

For the benefit of all

LBJ and the development of the US space program



- Johnson's support of the the US space program began in 1957 with the launch of Sputnik
- As Senator:
 - Pushed for the creation of the Preparedness Subcommittee of the Senate Arms Services Committee
 - Created & chaired the Special Committee on Space and Aeronautics
 - Led to creation of NASA
- Desired a space program that was bi-partisan, non-military, and a beacon for US achievement.





Senator Johnson saw space as “a direct responsibility of mine”
and space exploration as an area for
“bold, new thinking in defense and foreign policy”



- Historian Andreas Richstein said, “All actions of Congress with regard to space between 1957 and 1961 can be attributed to Johnson.”
- As Vice President, Kennedy appointed LBJ as the chair of National Space Council
- LBJ would oversee the Gemini, Saturn, Apollo Programs

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

April 20, 1961

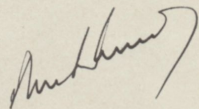
MEMORANDUM FOR

VICE PRESIDENT

In accordance with our conversation I would like for you as Chairman of the Space Council to be in charge of making an overall survey of where we stand in space.

1. Do we have a chance of beating the Soviets by putting a laboratory in space, or by a trip around the moon, or by a rocket to land on the moon, or by a rocket to go to the moon and back with a man. Is there any other space program which promises dramatic results in which we could win?
2. How much additional would it cost?
3. Are we working 24 hours a day on existing programs. If not, why not? If not, will you make recommendations to me as to how work can be speeded up.
4. In building large boosters should we put out emphasis on nuclear, chemical or liquid fuel, or a combination of these three?
5. Are we making maximum effort? Are we achieving necessary results?

I have asked Jim Webb, Dr. Weisner, Secretary McNamara and other responsible officials to cooperate with you fully. I would appreciate a report on this at the earliest possible moment.



OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON, D. C.

April 28, 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Evaluation of Space Program.

Reference is to your April 20 memorandum asking certain questions regarding this country's space program.

A detailed survey has not been completed in this time period. The examination will continue. However, what we have obtained so far from knowledgeable and responsible persons makes this summary reply possible.

Among those who have participated in our deliberations have been the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense; General Schriever (AF); Admiral Hayward (Navy); Dr. von Braun (NASA); the Administrator, Deputy Administrator, and other top officials of NASA; the Special Assistant to the President on Science and Technology; representatives of the Director of the Bureau of the Budget; and three outstanding non-Government citizens of the general public: Mr. George Brown (Brown & Root, Houston, Texas); Mr. Donald Cook (American Electric Power Service, New York, N. Y.); and Mr. Frank Stanton (Columbia Broadcasting System, New York, N. Y.).

The following general conclusions can be reported:

- a. Largely due to their concentrated efforts and their earlier emphasis upon the development of large rocket engines, the Soviets are ahead of the United States in world prestige attained through impressive technological accomplishments in space.
- b. The U.S. has greater resources than the USSR for attaining space leadership but has failed to make the necessary hard decisions and to marshal those resources to achieve such leadership.

DECLASSIFIED
000 11652, Sec. 3(E) and 5(D) or (E)
By MFD NARS, Date 3/14/74
NLK-74-11

- As President, LBJ had to balance the soaring budgetary needs of The Great Society, Vietnam War, and increased needs of NASA in order to make it to the moon.
- LBJ knew that space exploration and superiority was important for technology and national morale
 - Though it should be noted that the space fervor from 1957 had subsided amongst Americans





Lyndon Johnson toured Cape Kennedy, including ascending the launch umbilical tower at Pad 39A to view the Saturn V 500-F facilities demonstrator, as pictured. September 1966

National Archives

President Johnson made space advancement and achievement visible to the American people.



President Lyndon B. Johnson pins a medal on Astronaut Gordon Cooper. Pete Conrad stands behind Cooper.
September 14, 1965



President Lyndon B. Johnson awarding CDR Charles "Pete" Conrad, astronaut, the Exceptional Service Medal in the Oval Office. Conrad was the pilot for the Gemini 5 mission.
September 14, 1965



President Lyndon B. Johnson talks to an Apollo 7 astronaut by telephone, astronaut is seen on television.
October 22, 1968



Apollo 8 astronauts (L-R) Frank Borman, Jim Lovell, and William Anders are greeted by President Lyndon B. Johnson on their arrival at the White House.
January 9, 1969

LBJ had to face tragedy when the Apollo 1 vessel caught fire during a mock liftoff on January 27, 1967, killing astronauts Virgil “Gus” Grissom, Edward White, and Roger Chaffee.



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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 27, 1967
7:45 p. m.

Mr. President:

James Webb just reported that the first Apollo crew was under test at Cape Kennedy and a fire broke out in their capsule and all three were killed. He does not know whether it was the primary or backup crew, but believes it was the primary crew of Grissom, White and Chafe.

