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The Landsat Program: Management, Funding, and Policy Decisions

November 26, 1991
House Rayburn Office Building
Room 2318
9:30 a.m.

Panel I

Admiral Richard H. Truly
Administrator, National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Duane P. Andrews
Assistant Secretary of Defense
Command, Control, Communications and Intelligence

Panel II

Lawrie E. Jordan, III
President, ERDAS, Incorporated

William P. Bishop
Vice President for Research
Desert Research Institute, University of Nevada

Arturo Silvestrini
President, Earth Observation Satellite Company (EOSAT)

Kass Green
President, Pacific Meridian Resources

Frederick B. Henderson, III
President, The Geosat Committee, Inc.

Molly Macauley
Resources for the Future

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OPENING STATEMENT

BY THE

**HONORABLE DUANE P. ANDREWS
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
(COMMAND, CONTROL, COMMUNICATIONS AND INTELLIGENCE)**

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE AND TECHNOLOGY
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

NOVEMBER 26, 1991

Good morning Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee.

As you requested in your letter of October 31, 1991, I am pleased to be here today to address the role of the Department of Defense in the Landsat Program and offer comment on the provisions of H.R. 3614, the National Land Remote Sensing Policy Act of 1991.

Let me begin by stating that the Department continues to believe that Landsat is an important program: to Defense, to the civil sector, and to our national space program in general. As you know, we have been a major user of Landsat data in the past, and our usage could even grow if the system is improved in the future. We are taking the current Landsat situation very seriously -- as is the Administration as a whole. I know, Mr. Chairman, that this committee has devoted considerable time and thought to this issue; let me assure you that pursuant to Deputy Secretary Atwood's direction, we have too. We have been an active player in the National Space Council Review of the Program, which has been an objective and thorough interagency process. In addition, NASA and DoD have been aggressively developing potential joint management arrangements.

As a result of these efforts, I can tell you today that the Administration will acquire a Landsat 7 spacecraft; and that the program will be conducted jointly by DoD and NASA under a mutually acceptable -- but yet to be finalized -- management and funding approach. Since the Department is still in the process of developing its fiscal year 1993 budget submission, I cannot specify for you today any program details such as funding levels, technical features or schedule. We will, of course, provide such information as it becomes available.

With this as a precursor, I would like to provide an initial reaction to H.R. 3614. Before getting to specifics, I would like to note that in my view, H.R. 3614 is a well thought out package that seeks to guide the Landsat Program into the next century, while balancing the interests of all users. However, there are some aspects of the bill that are of concern.

With regard to the procedural and programmatic aspects of H.R. 3614, I believe the Bill in general proposes principles and practices that would provide a sound point of departure for developing a solid joint program plan. However, there are two aspects of the proposed legislation that I believe are unnecessary, would restrict the agencies' abilities to most effectively and efficiently manage the program, and therefore warrant reconsideration.

First, the Bill directs the establishment of a Joint Program Office (JPO), under a civilian Program Manager and in headquarters to be provided by NASA. My belief is that any agency or agencies who agree to fund and execute the future Landsat Program should be given the widest possible latitude to select organizational structures consistent with their assessment of how the effort can be most effectively managed. Certainly, the concept of a JPO represents one possible arrangement, but there are others. The Bill need not be this specific or this directive. Rather, it should provide that the implementing agencies develop an overall management plan -- to include organizational structures and responsibilities -- and advise the Committee on its plan within a reasonable period of time after enactment.

A second, but related, concern is that the Bill would direct sole source negotiations with the current Landsat vendor for the follow-on satellite, as well as for rights associated with the follow-on and previous satellite data. As above, I view this as unnecessarily

restrictive on the agencies, and potentially detrimental to the efficient execution of the Program as a whole. The agencies should be granted the authority to structure a procurement plan consistent with their existing policies and practices, and with federal acquisition regulations. As a minimum, the Bill should not prematurely foreclose on the concept of introducing competition to this program, which in my estimate could be beneficial. I would expect the current vendor to be a viable contender in such a competition.

