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THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT OF THE NATIONAL SPACE COUNCIL

Creation of a US Space Force: Needs and Perspectives

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF

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INTRODUCTION

Vice President Pence, Members of the National Space Council, ladies and gentleman. It is an honor to join these distinguished panelists to discuss the President's proposal to create a Space Force. I have a unique perspective on the topic of how the government should organize and manage national security space. As you can see from my biography, I spent the majority of my 34-year Air Force career in a variety of space assignments that are relevant to today's discussion. I have experience in a wide range of space-related assignments in the Air Force, the National Reconnaissance Office, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and Combatant Commands. I was the CENTCOM Director of Space Forces assigned to the Middle East, where I was responsible for space war fighting support for Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. I was the first Director of the Joint Operationally Responsive Space Office...the precursor to today's Space Rapid Capabilities Office. As a one-star, I was the Vice Commander of the U.S. Air Force Warfare Center, where I was directly responsible for integrating space capabilities into how the Air Force executes advanced training, tactics development, and operational test across air, space, and cyber. As a two-star, I was the Deputy Director of Global Operations at United States Strategic Command responsible for how space capabilities are employed in support of STRATCOM and Combatant Command operations globally, and later served as the HQ Air Force Director of Space Operations and the Functional Manager for the human capital development of all space operations personnel across the Air Force. Last and very relevant to today's discussion, I was the only military staff member on the Rumsfeld Space Commission in 1990-1991 and then moved to the Pentagon where I became the special assistant to the Deputy Secretary of Defense for Space Commission Implementation. I also authored or co-authored numerous articles on this general topic in the years following the Space

Commission. I am here representing myself and have no personal or professional vested interest in the outcome of this debate other than wanting what's best for the United States.

RUMSFELD SPACE COMMISSION – WHAT WAS IT, WHY WAS IT IMPORTANT, AND WHAT HAPPENED

My perspective on this issue goes back almost two decades to the timeframe of the Commission to Assess National Security Space Management and Organization Space Commission (aka the Rumsfeld Space Commission) that was chaired by former Secretary of Defense Don Rumsfeld.

For the four reasons listed below, any senior leader responsible for National Security Space Management and Organization should be familiar with the Rumsfeld Space Commission report's five broad conclusions, ten separate findings, and thirteen specific recommendations. In addition, it is critical to understand the bureaucratic history associated with the implementation of the Commission's recommendations.

- The commission was the most thorough, comprehensive, and detailed study ever ever conducted on the topic of space management and organization. The thirteen commissioners came from a broad range of backgrounds and they spent six-months assessing U.S. national security space activities, including 32 days of meetings with 77 current and former senior officials and knowledgeable private sector representatives.
- Second, while the Space Commission report was not perfect, the majority of the Commission's conclusions, findings, and recommendations are still relevant today and in most cases much more urgent due to the serious threats that exist now to our space

systems and our space leadership. Only by understanding each key area, to include the underpinning logic and rationale, can a student of this topic be adequately informed.

- Third, the Space Commission was a bi-partisan and independent effort driven, but not managed by, the Congress. It was not written by the Executive branch or slanted towards the specific interests of any service, agency, or industry partner.
- Last and very important for today's focus, senior leaders need to understand whether or not Space Commission recommendations were implemented fully, partially, or not at all. They also need to understand why specific recommendations were not implemented or not implemented in accordance with the Space Commission spirit and intent. It is important to understand that any major bureaucratic realignment will be met with significant resistance and requires continued focus, clear and ambiguous direction, dedicated leaders accountable and committed to the directed outcomes, and an effective and clear oversight mechanism. Much of the great work done by the Space Commission was for naught, because we did not follow through and stay the course during implementation. We should learn those lessons and not repeat the same mistakes in the future.

To assist in gaining the understanding advocated for above, the following paragraphs will provide a high level summary of the Commissions conclusions, findings, and recommendations as well as some high level comments regarding how or if specific recommendations were implemented.

Five Space Commission Broad Conclusions

The thirteen bi-partisan members of the Commission identified five matters of key importance that needed attention quickly from the top levels of the U.S. Government. Those five matters, the unanimous conclusions of the commission, are as true and relevant today as they were in January of 1991 when the report was published.