Jim Jones

*Can read this note aloud
(upon receiving it) at the
20th party honoring
Key Tamm -*



Astronauts James McDivitt and Edward White and their families in the White House swimming pool.
June 17, 1965



President Lyndon B. Johnson in the Oval Office with astronauts Gordon Cooper and Charles "Pete" Conrad, and NASA physician Charles A. Berry and their families after awarding Cooper, Conrad, and Berry the Exceptional Service Medal.
Sept. 14, 1965

President and Mrs. Johnson often hosted astronauts and their families at White House after missions/achievements for congratulations, awards, and fun family weekends

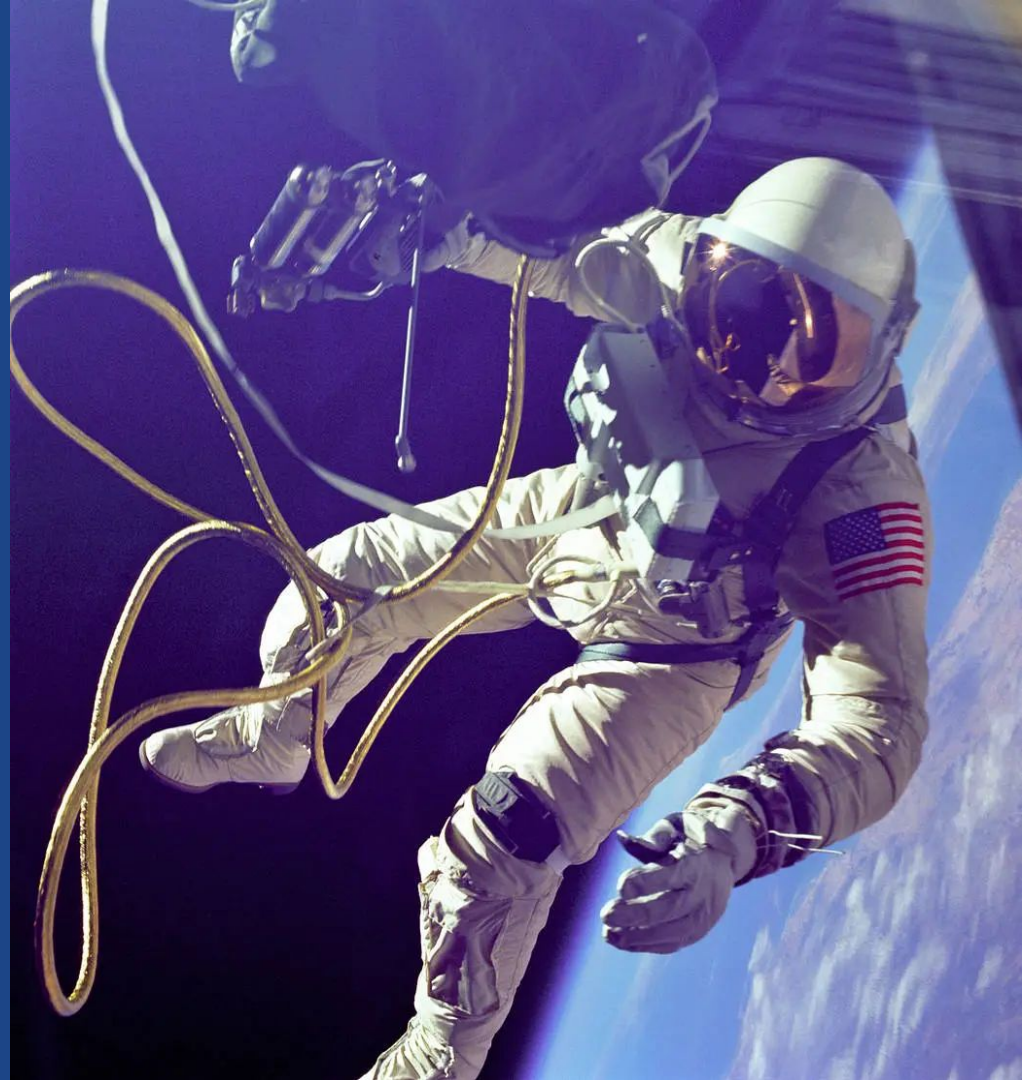
They even took the astronauts and their wives to Paris as a surprise trip!

And then Lyndon delivered the shocker of the evening. He said,. "I'm not going to be very popular with your families when I say this, but I want you astronauts to go again outside this country.

<https://www.discoverlbi.org/item/ctid-19650617>

Moments for President Johnson

- Renamed Cape Canaveral Kennedy Space Center
- First space walk for the United States
Edward White, 1965 





1967 Outer Space Treaty
January 20, 1967

February 7, 1967: Special Message to the Senate on Transmitting the Treaty on Outer Space

I hope that I may be able to affirm as President of the United States, what I said as a Senator to the United Nations in 1958:

"On the goal of dedicating outer space to peaceful purposes for the benefit of all mankind, there are no differences within our government, between our parties or among our people."

ACTIVITY TIME!



