

MINNESOTA RADIO TAPE OF MAY 20, 1963

FOR BROADCAST WEEK BEGINNING MAY 26, 1963

Ladies and gentlemen---

This is Senator Hubert Humphrey, reporting to you  
from my office on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.---

This was an exciting week in Washington, and a proud time for the  
Nation.

I speak of the triumphant appearances of Astronaut Gordon Cooper in  
a special ceremony at the White House and in a Joint Session of the  
Congress.

I participated in both events, and want to share with you now a few  
thoughts of mine as I watched Major Cooper report to the President and to  
Congress.

Gordon Cooper merits our admiration and respect for his courage and

(more)

skill in his 22 orbit flight around the world. This flight of the Mercury capsule "Faith 7" proved once again that machines and computers can not replace the power of judgment and decision by man.

Yes, Gordon Cooper's flight was a personal achievement---but it was also a national achievement.

Thousands of men and women worked quietly in the background to make this significant flight possible and successful. But more important, every American contributed to this magnificent space success. This was your achievement, made possible through your support of America's space program.

That program is awesomely expensive. The American people have been asked to give a big slice of the national budget to the complex and costly effort to send man into space and to explore the mysteries of the universe.

There are some citizens who question whether or not the cost is justified. Many have seriously questioned the policy of spending billions for the United States' space program at a time when our nation has pressing needs to meet domestic and international responsibilities.

(more)

I can understand why the questions are asked. Our Nation faces critical needs for schools, hospitals, programs for our young people, and steps to apply our technology to strengthen our economy. The world is still marked by massive poverty, hunger, sickness and illiteracy.

Yes, we must apply our energies and resources to these problems and needs on earth.

But I believe that we must also continue America's ambitious space program. The basic reason is not that we simply enjoy witnessing the drama of space flights or identifying with a National hero such as Gordon Cooper or John Glenn. And the basic motivation for our space program is not just an urge to compete with the Soviet Union in space exploration.

The real reason for America's costly space program is that we, as a people, must explore the unknown. The pioneer instinct is still with us. We are not a stagnant people, willing to sit back and ignore opportunities for new discoveries.

This Nation was discovered, built and strengthened by a human instinct to explore. The <sup>(</sup>men who sailed across the uncharted waters of the Atlantic

centuries ago did not know what they would find at the end of their voyages. The men and women who pioneered westward across the American continent in the last century and a half did not know what they would find.

And today, we do not know what we will find in space---but we must explore it.

Our space programs do have immediate values---for our international stature, for communications techniques, for military application. But the real values are yet to come, and they will represent the fulfillment of man's capacity for courage and adventure.



# Minnesota Historical Society

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.



[www.mnhs.org](http://www.mnhs.org)