

space developments was made in less time than has customarily been the practice in the Department of Defense. It is not true that the decision was made without full consideration and without giving all parties an opportunity to be heard.

Each Service and other component of the Department of Defense was given ample opportunity to concur and everyone took advantage of that opportunity and Secretary McNamara and I personally considered all the points of view presented by the different Services and the other agencies before we arrived at a final decision.

A major criticism of the Department of Defense, which has been made for many years both in the Congress and elsewhere, has been the slowness of the decision-making process within the Department. Secretary McNamara and I believe that it is imperative, if we are to have a defense adequate to meet the needs of this nuclear and space age, that decisions be made as promptly as possible. We do not feel that important decisions affecting the national security of the United States can be deferred pending attempts to work out a modus vivendi which will be satisfactory and pleasing to everyone.

Once you try to compromise the positions of competing interests, you water down the solution to a point where we believe it cannot be as effective as it should be.

Too often such efforts do not resolve our problems but rather intensify them in at least two ways.

First, during long periods of deliberation, independent actions may be taken by many of the participants which may, in turn, compromise the final policy when it is promulgated. Alternately, a moratorium on all actions during the period of prolonged deliberation may mean that some very necessary decisions are held too long in abeyance. Second, long and involved deliberations on the details of broad policy matters inevitably tend to exacerbate differences of opinion.

I am sure members of this committee have seen that process at work. I want to add, however, that any changes which are made within the Defense Department by the Secretary of Defense and myself will be made in accordance with existing legislation and law and wherever they involve matters within the purview of Congress we are certainly going to come to you first.

Before closing my introductory statement, I want to make a comment on the relations of the Department of Defense with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

On space this directive does not impinge upon that relationship but I have discussed this directive with Jim Webb. Jim Webb and I are old friends; we were in the Government before and we have worked together very closely.

One of the first things we did when we came into office respectively was to reach a written agreement on the National Launch Vehicle Program, on the 23d of February, and agreement that neither NASA nor the Department of Defense would go ahead with additional such programs without coordinating one with the other.

This is not new. Our predecessors had a series of agreements. There was a basic agreement that was reaffirmed as late as September of last year, setting up the Aeronautical and Astronautical Coordinating Board. This is a board which consists of equal representation by representatives of NASA and by the Defense Department. The