

Shuttle Diplomacy

By Jeff Krukin

COLUMBIA has flown and an odyssey has begun; an odyssey which, when fully realized, shall rival the original Homeric epic itself. Should the United States pursue a course of such magnificence and difficulty? Absolutely! And you know some of the reasons why: the economic utilization of space is vital to communications, remote-sensing, defense, and the strengthening of our scientific and technological capabilities which are the very core of our society's well-being.

There is yet another reason why the Reagan Administration must staunchly support a vibrant space policy. Our ability to utilize space can be a vital part of United States foreign policy. This is the issue I wish to address here.

I am concerned that the higher echelon of the State Department is totally unaware of how it may complement US foreign policy with NASA activities. This cannot continue. As Ken Pedersen, Director of International Affairs, NASA states in the Foreword of *A Review of NASA International Programs*: "During the twenty years of its existence, NASA has developed an extensive program of international cooperation involving more than 100 countries, developing as well as industrialized, in a variety of scientific and technical activities."

Opportunities exist for developing such cooperative activities into more fundamental links between other nations and the United States. But the impetus must come from the President or the Secretary of State. NASA's enabling legislation does not provide for such policy-making initiatives.

On a very general level U.S. foreign-space policy may be placed in two categories: one pertaining to undeveloped/developing nations and one pertaining to industrialized nations. My remaining comments are divided in this manner, but the actual development of foreign-space policy must occur case-by-case with the needs and technical capabilities of each nation being accounted for individually.

Beginning with the first category, the undeveloped/developing nations are vital to

the security and economic interests of the United States. Each such nation differs in its importance yet there are common issues to be considered. The presence of natural resources and raw materials necessary for their economic development and our continued economic stability will become increasingly important to the United States. Space applications technology can assist in the development of these resources and materials. Our economy benefits and the other nations are more likely to view Uncle Sam as a benevolent member of the family. As the political power and willingness to use terrorism of Third World nations surges, the United States will do well to demonstrate true interest in their economic and resulting social stability.

Relations between the United States and other industrialized countries are similarly important. In the years ahead the economies of these countries will vie for greater shares of the international market, for available energy and other resources, and anything else important to their industrial strength. This competition will not necessarily follow typical ideological lines, as former allies begin to develop great economic strains in their rela-

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After months of behind-the-scenes shuffling, consulting, and tea-leaf reading, President Reagan has selected individuals for the number one and two slots of NASA: James M. Beggs as administrator and Hans Mark as deputy administrator.

Both men have been previously employed by NASA. Beggs, 55, acted as associate administrator for advanced research and technology at NASA in 1968-1969. Leaving the space agency, he served 4 years as under-secretary of the Department of Transportation, and then 7 years as vice president in charge of aerospace and a director of the General Dynamics Corporation in St. Louis, Missouri.

Mark, 52, trained as a nuclear physicist, was former director of NASA's Ames Research Center in Mountain View, California before serving as Secretary of the Air Force during the Carter Administration.



tionships. Indications of this may be seen within the European Economic Community and between Japan and the United States.

Cooperative research and development, and commercialization efforts in the aerospace industry, can be a strong factor in strengthening the economies of all contributing nations. Industrialized nations, both east and west, must realize that the key to stable and strong economies and societies is cooperation—not competition and confrontation. The development of space science and technology cries out for international cooperation due to its high cost and tremendous potential for benefit

Both nominations require confirmation by the Senate, with little if any, opposition expected.

As for the new administrator's view of an expanding space program, little is known. Beggs did serve as Chairman for a report produced by the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) in 1977 titled: *U.S. Space Transportation in the 1980's: Organizational Alternatives*.

The report, prepared by the NAPA for NASA under contract, considered the organizational location best suited for operating the nation's space shuttle program. The possibilities evaluated included a private or a mixed-ownership corporation, several existing Federal Departments, a new independent Federal agency, and NASA itself. After extensive analysis and comparison, the Panel, under Beggs's chairmanship, concluded that the space shuttle transportation organization should be a "component element of NASA."

The report argued, at least for the 1980s, the "economics of the situation effectively

to all humanity.

For these reasons, the United States must develop and actively pursue a viable foreign-space policy. A nation whose activities begin to encompass near-earth orbit cannot have its foreign policy immutably rooted to earth-bound considerations.

Henry Kissinger, when Secretary of State, made "shuttle diplomacy" a household phrase. Now COLUMBIA can make it a foreign policy phase. ■

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ruled out private or mixed ownership." If, however, commercial usage truly flourished in later years, "some private investment in the system could become financially feasible," stated the report.

As for turning shuttle operations over to non-NASA Federal agencies, the Department of Defense was ruled out because "its selection would be inconsistent with U.S. emphasis on open, peaceful use of space, and it is politically out of the question."

The Departments of Commerce and Transportation were also evaluated as a home for shuttle operations management, as was a new independent agency.

Cites the report: "The comparative analysis left the Panel in no doubt that NASA was the best organizational location for the STO (space transportation organization)."

In his last position as Air Force Secretary, Mark strongly advocated the Department of Defense operating a separate fleet of shuttles, leaving NASA to maintain its own complement of space planes. ■