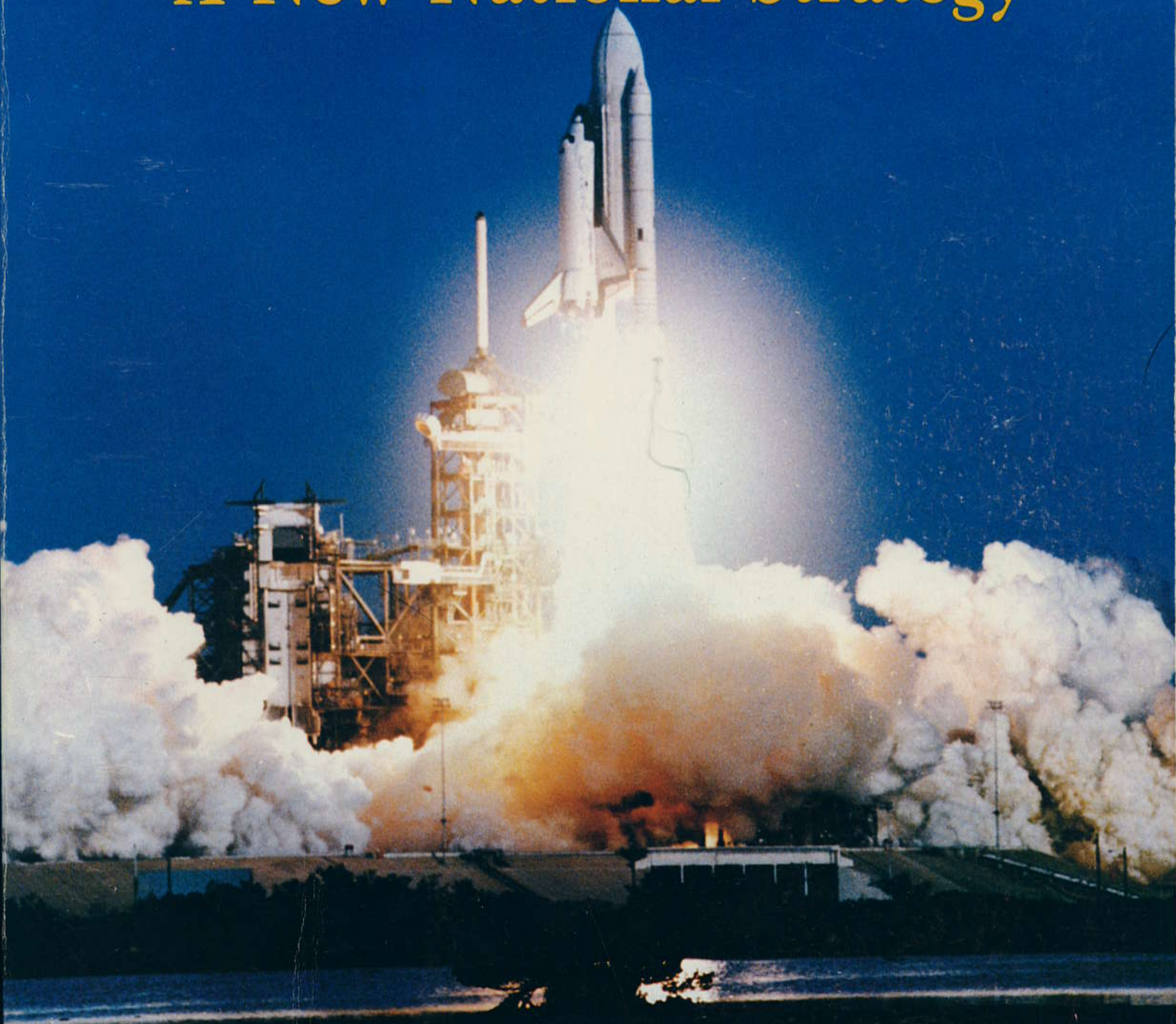


# HIGH FRONTIER

A New National Strategy



By  
LT. GEN. DANIEL O. GRAHAM  
USA (RET.)

Introduction By  
ROBERT A. HEINLEIN

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## INTRODUCTION

Robert A. Heinlein

“High Frontier” is the best news I have heard since VJ Day.

For endless unhappy years the United States has had no defense policy. We had something called a defense policy . . . but in the words of Abraham Lincoln, “Calling a tail a leg does not make it a leg.”

Under our present policies what do we have? H-bombs, airborne, water-borne, and in silos, capable of destroying anything, anywhere on this planet. Elite troops second to none in our Marine Corps, in our Army’s 82nd Airborne, and in our Navy SEALs. Other armed forces stationed around the world and on every ocean. Eyes in the sky that can spot any missile launched in our direction.

