

EXCERPT

ESSA-NASA CEREMONIES MARKING INAUGURATION OF THE OPERATIONAL WEATHER SATELLITE SYSTEM

Date: February 4, 1966

NASA Headquarters

Exceptional Service Medal Awardees:

Dr. Morris Tepper  
Mr. Herbert Butler  
Mr. David Johnson

Participants:

Honorable Hubert H. Humphrey, Vice President of the United States  
Honorable John T. Connor, Secretary of Commerce  
Honorable James E. Webb, Administrator of National Aeronautics and Space Administration  
Honorable J. Herbert Hollomon, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Science and Technology  
Dr. Robert C. Seamans, Deputy Administrator of National Aeronautics and Space Administration

\* \* \* \* \*

Mr. Vice President:

Thank you very much. Mr. Secretary and Administrator Webb, our good friend Jim Webb, and Dr. Seamans, and the distinguished scientists and gentlemen that have been the recipients of this high award from NASA, Mr. Johnson, Dr. Tepper, and Mr. Butler. I am sure they all have the honored title of Doctor, but if they don't, Mister is a good title too.

I am very honored myself to be included in these ceremonies today. First of all because once again we see the spirit of cooperation that is so necessary in our space activities. We all know that science leaves no room for jurisdictional disputes, and we sense here the cordial and friendly relationships and helpful relationships that exist between NASA, our great space agency, and the Department of Commerce, and the Weather Service, and the Environmental Scientific Service, (Is that right? pretty close) the ESSA anyway. And I surely want to commend all of those who made possible

coordination and cooperation and to express once again, as you have heard so many times others do it, the admiration and high regard that we have for the men and the women that serve our nation in this adventure of the knowledge of space, the exploration of space, and all that that means.

The Weather Bureau, of course, has a unique function to perform which has a tremendous value to the American nation as to the whole world. A value that can be, I suppose, equated or estimated in commercial terms; but also in the conveniences of life too. And we know that weather satellites, the TIROS, and all the family of those satellites will make possible much better, not only much better, weather information, but ultimately weather control, which is a feature of scientific endeavor that we look to.

Now let me say just a word about Bob Seamans. As Jim Webb has so well stated, all of us feel keenly and sadly the loss of a great man and a great scientist, Dr. Dryden. He was so much a part of the pioneering endeavors, the pioneering work of our entry into the space development and research. I think his life tends to demonstrate to us once again the immortality of life. We shall never forget the contribution that he has made and that great mind and the product of that mind and that warm personality and the product of that mind and personality. They live on. They live on in the lives of people here, and they live on surely in the scientific achievements and discoveries that have come because of the efforts of many.

But Dr. Dryden is succeeded by a remarkable man and in the very real sense, I don't think you can call it succession because Jim Webb and our good friend, Dr. Seamans, are going to join hands as they have, as two now, rather than the three. I haven't had the privilege that many of you had to know Bob Seamans for many years, but I surely know of him and I know that this Agency and the great effort of our country, not only our Government, but of the

Profz

private sector of industry, of the universities, of the technical institutes, that this great effort would not be what it is today, were it not for his guidance, his abilities, his managerial ability, his competence.

And while I have the opportunity, may I say that we are ever indebted to Jim Webb. I've grown to know this man a good deal this past year, and I am astounded and at all times, and let me say pleasantly moved by the scope of his vision, the depth of his thought and the sincere dedication to public service. It is truly a sacrificial dedication. I don't think our great country would be where it is in the space race, or should I put it in space exploration, don't need to make it a race, were it not for men like James Webb, and Robert Seamans, and might I add others in the different departments of government.

Now finally, I want to say this, that by law I am Chairman of the Space Council. That doesn't make you competent, but at least it puts you in a position. I have enjoyed immensely the excitement of learning that has come this year. I like to feel that I am a student and slowly, and I hope surely, I have learned a little more each month about what our country is doing and what many other countries are doing in the field of space, research, and development, this great probing into the unknown, learning more of the cosmos of the universe, this movement from this planet to another and to many others; and what an exciting experience it is. It really is. It's the sort of thing you dream of as a boy. And now I am glad that my mother once said to my father, that men are always boys, because I hope that's the case, because you really need a boyish enthusiasm to truly gain from this marvelous endeavor on science and research and development in the space field of what's there.

Only yesterday, of course, we were all very much excited over the remarkable achievement of the Soviet Union in the soft landing on the moon. And I want to say to my fellow Americans that we always ought to be big enough, as was the case of the President and the Administrator, Mr. Webb, and all the others, big enough to recognize the competence and ability and achievement. And I believe that this spirit of generous attitude, of respect for ability and competence, and congratulations that came genuinely from the American people and their leaders to the Soviet Union, I think that spirit will stand as well in the years ahead. There are really no secrets, it's only a matter of when somebody finds out, you know that all science is not a game in which you hide things. The scientific mind can penetrate any wall. And the scientific mind that can penetrate the unknown surely can penetrate any barriers that man imposes.

I think that what we are finding out these days from others is very helpful. We have learned as Dr. Welsh and I on the way visiting over here, and by the way I want to salute him for his good work in the Space Council as Executive Director. We were just saying that out of this lunar landing, this soft landing on the moon, we have already gained a great deal. We have learned, (1) It can be done. We have learned that you can put a system, a machine, a mechanism on the surface of the moon, and it didn't disappear, and we learned that you can get signals and other information from the moon. There is already much that we have learned that just ordinary people have learned. You didn't even need to be a graduate scientist to learn it.

Now, I think that I have more than stated my case. I have a birthday party that I am going to attend 1,100 miles away from here tonight. I have a son that's 18 years of age, and that's a very important milestone in his life for many reasons. When you get to be 18, many things can happen to you. He is a Senior in high school and he's on the swimming team, and he thinks

he is pretty good, and he is on the ROTC Drill Team, and I think he is very good, and he may be better a little later, so I thought I ought to go out and meet him, besides his mother is there and it's sort of a good idea to keep track of her too. Or maybe it's better she keep track of me, so I am going to go there.

I want to thank you, Mr. Webb, for inviting me and letting me participate. And again, I salute each and every one of the gentlemen who have won these distinguished awards from NASA. May this be an inspiration for you to do better. Thank you very much.



# 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)