



THE VICE PRESIDENT  
WASHINGTON

December 20, 1989

Dear George:

Thank you for your letter concerning the Landsat remote sensing satellite. I think we have made significant progress on Landsat and want to update you on our plans for this important program.

As you know, in July of this year the President, acting upon the unanimous advice of the Space Council, approved a new civil remote sensing policy. The policy specifically commits the United States to maintain the continuity of Landsat-type data. To implement this policy, we plan to continue operating Landsat satellites 4 and 5 as long as they function and to complete manufacture of Landsat 6, launching it not earlier than 1991. Further, we plan to replace Landsat 6 in about 1996.

We considered the Landsat 6 follow-on program during our internal process to develop the President's fiscal year 1991 budget request. However, we determined that funds for a follow-on program are not yet required. Further, we determined that there are outstanding issues concerning the requirements for, and management of, the follow-on system which require further policy review. Based on this finding, the Space Council will look into the Landsat 6 follow-on issue later this year.

I fully understand the concerns you expressed relative to maintaining the civil character of the Landsat program. Our challenge will be to retain non-discriminatory access to the data while establishing a stable, long-term basis of support and advocacy for our nation's civil remote sensing capability. Your support and that of your colleagues in the Congress will be essential if we are to achieve these important goals.

Best wishes for the holidays. I look forward to working with you to create a healthy civil remote sensing program during the upcoming New Year.

Sincerely,



Dan Quayle

The Honorable George Brown  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

