

in considering the expansion of joint AEC/NASA efforts, "it was my feeling that much more testing was needed. The RTG people at the AEC had been operating on a shoestring, and they really didn't comprehend the extent of testing that was needed." In contrast, NASA, which was to develop the much larger systems that would use the RTGs, was accustomed to much testing.⁸

Bernard Rock* recalled how the NASA missions influenced his own orientation. "My background was technical, but I soon saw how important management was in the NASA scheme of things; and I sensed that this concern with management was correct. I went out and enrolled in some courses in engineering administration." Recalling the major NASA missions that then came along for the RTG program, he said: "The Nimbus program really helped me a lot. I saw how much more detailed we had to be. Then Apollo was many orders of magnitude greater in size and complexity than Nimbus."⁹

The magnitude of the Apollo effort can be seen in the fact that the AEC's proposed fiscal 1965 budget of \$6.3 million was doubled to \$12.5 million¹⁰ for fiscal 1966. This figure did not include money being spent by other agencies, such as NASA and DOD, for work on isotope propulsion space power. For RTGs alone, the AEC, which had spent about \$3 million in fiscal 1964 and 1965, expected to spend more than \$8 million in fiscal 1966 for development of isotope-fueled auxiliary power systems for space applications.¹¹

As the RTG program looked ahead in early 1966 to expansion for new mission applications, close attention was given to the problem of maintaining momentum in the total space nuclear program. Preparing in March for a briefing of Vice President Hubert Humphrey on the space nuclear systems effort, Finger emphasized that it would be difficult to get Congressional support unless the space program were defined in a way that indicated the need to advance propulsion and power capability beyond the Apollo Mission for specifically-defined missions that would use the new systems.¹²

Program momentum concerned the top administrators at NASA, as they sought to define post-Apollo research and development. In the words of Deputy Administrator Robert Seamans,† "The capability now coming on

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†Robert Seamans, Jr., who had been Associate Administrator of NASA since 1961, became Deputy Administrator in January 1966 following the death of Deputy Administrator Hugh Dryden in December 1965.