- First, the present extent of U.S. dependence on space, the rapid pace at which this dependence is increasing and the vulnerabilities it creates, all demand that U.S. national security space interests be recognized as a top national security priority. The only way they will receive this priority is through specific guidance and direction from the very highest government levels. Only the President has the authority, first, to set forth the national space policy, and then to provide the guidance and direction to senior officials, that together are needed to ensure that the United States remains the world's leading space-faring nation. Only Presidential leadership can ensure the cooperation needed from all space sectors—commercial, civil, defense and intelligence.
- Second, the U.S. Government—in particular, the Department of Defense and the Intelligence Community—is not yet arranged or focused to meet the national security space needs of the 21st century. Our growing dependence on space, our vulnerabilities in space and the burgeoning opportunities from space are simply not reflected in the present institutional arrangements. After examining a variety of organizational approaches, the Commission concluded that a number of disparate space activities should promptly be merged, chains of command adjusted, lines of communication opened and policies modified to achieve greater responsibility and accountability. Only then can the necessary trade-offs be made, the appropriate priorities be established and the opportunities for improving U.S. military and intelligence capabilities be realized. Only with senior-level

leadership, when properly managed and with the right priorities will U.S. space programs both deserve and attract the funding that is required.

- Third, U.S. national security space programs are vital to peace and stability, and the two officials primarily responsible and accountable for those programs are the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence. Their relationship is critical to the development and deployment of the space capabilities needed to support the President in war, in crisis and also in peace. They must work closely and effectively together, in partnership, both to set and maintain the course for national security space programs and to resolve the differences that arise between their respective bureaucracies. Only if they do so will the armed forces, the Intelligence Community and the National Command Authorities have the information they need to pursue our deterrence and defense objectives successfully in this complex, changing and still dangerous world.
- Fourth, we know from history that every medium—air, land and sea—has seen conflict. Reality indicates that space will be no different. Given this virtual certainty, the U.S. must develop the means both to deter and to defend against hostile acts in and from space. This will require superior space capabilities. Thus far, the broad outline of U.S. national space policy is sound, but the U.S. has not yet taken the steps necessary to develop the needed capabilities and to maintain and ensure continuing superiority.
- Finally, investment in science and technology resources—not just facilities, but people—is essential if the U.S. is to remain the world’s leading space-faring nation. The U.S. Government needs to play an active, deliberate role in expanding and deepening the pool of military and civilian talent in science, engineering and systems operations that the

nation will need. The government also needs to sustain its investment in enabling and breakthrough technologies in order to maintain its leadership in space.

Space Commission Findings and Recommendations

In the Space Commission report, the commissioners made one thing clear regarding the nature of their thirteen recommendations. They viewed them as a coordinated tapestry of mutually reinforcing actions that were all needed to achieve success. They included recommendations focused on Presidential leadership and guidance, a more effective interagency process, significant internal organizational and management realignments (primarily within the Air Force), and improved coordination between the Department of Defense and the Intelligence Community. Within the report, each finding was listed with one or more recommendations aimed at addressing that particular finding. Below are the ten findings **[in bold]** and the thirteen unanimous recommendations *[in italics]* from the Space Commission.

Finding 1: Presidential Leadership

The United States has a vital national interest in space. National security space should be high among the nation's priorities. It deserves the attention of the national leadership, from the President down.

- *Recommendation 1: The President should consider establishing space as a national security priority.*

Finding 2: Presidential Space Advisory Group

The President might find it useful to have access to high-level advice in developing a long-term strategy for sustaining the nation's role as the leading space-faring nation.

- *Recommendation 2: The President should consider the appointment of a Presidential Space Advisory Group to provide independent advice on developing and employing new space capabilities.*

Finding 3: Senior Interagency Group for Space

The current interagency process is inadequate to address the number, range and complexity of today’s space issues, which are expected to increase over time. A standing interagency coordination process is needed to focus on policy formulation and coordination of space activities pertinent to national security and to assure that representation in domestic and international fora effectively reflects U.S. national security and other space interests.

