

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(London, England)

For Immediate Release

June 1, 1989

STATEMENT BY THE PRESS SECRETARY

The President today announced he had approved funding for continued operations of Landsat satellites 4 and 5 and for the completion and launch of Landsat 6. The President's action endorsed a recommendation from the National Space Council chaired by Vice President Dan Quayle. The President also directed the National Space Council and the Office of Management and Budget to review options with the intention of continuing Landsat-type data collections after Landsat 6.

Landsat, which takes detailed photographs of the earth, is the U.S. Government's civil, space-based, land remote sensing program. Landsat-type imagery data is important for such applications as global change research, environmental monitoring, law enforcement, natural resource estimates, national security and a variety of private sector uses. In addition, Landsat provides a visible symbol of the U.S. commitment to, and leadership in, the use of space for the common good.

Over recent years, it has become increasingly evident that commercializing the entire Landsat program would not be feasible until at least the end of the century. Since earlier government planning was based on commercializing the entire program, the absence of near-term commercial viability threatened continuity of Landsat and jeopardized continuity of Landsat data. The National Space Council, at its first meeting on May 12, recommended the action endorsed by President Bush today.

Continued operation of Landsats 4 and 5 will require an additional \$5 million in FY89 and \$19 million in FY90. Cost of completion and launch of Landsat 6 by 1991 has already been included in the Commerce Department budget.

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