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Well, we've got a long way to walk in the future. We'll walk together. Our feet may be tired, but when we get through, our soul will be rested.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:14 p.m. in the International Ballroom at the Washington Hilton Hotel. In his opening remarks, he referred to Representative Parren J. Mitchell of Maryland, chairman, and Representative Shirley Chisholm of New York, vice chairperson, Congressional Black Caucus.

Kennedy Space Center, Florida

Remarks at the Congressional Space Medal of Honor Awards Ceremony. October 1, 1978

Governor Askew, Senator Chiles, Senator Stone, Senator Stevenson, who is the chairman of the Subcommittee on Energy and Technology, Congressman Tiger Teague—who is the retiring chairman of the Committee on Science and Technology, and who has done so much to bring our space program to our Nation and who wrote the legislation establishing the Space Medal of Honor—Congressman Fuqua, Congressman Gibbons, Congresswoman Boggs, ladies and gentlemen; many of you who have helped in past years to make the achievements commemorated this afternoon possible:

This is one of the most exciting events of my life. For a number of weeks since I planned to come here, I've been thrilled at the prospect of meeting these famous men on my right, who have done so much to inspire all those who love our country and who have confidence in the future of human beings.

A few minutes ago, we watched a simulated takeoff and flight of *Apollo XI*. And my palms are still sweating with excitement and nervousness, and I might say that I was not the only one. The as-

tronauts' palms were sweating even more than mine. [Laughter]

I believe it's accurate to say that we are here today to recognize and honor six American pioneers of the farthest and highest of all frontiers, the frontier of space. We honor them for individual human qualities, dedication, skill, extraordinary courage. But we do more than that. What those men have done is the most visible part of a vast and continuing collective accomplishment of many people.

Tens of thousands of Americans, many of you, including scientists, engineers, administrators, skilled workers, others, have contributed directly to the success of the American space enterprise. They in turn have had the support of an entire nation and the good wishes of an entire planet.

The glory that belongs to the six recipients this afternoon of the Space Medal of Honor belongs equally to those who helped them, and in a real sense, to all humanity who prayed for them and who supported them. This does not diminish the glory of these American heroes. It enlarges their glory.

It's fitting that these ceremonies take place today on the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. And it is, of course, fitting that they take place here where the ships that took men to the Moon were launched and where we will take our next great step into space with the first flight of the space shuttle, which I sincerely hope will be before my next birthday. I have every assurance from those involved that there will be no slippage in the present schedule as it now stands.

The age of space, as Dr. Frosch¹ said, can now be characterized as having

¹ Robert A. Frosch, Administrator, National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

reached the threshold of its maturity. It began 21 years ago this week with the launching of *Sputnik I*. That remarkable achievement galvanized our own space efforts. We have met the challenge fully; indeed, we have gone far beyond that challenge. And as Americans, we are proud of these achievements and glad of the benefits that have been brought to our Nation and, indeed, to the entire world.

We speak often of progress. But there's nothing in scientific and technological experience to compare with the enormous leaps we've made in the brief span of the two decades of the space age. We have performed what any generation would have considered miracles. We've taken the stuff of fantasy and dreams, and we've turned it into accomplishment and reality.

The dreams of a few visionaries have become a part of the everyday life of hundreds of millions of people. Consider what we have done in just one quarter of a human lifetime. We've put men in orbit around the Earth and around the Moon. We've put machines in orbit around the Earth, the Moon, the Sun, and the planet Mars. We've learned to maneuver in space, to dock ships together in space, and even to walk in space.

On board Sky Lab we've learned to live and work in a weightless environment for many weeks at a time. We've begun the exploration of the inner planets and the outer planets.

Two American *Vikings* have been sending back valuable scientific data from the surface of Mars for more than 2 years.

Pioneer X has passed Jupiter and is on its way to interstellar space. It will be the first tangible product of human hands to leave the solar system. Its flight time may turn out to be longer than the life of civilization that launched it. And of course, its destination is unknown. But

like the entire effort of space exploration, it is a striking symbol of human curiosity, human ingenuity, and the very human desire to communicate with others.

And of course, the greatest event of all: We went to the surface of the Moon, not once, but six times. And each time, the astronauts returned safely to their home planet, Earth, and to their home country, the United States of America.

In the 9 years since a man took that one small step, the giant leap it represented has almost come to be taken for granted. Yet, at the outset, many doubted it could be done at all. And many more doubted it could be done in so short a time. But it was done. And it was done magnificently. The goal was met. And this great space center is deservedly named for the man who summoned his fellow citizens to an extraordinary adventure, President John F. Kennedy.

We went to the Moon, in part, as a matter of national pride. But when we got there, we discovered something very interesting. Through the eyes and the cameras of the astronauts, we looked back at the Earth, above the strange horizon of the Moon in a pitch black sky. We saw our own world as a single delicate globe of swirling blue and white, green, brown. From the perspective of space, our planet has no national boundaries.

It's very beautiful, but it's also very fragile. And it is the special responsibility of the human race to preserve it. Of all the things we've learned from our explorations of space, none has been more important than this perception of the essential unity of our world.

I learned this morning that while I was at Camp David with President Sadat and Prime Minister Begin, that scientists at Cal Tech discovered a new miniplanet whose orbit comes between that of Earth and that of Mercury. The new miniplanet has just been named Ra Shalom—Ra

being the Egyptian sun god, and as you know, *shalom* being the word for peace.