- *Recommendation 3: The President should direct that a Senior Interagency Group for Space be established and staffed within the National Security Council structure.*

Finding 4: SecDef/DCI Relationship

The issues relating to space between the Department of Defense and the Intelligence Community are sufficiently numerous and complex that their successful resolution and implementation require a close, continuing and effective relationship between the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence.

- *Recommendation 4: The Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence should meet regularly to address national security space policy, objectives and issues.*

Finding 5: Under Secretary of Defense for Space, Intelligence and Information

Until space organizations have more fully evolved, the Office of the Secretary of Defense would benefit from having a senior-level official with sufficient standing to serve as the advocate for space within the Department. The Secretary of Defense would assign this official responsibility to oversee the Department’s research and development, acquisition, launch and operation of its space, intelligence and information assets; coordinate the military intelligence activities within the Department; and work with the Intelligence Community on long-range intelligence requirements for national security.

- *Recommendation 5: An Under Secretary of Defense for Space, Intelligence and Information should be established.*

Finding 6: Commander in Chief of U.S. Space Command and NORAD and Commander, Air Force Space Command

The Commander in Chief, U.S. Space Command should continue to concentrate on space as it relates to warfare in the mediums of air, land and sea, as well as space. His primary role is to conduct space operations and provide space-related services, to include computer network defense/ attack missions in support of the operations of the other CINCs, and national missile defense. This broad and varied set of responsibilities as CINCSPACE will leave less time for his other assigned duties.

- *Recommendation 6: The Secretary of the Air Force should assign responsibility for the command of Air Force Space Command to a four-star officer other than CINCSPACE/CINCNOAD.*
- *Recommendation 7: The Secretary of Defense should end the practice of assigning only Air Force flight-rated officers to the position of CINCSPACE and CINCNOAD*

to ensure that an officer from any Service with an understanding of combat and space could be assigned to this position.

Finding 7: Military Services

The Department of Defense requires space systems that can be employed in independent operations or in support of air, land and sea forces to deter and defend against hostile actions directed at the interests of the United States. In the mid term a Space Corps within the Air Force may be appropriate to meet this requirement; in the longer term it may be met by a military department for space. In the nearer term, a realigned, rechartered Air Force is best suited to organize, train and equip space forces.

- *Recommendation 8: The Air Force should realign headquarters and field commands to more effectively organize, train and equip for prompt and sustained space operations. Assign Air Force Space Command (AFSPC) responsibility for providing the resources to execute space research, development, acquisition and operations, under the command of a four-star general. The Army and Navy would still establish requirements and develop and deploy space systems unique to each Service.*
- *Recommendation 9: Amend Title 10 U.S.C. to assign the Air Force responsibility to organize, train and equip for prompt and sustained offensive and defensive air and space operations. In addition, the Secretary of Defense should designate the Air Force as Executive Agent for Space within the Department of Defense.*

Finding 8: Aligning Air Force and NRO Space Programs

The Department of Defense and the Intelligence Community would benefit from the appointment of a single official within the Air Force with authority for the acquisition of

space systems for the Air Force and the NRO based on the “best practices” of each organization.

- *Recommendation 10: Assign the Under Secretary of the Air Force as the Director of the National Reconnaissance Office. Designate the Under Secretary as the Air Force Acquisition Executive for Space.*

Finding 9: Innovative Research and Development

The Intelligence Community has a need for revolutionary methods, including but not limited to space systems, for collecting intelligence.

- *Recommendation 11: The Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence should direct the creation of a research, development and demonstration organization to focus on this requirement.*

Finding 9 (Cont): Innovative Research and Development

Competitive centers of innovation that actively pursue space-related research, development and demonstration programs are desirable.

- *Recommendation 12: The Secretary of Defense should direct the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency and the Services’ laboratories to undertake development and demonstration of innovative space technologies and systems for dedicated military missions.*

Finding 10: Budgeting for Space

Better visibility into the level and distribution of fiscal and personnel resources would improve management and oversight of space programs.

