going to design a mission, could you design it to avoid technology transfer. And their preliminary estimation so far is that yes, you could, if you designed it that way from the beginning, if you went into it thinking from the beginning.

Mr. NELSON. Okay.

What we will do now is we will recess and go vote, and come back. Dr. Ride will proceed with describing the remaining two initiatives, and then we'll proceed with the questions— Mr. Walker, Mr. Nagle, and Lewis and Mr. Perkins, in that order.
Can someone tell us what the vote is?

Mr. WALKER. It's on the rule.

Mr. NELSON. Okay, a vote on the rule. The committee will stand in

This would launch in 1998. It takes about six years to get to Saturn, six or seven years. Once it got there, the mission would start a three-year comprehensive study of the Saturnian system, the rings, the magnetosphere, and also a very detailed study of one of Saturn's moons, Titan, which is a very, very interesting body, as was revealed on the Voyager flights. That is the mission that would give us information on the outer solar system class of bodies, the outer planets.

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Mr. WALKER. It's on the rule.

Mr. NELSON. Okay, a vote on the rule. The committee will stand in recess.

[Whereupon, the subcommittee was in recess.]

Mr. NELSON. Dr. Ride, if you will proceed.

Dr. RIDE. Thank you.

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