This I think vividly demonstrates that we on Earth have a responsibility to unify the people of the world in peace and harmony and preserve the life of those that were observed so distantly by the astronauts from the Moon.

Space has brought us a great deal of human knowledge and also a great deal of technical knowledge. It may also have brought us a measure of wisdom. Today we celebrate the accomplishments of the past in the spirit of the men we honor; we also look toward the future, a future that is as exciting as anything that has gone on before.

The first great era of the space age is over; the second is about to begin. It will come into its own with the new space shuttle, the heart of our new space transportation system, when it becomes operational. With its ability to lift a payload of up to 32 tons into orbit on mission after mission, the shuttle will give us a regular, frequent, and economical access to space. Like the sea, the land, and the air, space will become an environment in which human beings can live and work for the welfare of their own species.

Paradoxically, the most exciting thing about the space shuttle is that it will make our use of space in the future routine and perhaps not very exciting.

The first generation of space activities was driven in large part by a single, exciting, transcendent goal, the quest for the Moon. In the second generation, thanks to the versatility of the shuttle, our activities in space will be enormously varied.

We've invested so far some \$100 billion over the history of our American space programs. It's now time for us to capitalize on that major investment even more. We've already reaped many practical benefits from space. Over the next generation, these benefits will increase geometrically.

Communication satellites have already made global communications instantaneous, reliable, and cheap. They've brought remote areas of the Earth out of their isolation. We will continue to develop them.

Weather satellites have already saved billions of dollars, thousands of lives through early warnings of hurricanes and floods. We will continue to develop them. We've greatly strengthened our national security through defense space applications. We will continue to develop these capabilities.

Photoreconnaissance satellites have become an important stabilizing factor in world affairs in the monitoring of arms control agreements. They make an immense contribution to the security of all nations. We shall continue to develop them.

Earth resources satellites have already proved their value to many countries through remote sensing. They tell us about everything from the location of mineral and energy deposits to the condition of our crops, from the motion of icebergs to the health of the oceans. We will continue to develop and to use these satellites for the benefit of all people of the world.

Aboard the shuttle on many of its missions will be the European-built laboratory, the space lab. Scientists of many nations will use the space lab to do research in all branches of science and engineering. No one can say where this research will lead, but carefully selected experiments could yield direct benefits in the coming decades.

I'm often asked about space factories, solar power satellites, and such other large-scale engineering projects in space. In my judgment, it's too early to commit the Nation to such projects. But we will continue the evolving development of our

technology, taking intermediate steps that will keep open possibilities for the future.

During the period of the *Saturn-Apollo* missions, we were pilgrims in space, ranging far from home in search of knowledge. Now we will become shepherds tending our technological flocks, but like the shepherds of old, we will keep our eyes fixed on the heavens.

We are committed to the practical use of space. But we are equally committed to the scientific exploration of the solar system and the universe.

In the 1980's, the 1990's, we will continue the direct reconnaissance of the solar system. Through the eyes of our remote cameras, we will see Mars and Venus, Jupiter and its moons, Saturn with its moons and rings, and comets and asteroids. The study of other planets, their climate, geology, geophysics, perhaps their biology, will increase our understanding of our own planet. We will seek to learn more about the Sun.

Many missions will aim at this goal in the years to come. In one of them, an instrumented probe will journey far above the plane of the solar system to look down at the never-before-seen polar regions of the Sun.

And finally, we will look out from Earth orbit to the very end of the universe, notably by means of the space telescope. In its orbit 300 miles above the Earth's surface, the space telescope will at last let us see the universe without interference from the Earth's obscuring atmosphere.

It will be the centerpiece of astronomy for the decade beginning in the mid-eighties. Its contributions may dwarf all but the most fundamental discoveries of the past, leading to a quantum growth in our understanding of the basic nature of time, matter, and energy.

In the coming generation, the scope and the range of our space activities will

reflect the range of our requirements and interests as a vigorous, responsible, and free society. Those activities will be measured against all the needs of our country. We will be encouraging other countries to participate both in the work and in its benefits. But we will not give up the leadership of the United States in space.

And finally, let me say, in the last analysis the challenge of space takes us very close to the heart of things. It brings us face to face with the mysteries of creation, of matter, of energy, of life itself. The men we honor today met that challenge, and they were equal to it. Our Nation met that challenge and was equal to it. And in the final two decades of the twentieth century, America will reach out once more to the beauty and to the mystery of space, and once again America, you and I, will be equal to that great task.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:14 p.m. at the Vehicle Assembly Building of the Shuttle Landing Facility, John F. Kennedy Space Center.

Following his remarks, the President presented the awards to Neil A. Armstrong, Col. Frank Borman (USAF, Ret.), Capt. Charles Conrad, Jr. (USN, Ret.), Senator John H. Glenn, Jr. (Col., USMC, Ret.), and Rear Adm. Alan Shepard (USN, Ret.). He also presented a posthumous award to Betty Grissom on behalf of her husband, Lt. Col. Virgil I. Grissom (USAF).

Earlier in the day, the President toured various facilities at the Center and received briefings from NASA officials.

Meeting With United Nations Secretary General Kurt Waldheim

White House Statement. October 1, 1978

President Carter and Secretary General Waldheim discussed the crisis in Lebanon, and both expressed their deep concern