And none of these can even slow down an ICBM launched at Washington.

(Or at your hometown.)

So we have *no* defense. Instead we have something mislabeled a “defense policy,” called “Mutually Assured Destruction,” referred to as “MAD.”

Never has Washington produced an acronym that fitted so perfectly. Picture two men at point-blank range each with a .45 aimed at the other man’s bare chest. That is MAD. Crazy. Insane. And *stupid*.

High Frontier places a bulletproof vest on our bare chest. High Frontier is as non-aggressive as a bulletproof vest. There is no way to kill anyone with High Frontier—all that High Frontier can do is to keep others from killing us.

That is one of the two best aspects of High Frontier. It is so utterly peaceful that the most devout pacifist can support it with a clear conscience—indeed must support it once he understands it . . . as it tends to stop wars if war does happen. All who supported GROUND ZERO should support High Frontier.

The other best aspect of High Frontier is that its systems are nonnuclear. I am not one who gets upset at hearing the word “nuclear” . . . but no one in his

right mind wants nuclear explosions going on over his head or anywhere on this planet. It is happy indeed that the best defense we can devise does not call for nuclear explosions. To save ourselves we do *not* need to blow up Moscow, we do *not* need to add to the radioactive fallout on our lovely planet.

The designers of High Frontier calculate that this new strategy will decrease our military costs. I am not in a position to judge this . . . but, frankly, I don’t give a damn. A man with a burst appendix can’t afford to dicker over the cost of surgery.

But will High Frontier in fact protect the Republic? As an old Research and Development engineer with the pessimism appropriate to the trade, I am certain that most of the hardware described in the High Frontier plan will undergo many changes before it is installed; that is the way R & D always works. But I am equally certain that the problems can be solved.

The first stages of High Frontier, point defense of our missile silos, we could start building later this afternoon; it involves nothing but well-known techniques and off-the-shelf hardware. That first stage alone could save us, as it denies to an enemy a free chance to destroy us by a preemptive first strike. It forces him to think twice, three times and decide not to try it.

But the key point is not whether this hardware will do the trick; the key lies in a change of attitude. A firm resolve to *defend* the United States . . . rather than resigning ourselves to the destruction of our beloved country. If we will so resolve, then the development of hardware is something we certainly know how to do.

But we won’t get there by throwing up our hands and baring our necks to the executioner. God helps those who help themselves; he does not help those who won’t try.

So let’s try!  
Robert A. Heinlein

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<b>FOREWORD</b> .....	ix
<b>SUMMARY</b> .....	1
<b>CHAPTER I: STRATEGY</b> .....	17
The Situation in Brief .....	17
The Options .....	18
The Incremental Approach .....	18
The Bold Approach .....	18
A Comparison of the Options .....	19
<b>CHAPTER II: THE MILITARY DIMENSION</b> .....	21
A Technological End-Run .....	21
The Case for Strategic Defense .....	22
<b>CHAPTER II ANNEX: SURVIVABILITY OF SPACE SYSTEMS</b> .....	27
<b>CHAPTER III: NONMILITARY DIMENSION</b> .....	31
Space Transportation and Space Stations .....	33
Space Based Energy Systems .....	34
<b>CHAPTER III ANNEX: SPACE INDUSTRIALIZATION</b> .....	37
Introduction .....	37
Integrated Space Missions .....	39
Space Resources .....	40
Growth Potential .....	42
International Participants .....	43
Strategies for Space Industrialization .....	45
<b>CHAPTER IV: COLLATERAL ACTIONS</b> .....	49
Point Defense .....	49
Civil Defense .....	49
Offensive Systems .....	50
Military Organization .....	50
Nonmilitary Collateral Actions .....	51
International Cooperation .....	51
Space Law .....	51