- *Recommendation 13: The Secretary of Defense should establish a Major Force Program for Space.*

Space Commission Implementation – What Happened and Why

So what happened and where are we today? In a nutshell, we collectively failed to implement many of the Space Commission's thirteen key recommendations and this failure meant we did not create the independent structures and authorities within the Air Force as envisioned by the Commission. Bluntly stated, our failure to implement the needed recommendations is the singular reason for today's frustrations. There are numerous reasons the broad range of recommendations were not uniformly pursued. A few of the major ones are:

- **Presidential Transition and Timing:** The Space Commission met for six months at the end of the 2000 Presidential Campaign and the report was published just prior to the Jan 2001 inauguration of George W. Bush. The Commission deliberately chose not to engage the Bush or Gore campaigns during the summer and fall of 2000, so Space Commission issues were never discussed with the campaigns or their core policy experts. After the election concluded, the Bush transition team already had their priorities and organizational structures set and they did not alter them based on Commission recommendations. For that reason, none of the three recommendations associated with Presidential leadership, Presidential advice, and White House structure were implemented in either of the two George W. Bush Presidential terms. They were also not implemented in either of the Barack Obama Presidential terms. That all has changed in

the Trump administration, as the President Trump has made national security space a high priority and re-established the National Space Council under the leadership of Vice-President Pence.

- **Secretary of Defense Priorities and Decisions:** In an interesting twist, Space Commission Chairman Donald Rumsfeld was selected by President Elect Bush in December of 2000 to serve as Secretary of Defense for the second time. As Secretary of Defense, Rumsfeld had a different role than as Space Commission Chairman. Many thought he would simply implement or advocate for implementation of all Space Commission recommendations that pertained to DoD, but that turned out to be an unrealistic expectation for the following reasons.
 - First, the Space Commission was a consensus report. As SecDef, Rumsfeld had a different role. He had to determine what DoD thought about each of the findings and recommendations, and decide which he would direct or advocate to be implemented. In this role, Secretary Rumsfeld chose to implement some, but not all Space Commission recommendations.
 - Second, world events transpired that ultimately pushed space organization and management to the back burner. The terrorist attacks of Sept 11, 2001 changed our world forever and almost all of our priorities and attentions turned, appropriately so, to that crisis.
- **Air Force Culture and Dynamic:** The Air Force had not supported the idea of a space commission after it was directed by the Congress and argued strongly against the notion that the service was not adequately supporting the space mission. However, the Space Commission report stated “Few witnesses before the Commission expressed confidence

that the current Air Force organization is suited to the conduct of these missions. Nor was there confidence that the Air Force will fully address the requirement to provide space capabilities for the other services. Many believe the Air Force treats space solely as a supporting capability that enhances the primary mission of the Air Force to conduct offensive and defensive air operations. Despite official doctrine that calls for the integration of air and space capabilities, the Air Force does not treat the two equally. As with air operations, the Air Force must take steps to create a culture within the Service dedicated to developing new space system concepts, doctrine, and operational capabilities.” There is no indication the Air Force agreed with the perspective as stated in the above quote and they certainly did not agree that there was any need to drastically realign core organize, train, and equip authorities inside the service. Instead, the service created some new, surface level alignments, authorities and processes, but did not actually transfer core responsibilities away from the institutional centers of power for personnel management, financial management, space R&D, and space development and acquisition. This created a perception of real change, no true change occurred.

- Foxes Guarding the Hen House: A simple bureaucratic truth is you cannot ask a group of organizations to transform themselves in significant ways, if the results of that transformation will reduce or threaten the power or authority of the organizations involved. In many cases, committees made up of OSD, Air Force, and IC organizations were left to determine whether space commission recommendations should be embraced and implemented, and this work was done without any driving senior oversight or accountability to a particular outcome. All experts of organizational change would argue

against such an approach, yet that is usually how DoD manages change and one reason it takes so long to do so little.

Below is a very brief summary of how each of the thirteen commission recommendations were handled in terms of implementation. Only two recommendations were implemented and remain in place. Three were implemented, but later undone by other actions. Five were never implemented. Two were implemented in name only, but not close to the spirit and intent intended by the commission.

