

August 13, 1965

A STATEMENT TO THE AMERICAN ASTRONAUTICAL SOCIETY  
BY  
VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY

Congratulations to the American Astronautical Society for organizing so significant a meeting on the "Impact of Space Exploration on Society." Your distinguished assembly offers a unique opportunity to explore the social, economic, educational and scientific implications of our vast space effort.

As Chairman of the National Aeronautics and Space Council, I know how dedicated you are to fulfillment of our space objectives.

The United States is successfully advancing in this great adventure -- thanks to the variety and quality of competences such as are so well represented in this Conference.

Inter-disciplinary dialogue such as the Conference features is invaluable.

International participation is likewise most essential. I am particularly happy, therefore, to welcome your distinguished foreign guests. This Nation seeks and has sought maximum international teamwork.

Your proceedings will, I am confident, represent an important phase in the understanding necessary to attainment of our long-range program. Out of your discussion will come new insight into the problems, opportunities, and challenges which lie ahead.

We have come a long way since the Space Age opened in October 1957. A vast and systematic scientific program of exploration of the near-Earth space environment by satellite vehicles is being conducted by many countries. Lunar and planetary probes are gaining much new information about our celestial neighbors. Satellites are being used for world-wide weather observations and to provide instantaneous and reliable communications between continents. Finally, and most important of all, we have proven that Man can be equipped to survive in the harsh environment of space.

Although the accomplishments of the last seven years are impressive, they will be dwarfed by the events of the coming 20 years.

Before the end of this decade, we expect Man to have set foot on the Moon's surface. This will be an event of historical magnitude.

By 1970, manned satellite stations will be circling the Earth for a month or more. A multi-manned crew (of three or four) will be on board, performing many kinds of scientific experiments, ranging from astronomy to zoology. Much larger manned space stations could become a reality in future years.

Before the end of the next five years, world-wide communication by means of satellites will be a routine accomplished fact, as will detailed observation of weather patterns and collection of meteorological data around the globe.

Radio and TV direct broadcasting to large areas of the Earth from satellites could become a reality in the next 10 years.

Before 1975, unmanned vehicles from Earth will be circling Mars and Venus and sending exploratory probes to the planets' surfaces.

To look into the future beyond 1975 is much more uncertain, but experts judge that by 1985, if Man has the desire and will, he can have gone a long way toward the goal of sending a manned expedition to Mars, perhaps with the aid of some kind of nuclear propulsion.

Even the most skilled expert cannot claim that all of these predictions will come true, but many or most or all can become realities if we steadfastly seek to make them come true.

With help from you and others, we shall forge ahead.

The goals so well enunciated by our late President John F. Kennedy and by President Lyndon B. Johnson will, indeed, be achieved.



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