UNITED NATIONS
Office for Outer Space Affairs



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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

2222 (XXI). Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space covering its work during 1966, ¹ and in particular the work accomplished by the Legal Subcommittee during its fifth session, held at Geneva from 12 July to 4 August and at New York from 12 September to 16 September,

Noting further the progress achieved through subsequent consultations among States Members of the United Nations,

Reaffirming the importance of international cooperation in the field of activities in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, and the importance of developing the rule of law in this new area of human endeavour,

1. *Commends* the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, the text of which is annexed to the present resolution;
2. *Requests* the Depository Governments to open the Treaty for signature and ratification at the earliest possible date;
3. *Expresses its hope* for the widest possible adherence to this Treaty;

January 27, 1967: Remarks at the Signing of the Treaty on Outer Space

Secretary Rusk, Mr. Vice President, Mr. Chief Justice, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen:

This is an inspiring moment in the history of the human race.

We are taking the first firm step toward keeping outer space free forever from the implements of war.

It was more than 400 years ago when Martin Luther said: "Cannons and firearms are cruel and damnable machines. I believe them to have been the direct suggestion of the devil. If Adam had seen in a vision the horrible instruments that his children were to invent, he would have died of grief."

Well, I wonder what he would have thought of the far more terrible weapons that we have today.

We have never succeeded in freeing our planet from the implements of war. But if we cannot yet achieve this goal here on earth, we can at least keep the virus from spreading.

We can keep the ugly and wasteful weapons of mass destruction from contaminating space. And that is exactly what this treaty does.

This treaty means that the moon and our sister planets will serve only the purposes of peace and not of war.

It means that orbiting man-made satellites will remain free of nuclear weapons.

It means that astronaut and cosmonaut will meet someday on the surface of the moon as brothers and not as warriors for competing nationalities or ideologies.

It holds promise that the same wisdom and good will which gave us this space treaty will continue to guide us as we seek solutions to the many problems that we have here on this earth.

It is a hopeful and a very promising sign. We are so pleased that we could be joined here today by the representatives of so many of the other nations of the world...

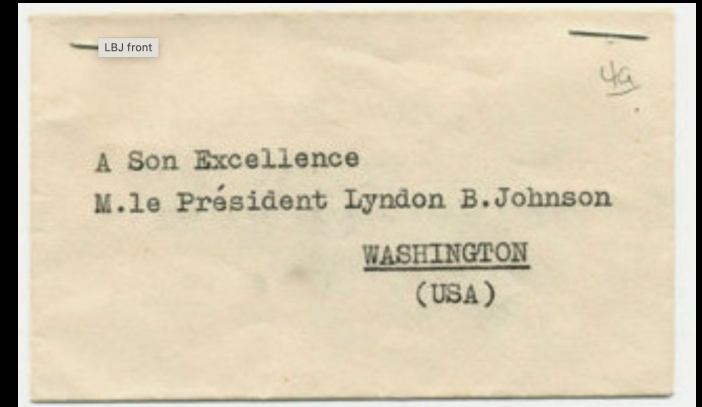
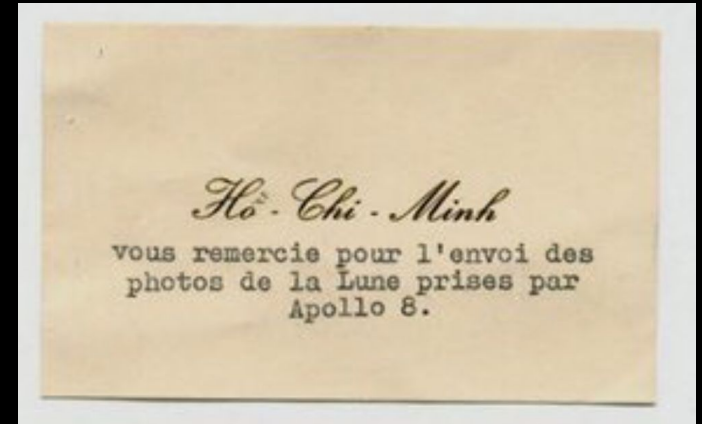
December 1968
Earth Rising photo
Apollo 8 mission



The Power of a Picture

I am haunted by a little piece of paper in the library archives — a note from Ho Chi Minh, leader of North Vietnam, with whom we were at war. It had been sent indirectly, through France. The note simply thanked President Johnson for a picture of the earth rising over the moon — Earthrise, it was called. The picture had been taken in December 1968 by the Apollo 8 astronauts, the first humans to escape earth's gravitational field, and the first to see the dark side of the moon. As one of his last acts as president, Johnson had sent Earthrise to all the world's leaders — even to those, such as Fidel Castro and Ho Chi Minh, with whom we had no diplomatic relations. From the transformational perspective of the earth as seen from space, all of us, even our enemies, travel together.

-Betty Sue Flowers, former Director of the LBJ Presidential Library



- Neil Armstrong walks on the moon, 6 months after LBJ leaves office
 - LBJ was in attendance for the Apollo 11 lift off in Florida





- In 1973, President Nixon would rename the manned space program facility in Houston after Lyndon Johnson in recognition of his unyielding support of the space program

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Questions?

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Did you know?

LBJ signed 60 education bills during his presidency, including the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the Higher Education Act.

The library, led by our education department, carries on that legacy every day through the nearly 11,000 students (and their teachers and school educators) that visit and participate in our educational programming and activities yearly.

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