

NATIONAL SPACE COUNCIL  
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
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July 20, 1992

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. W. ROBERT PEARSON  
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National Aeronautics  
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U.S. Arms Control and  
Disarmament Agency

MR. MICHAEL BROWNRIGG  
Executive Assistant  
United States Trade  
Representative

SUBJECT: Space Policy Assessment

The Vice President has directed that the U.S. national space policies be reviewed in the context of recent changes in the world situation. These changes could have significant implications for the future of the space program and the Vice

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President intends for the Space Council to conduct an assessment to determine whether, and in what ways, the character of America's space program should be adjusted to account for this new world reality.

In considering these changes, the Council's assessment will take into account: the end of the cold war, along with the concomitant decline in defense spending and aerospace industry cutbacks; the impact of the deficit on prospects for future budget growth; and the revolution in electronic and other space-related technologies. We also need to take into account the aggressive development and proliferation of space technology to other nations and the recognition, based on the Desert Storm experience, that space has become a critical element of America's warfighting capability.

Some are already citing the end of the cold war as a rationale for cutting back on space activities. The reluctance of some in Congress to support the President's civil space proposals, along with proposed reductions in important national security capabilities, are symptomatic of the fact that our basic structural approach and rationale may be aging.

Changes in the world situation present an opportunity. The overarching principles that guide U.S. space activities today were largely established by President Eisenhower in the late 1950's. It's remarkable how much was achieved during that first decade in space. America had a space program that enjoyed tremendous bipartisan support and that accomplished many great things.


In order to seize the opportunity and to regain this sort of momentum, the nation may need to conduct the space program in fundamentally different ways. For example, the Vice President would like the Space Council to seriously consider the implications of: increasing the synergism between civil and national security space activities in areas such as the utilization of common infrastructure, cooperative technology development, etc.; reexamining ways to promote greater international cooperation; strengthening institutional advocacy for space solutions to defense problems; streamlining and standardizing acquisition processes; creating design standards and commonality for spacecraft; facilitating better, faster, and less expensive programs; and, breathing new life into needed improvements in launch capability and infrastructure. A new relationship between industry and government may also be appropriate, one that fosters technological competitiveness and strengthens the trade stance of U.S. companies in international markets.

Initiatives such as these transcend the responsibility and interests of individual agencies. Yet, such comprehensive actions may be critical to maintain U.S. leadership and competitiveness for the 21st century, and to maintain and enhance

bipartisan domestic support and funding for U.S. space programs

To initiate this assessment, the Vice President's Space Policy Advisory Board will be tasked to perform an independent review. It will build on the findings of the Advisory Committee on the Future of the U.S. Space Program and support consideration by the Council of a new policy framework. The Advisory Board's review will be conducted as openly as possible within national security constraints, with the aim of encouraging public comments and suggestions. Consultations with the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board and others will also be carried out.

Following this review, a high level interagency group will be formed under the direction of the National Space Council and, when appropriate, the National Space Council and the National Security Council, to consider National Space Policy in the context of the Advisory Board's recommendations. A comprehensive policy framework, together with the Advisory Board's input and specific alternatives, as necessary, will be prepared for consideration by the Council and the President in early 1993.



Brian D. Dailey  
Executive Secretary