- *Recommendation 1: The President should consider establishing space as a national security priority.* – **This did not happen.**
- *Recommendation 2: The President should consider the appointment of a Presidential Space Advisory Group to provide independent advice on developing and employing new space capabilities.* – **This did not happen.**
- *Recommendation 3: The President should direct that a Senior Interagency Group for Space be established and staffed within the National Security Council structure.* – **This did not happen.**
- *Recommendation 4: The Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence should meet regularly to address national security space policy, objectives and issues.* – **This was partially implemented. SecDef and DCI did to agree to meet regularly to address intelligence matters and to reestablish Executive Committee, but the Global War on Terror (GWOT) was the priority and national security space matters were not often discussed.**
- *Recommendation 5: An Under Secretary of Defense for Space, Intelligence and Information should be established.* – **This did not happen. The SecDef initially**

chose to retain the traditional OSD structure and later created an Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence which had much more limited scope of authority than the position envisioned by the Space Commission. As a result, there was no dedicated advocacy for national security space or full-time oversight ensuring Space Commission implementation was occurring as directed.

- *Recommendation 6: The Secretary of the Air Force should assign responsibility for the command of Air Force Space Command to a four-star officer other than CINCSPACE/CINCNORAD. – This was implemented.*
- *Recommendation 7: The Secretary of Defense should end the practice of assigning only Air Force flight-rated officers to the position of CINCSPACE and CINCNORAD to ensure that an officer from any Service with an understanding of combat and space could be assigned to this position. – This was implemented, but the impact was short lived. In 2002, U.S. Space Command (USSPACECOM) was disestablished when U.S. Northern Command was created. USSPACECOM’s responsibilities were merged with a re-chartered and expanded U.S. Strategic Command.*
- *Recommendation 8: The Air Force should realign headquarters and field commands to more effectively organize, train and equip for prompt and sustained space operations. Assign Air Force Space Command (AFSPC) responsibility for providing the resources to execute space research, development, acquisition and operations, under the command of a four-star general. The Army and Navy would still establish requirements and develop and deploy space systems unique to each Service. – This was the most complex recommendation in the commission’s report as it was intended to drive multiple*

realignments of authority and responsibility for space within Headquarters USAF and in Air Force field commands. Many of the recommendations were not popular with Air Force leadership and very few of them were implemented in accordance with the spirit and intent of the Space Commission's intent. To further compound this problem, the lack of focused OSD senior oversight and the immense pressures associated with the GWOT, created an environment where the Air Force was largely left to its own devices in how it was to execute these recommendations. The failures in this area are directly causal in the fact that we have not made the progress needed inside the Air Force since the Space Commission. Because we never completed a fundamental realignment of the Air Force, we also never started the journey towards a Corps or a Department. We missed the opportunity stated by the Commission to "create a space-oriented culture comprised of military professionals who could directly influence the development of systems and doctrine for use in space operations. The nation's vital interests depend increasingly on the capability of its military professionals to develop, acquire and operate systems capable of sustained space combat operations."

- *Recommendation 9: Amend Title 10 U.S.C. to assign the Air Force responsibility to organize, train and equip for prompt and sustained offensive and defensive air and space operations. In addition, the Secretary of Defense should designate the Air Force as Executive Agent for Space within the Department of Defense. – This did not happen, because the Secretary of Defense decided not to ask Congress for a change in Title 10, but instead assigned the Department of the Air Force responsibility to organize,*

train, and equip for prompt and sustained offensive and defensive space operations via DoD Directive.

- *Recommendation 10: Assign the Under Secretary of the Air Force as the Director of the National Reconnaissance Office. Designate the Under Secretary as the Air Force Acquisition Executive for Space.* – **This was initially implemented, but both elements of the recommendation have since been undone.**
- *Recommendation 11: The Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence should direct the creation of a research, development and demonstration organization to focus on this requirement.* **The SecDef and the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) requested DNRO to examine how to establish an Office of Space Reconnaissance within NRO and report back to them.**
- *Recommendation 12: The Secretary of Defense should direct the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency and the Services' laboratories to undertake development and demonstration of innovative space technologies and systems for dedicated military missions.* **DARPA and Service laboratories were directed to undertake development and demonstration of innovative space technologies and systems for dedicated military purposes, but this focus faded at the end of the Bush administration.**
- *Recommendation 13: The Secretary of Defense should establish a Major Force Program for Space.* – **This was partially implemented via a virtual Major Force Program, but it never became a very useful tool.**

