

DEFENSE SPACE INTERESTS

FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 1961

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCES AND ASTRONAUTICS,
Washington, D.C.

The committee met at 10 a.m., Hon. Overton Brooks (chairman) presiding.

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will come to order.

This morning we are opening hearings on the subject of space organization in the Department of Defense, and its implications for relations to the national space program as a whole including NASA and the Space Council.

This is a matter which goes to the very heart of this committee's jurisdiction, as set forth in the Rules of the House, over "astronautical research and development, including resources, personnel, equipment, and facilities," and over "outer space, including exploration and control thereof." These same rules assign us responsibility to exercise continuous watchfulness over policies of concern to the Space Council and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

The internal organization of the Department of Defense for space activities is a vital factor in our total United States space effort which includes both military and civilian applications of space technology. This committee has demonstrated its concern for the military portion of astronautics research and development as recently as last month when it held its annual review of such programs in the Department of Defense. Approximately half the funds for our total space program are assigned within the Department of Defense.

The immediate occasion for these hearings is to evaluate the Department of Defense directive of March 6, 1961, on the development of military space activities. This directive deals with only one segment of the total cycle required for assuring "the role of the United States as a leader in aeronautical and space science and technology" in accordance with the National Aeronautics and Space Act. The directive is concerned with the "research, development, test, and engineering" of satellites and space probes. It does not of itself tell very much about its implementation; nor does it concern itself with operational responsibilities.

It is my view that such a directive cannot be considered apart from the broader context of the effects such a directive may have on the choice of projects to be pursued, our system of priorities, and ultimate applications in both the military and civilian spheres. When one views the entire cycle from the first research idea through to the final operational responsibility, a directive of this nature inevitably has ramifications not confined to the Department of Defense, but in-