

November 21, 1961

Dr. Robert C. Seamans, Jr.
NASA Headquarters
1520 H Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C.

Dear Bob:

Following up our various conversations of recent days, I would like to formally volunteer for service as a crew member on the Apollo mission to the moon, and also for whatever suborbital and orbital flights that may be made in preparation for the lunar trip. I fully realize my limitations as a test pilot, but I feel that my qualifications in scientific and engineering fields should be considered as a worthy background for a crew member primarily concerned with non-flight operation matters such as making observations, checking system performance, interpreting events, and helping to maintain communications. In addition, I feel that my flying experience, although non-professional, has extended over some thirty-five years with much experimental work included, and should, after proper training, make it possible for me to "fill in" for regular pilots if this becomes desirable.

I realize that my age of 60 years is a negative factor in considering my request, but General Don Flickinger tells me that this is no sure bar to my selection as a crew member. I will gladly undergo any physical examinations and tests that may be prescribed and will take any courses of training that may be recommended.

My reasons in volunteering for the Apollo flights are many.

First: I am convinced that our country badly needs some outstanding achievement in space technology. If we

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do not in some way reverse the deterioration of the image held by the world of our intentions and capabilities as compared with those of our Soviet rivals; it may well be that nothing will matter. Personally, I am going to do anything I can to help improve this situation.

Second: I feel that the development of space technology is the most interesting and potentially rewarding field that exists today, and I wish to participate to the fullest possible extent in the events associated with its development.

Third: I feel that my work of the past thirty years has given me a unique background of well rounded experience that may be considered as helping me to qualify for service as the engineering and scientific member of a space craft crew. It should be easier for me to learn the techniques of crew operations than for somebody else to acquire the capability I already possess. I believe I could do a good job for you.

Fourth: I would like to be in a position to become acquainted with selected crew members on the basis of being a potential working companion and to discuss all phases of the Apollo operations with them. My duties at M.I.T. would prevent my devoting full time to this activity, but I believe that I could inject useful ideas from the standpoint of overall success.

We at the Instrumentation Laboratory are going full throttle on the Apollo guidance work, and I am sure that our endeavors will lead to success. I am also sure that if I am permitted the status of a potential crew member all our operations will receive a real lift. If I am willing to hang my life on our equipment, the whole

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project will surely have the strongest possible motivation and discussions of general design and details will be most responsible to my inputs.

I request that you bring my wish to be an Apollo crew member to the attention of the proper agencies and ask them to let me know what application blank I should fill out, and what other steps I should take to advance my cause.

Please give my best regards to Mr. Webb and Dr. Dryden.

Sincerely,

CSD:aem

C. S. Draper
Director of
Instrumentation Laboratory