



Dupont Summit 2017

Science, Technology, and Environmental Policy

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Presentation

"An Examination of Presidential Leadership in Space Policy"

In response to an escalating global crisis involving Soviet Union nuclear armaments, mutually assured destruction and adversarial space capabilities that rendered the American public insecure, John F. Kennedy delivered an address at Rice University committing to landing American astronauts on the moon and safely returning them to earth. Such an endeavor, in the eyes of the public, meant a measure of safety and national pride, as well as economic benefit and job creation. At an executive and international level, the intentions of the Apollo program were to display geopolitical power and technical competence in an effort to counter the recent advances in spaceflight achieved by the Soviet Union and to regain the high ground in the global arena.

To ensure effective implementation of policy, initiatives set forth require far more than bold statements given in a public setting. Major space programs, like any large-scale publicly funded endeavor, must be backed by fervent and well-founded presidential leadership. This brand of leadership extends well beyond the image and persona of an elected official and must also include the proper circumstances, both domestically and internationally. At the executive level, intentions must be underpinned by strategic planning that balance administration priorities with those of the nation to receive adequate support from public perception and, perhaps most importantly, sufficient budget allocation. Leadership of the caliber displayed by John F. Kennedy in the Apollo era are essential for invigorating public support of an administration and its goals. In that light, recent private sector achievement coupled with an unprecedented political atmosphere raises the question of whether the current administration could create its own "Kennedy moment."

Moderator

Chris Beauregard, *Space Policy Institute*

Panelists

Ben Roberts, *Vice President of Government Affairs, Moon Express*

Tommy Sanford, *Executive Director, Commercial Spaceflight Federation*

Jason Callahan, *Space Policy Advisor, Planetary Society*

Teasel Muir-Harmony, *Curator, National Air and Space Museum Space History Department*