SUMMARY AND WAY AHEAD

It is very disappointing to say, but we have missed a generational opportunity after the Space Commission and we have wasted much of the past 17 ½ years. Until last year, we failed

to make space a national priority. President Trump has now made space a national priority and the National Space Council will be an effective mechanism aimed at delivering on that priority, but that change is only now starting to have an impact.

We failed to put a single senior leader and a strong oversight mechanism in place inside OSD to advocate and oversee space, as well as hold all involved accountable. We failed to ensure the Air Force created independent space organize, train, and equip functions and we failed to realize the benefit of almost two decades of maturity in areas such as personnel management and policy, doctrine and concept development, focused investment in research and development, and the planning, programming and acquisition of space systems needed by the nation today. We have made little progress toward a space department or a space corps within the Air Force. Until the past few years of Congressional and now White House interest, a Space Corps or separate Department rarely came up and it certainly was not a stated objective or end state.

Recommendations

I do have some recommendations moving forward for the Space Council members to consider as they deliberate on this important issue:

- Maintain the extraordinary level of Presidential focus and leadership and continue to build consensus on the Hill.
- Do everything possible to make this a bi-partisan issue important to all Americans and make sure they understand the serious nature of today's threat to our nation in the space area.
- Don't be distracted by issues that may be important, but are not central to creating an independent structure or you may be disruptive in the wrong areas. As an example, this is not about space acquisition and we don't solve the core problems by creating new acquisition

structures and figuring out how to be agile and innovative. Those are important issues and we need to better, but they are not unique to space and they are not causal to today's problems.

- Don't believe that creating an independent organization would distract us from the urgent problems of the day, because creating the space personnel, culture, doctrine, and capabilities the nation needs is the urgent problem of the day.

- Focus on rapid results and momentum. Pick an independent organizational structure, align it under a single, committed senior space leader, and provide that leader the needed authority, autonomy, and resources over core space organize, train, and equip functions. A separate Space Corps within the Department of the Air Force may be viewed as the most efficient and cheapest path to a separate branch of the military, but a Space Force under a separate Department of Space would be the most rapid and most effective path towards an organization able to meet the serious threats that exist right now...not tomorrow or in the mid-term. Whatever model is created, ensure the leadership and all involved know their job and that their futures are all tied to creating a truly independent organize, train, and equip organization.

- The Secretary of Defense should create or assign a single, senior OSD official and office to oversee, advocate for, and provide top cover for those charged with responsibility to create an independent space organization and to ensure all actions are being implemented as directed. The Secretary of Defense should also exempt all related matters from traditional OSD, Joint Staff, and service bureaucratic processes aimed at things like conducting studies, validating manpower, adding resources only after offsets are offered, and relitigating decisions already made by National or DoD leadership. Those traditional processes take far too long and add very little value towards rapid and effective implementation.

- Don't allow costs associated with a new space organization to be over-inflated. Do this by providing the leader of the new independent organization sole responsibility and authority over budget and costs associated with the new organization. Ensure every billet and dollar directly or indirectly associated with DoD space-related matters are transferred under this person's authority. Direct this leader to carefully break out and discriminate between direct costs associated with a new organize, train, and equip organization, from those associated with other space-related priorities that are independent of whether or not we create a new organize, train, and equip structure. For example, if we create a new military department, there will be some additional overhead required to meet statutory requirements and to execute service organize, train, and equip functions. But money and people for new joint commands, new space capabilities, and new warfighting structures should not be associated with a new organize, train, and equip organization. Reuse or modify existing infrastructure for headquarters, command and control, and other functions. Much already exists or is being built. The nation needs to invest much more money into national security space warfighting capabilities, but these investments are largely independent of a much smaller relative investment to stand up an independent space organize, train, and equip organization.