Mr. Chairman, H.R. 3614 represents an important step in refocusing the Landsat Program to move it toward a productive future. We look forward to working with you and your Committee in formulating a program that meets the diverse needs of the broad user community, builds upon the previous success of the Landsat program, and continues U.S. leadership in land remote sensing into the next century.

This concludes my opening remarks.



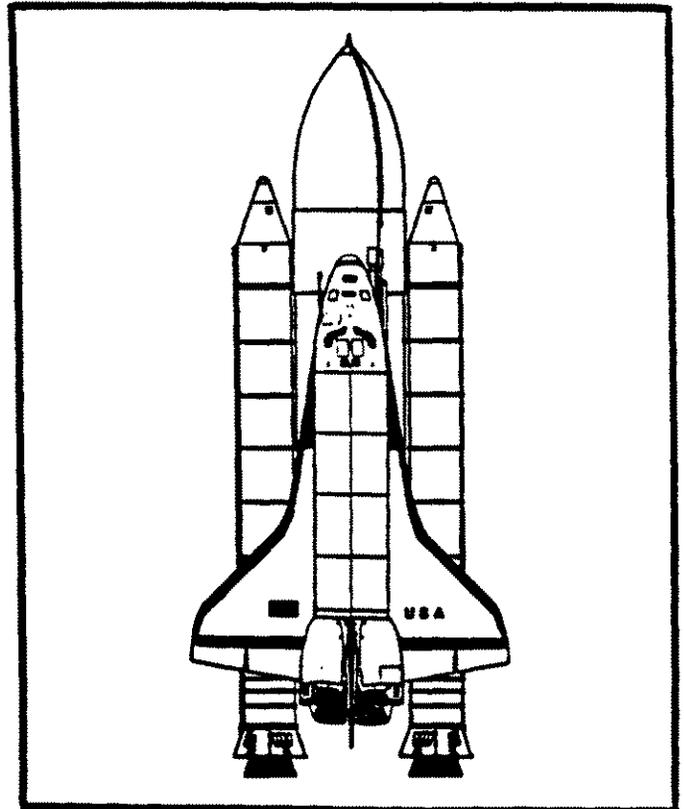
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Committee on Science, Space and Technology

U.S. House of Representatives



Statement by:
Richard H. Truly
Administrator

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--National Aeronautics and Space Administration

before the

Committee on Science, Space and Technology
U.S. House of Representatives

November 26, 1991

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the Committee today on NASA's role in the future of the Landsat program. For nearly twenty years Landsat has enabled us to document both natural and man-made changes on Earth's land surface. It has provided an uninterrupted stream of observations of the natural environment, contributing to scientific knowledge, land use management and establishing the first commercial demand for remote sensing data. Landsat has supported research in geology, hydrology, global biology and many other fields. It represents a historical data base that will play an extremely important role in the U.S. Global Change Research Program.

In 1989, President Bush issued a revised U.S. National Space Policy that committed the U.S. Government to maintaining the continuity of Landsat-type remote sensing data. Pursuant to that directive, the National Space Council, under Vice President Quayle's leadership, has been developing options for ensuring that the Landsat program meets the needs of the global change research and other user communities. I am pleased to inform the Committee today that yesterday the National Space Council met and strongly endorsed the Landsat system and the availability of this important data stream. As evidence of the Administration's commitment, the fiscal year 1993 budget request will include funding for Landsat 7 and other related activities. Between now and completion of the formulation of the final 1993 budget, NASA and DOD will work out the complete details of the initiative including the management structure and the funding profile. We also will work with Department of Commerce and the contractor to resolve important data rights issues.

Mr. Chairman the Administration has tried to be responsive to this Committee, and you personally, in coming up with a solution to maintain our nation's land remote-sensing capability.

As I indicated, Deputy Secretary Atwood and I are in the process of working out the final details. I have been asked by the Vice President to give you the Administration's assurance that we will work with you and the Committee to implement legislation to amend the Land Remote-Sensing Commercialization Act of 1984 and to ensure the availability of Landsat data.

Mr. Chairman, it is a pleasure to appear before the Committee today and to have the honor of announcing the Administration's commitment to the continuation of the Landsat program. This concludes my brief opening remarks and I would be pleased to answer any questions you or any members of the Committee might have.

Thank you.