	Page
<b>CHAPTER IV ANNEX A: GROUND BASED ANTIMISSILE DEFENSES</b> .....	53
Introduction .....	53
The Essential Problems of Point Defense .....	53
Summary of Systems Considered .....	54
Low Altitude Defense System (LOADS) .....	54
Limited Area ABM System .....	54
SWARMJET .....	55
Sandia System .....	55
Discussion .....	55
 <b>CHAPTER IV ANNEX B: FRAGMENTED ORGANIZATION IN U.S. SPACE PROGRAMS</b> .....	 57
Strategic Air Command .....	57
Air Force Systems Command .....	57
Aerospace Defense Command .....	57
Air Force Communications Command .....	58
 <b>CHAPTER IV ANNEX C: TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER</b> .....	 61
Introduction .....	61
The Soviet Reaction .....	61
Technological Competition .....	62
Protection of High Frontier Technology .....	63
The Arms Export Control Act and Munitions List .....	64
The Frame of Reference .....	64
 <b>CHAPTER V: URGENT REQUIREMENTS AND COSTS</b> .....	 67
Military Requirements .....	67
Combined Military and Nonmilitary Requirements .....	67
Nonmilitary Requirements .....	67
An Illustrative Set of High Frontier Programs .....	67
Quickly Deployable Point Defense .....	67
First Generation Spaceborne Defense .....	68
Second Generation Spaceborne Defense .....	68
High Performance Spaceplane .....	68
Civil Defense .....	71
Improved Space Transportation .....	71
Manned Low Earth Orbit Space Station .....	71
A Space Power System .....	71
Space Industrial Systems Research and Development .....	71
Cost Considerations .....	71
Cost Offsets .....	76

	<b>Page</b>
<b>CHAPTER VI: IMPACTS</b> .....	<b>81</b>
Military Impacts .....	81
Political Impacts .....	82
Economic Impacts .....	83
Foreign Impacts .....	83
The Soviet Reaction .....	83
The West European Reaction .....	87
 <b>CHAPTER VI ANNEX: ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS</b> .....	 <b>89</b>
Introduction .....	89
Primary Activities .....	89
Secondary Activities .....	89
Tertiary Activities .....	89
Quarternary Activities .....	89
Information .....	90
Materials .....	90
Energy .....	90
Force Delivery .....	91
Command, Control, Communications, & Intelligence .....	91
Military Support .....	91
Direct Benefits .....	91
Technological Innovation and Economic Growth .....	93
Military Considerations .....	95
Economic Effects of Renewed Hope .....	95
Public Psychology and the Economy .....	96
Prompt Economic Effects .....	96
Impacts on Jobs and Taxes .....	97
 <b>CHAPTER VII: IMPLEMENTATION</b> .....	 <b>99</b>
The Problem .....	99
Basic Implementation Concept .....	100
Proposed Centralized Organization .....	101
Departmental Roles .....	102
 <b>CHAPTER VIII: TREATY CONSIDERATIONS</b> .....	 <b>103</b>
General .....	103
The Influence of MAD on SALT .....	103
Current Treaties .....	104
Abrogation .....	106
Assertion of Compliance .....	106
Amendment .....	106

	Page
<b>CHAPTER VIII ANNEX: THE OUTER SPACE AND ABM TREATIES</b> .....	107
Legal Arguments .....	107
Key Points of Outer Space Treaty .....	107
Key Points of ABM Treaty .....	108
<b>APPENDIX A: MILITARY AND ECONOMIC RISKS</b> .....	109
U.S. Response to USSR Strike .....	109
Defend .....	109
Point Defense .....	109
Boost Phase Defense .....	110
Mid-course Defense .....	110
Absorb USSR First Strike .....	110
Launch on Warning .....	110
The Effects of Ground Based Point Defense Only .....	110
The Effects of Layered Spaceborne Defenses .....	111
Survivability—All Military Targets .....	111
DOD Expenditures at Risk .....	112
U.S. Losses at Replacement Cost .....	113
Conclusions .....	114
<b>APPENDIX B: TYPE POINT DEFENSE SYSTEM</b> .....	115
Radar System .....	115
Launcher System .....	116
SWARMJET Projectiles .....	116
System Costs .....	117
Structured Attack .....	117
<b>APPENDIX C: GLOBAL BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE</b> .....	119
General .....	119
System Description .....	122
Intercept Geometry .....	122
System Deployment .....	124
Launch .....	124
Tenant Systems .....	125
Survivability .....	125
Cost Parameters .....	125
<b>APPENDIX D: HIGH PERFORMANCE SPACEPLANE CONCEPT</b> .....	129
The Problem .....	129
The Need .....	130
The Solution .....	130

	<b>Page</b>
Description of HPSP .....	130
Omnimission Capability .....	133
Configuration Reasoning .....	133
Why Configured for Entry? .....	133
Why the Conical Shape? .....	133
Aircraft Launch .....	134
Priority .....	134
<b>APPENDIX E: ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY SPACEBORNE DEFENSE SYSTEMS .....</b>	<b>135</b>
Beam Weapons .....	135
High Energy Lasers .....	137
Particle Beams .....	140
High Power Microwave .....	141
Electromagnetic Pulse .....	142
<b>APPENDIX F: CIVIL DEFENSE .....</b>	<b>145</b>
The Need .....	145
Essential Requirements .....	145
Present Status .....	146
Measures to Attain a Strategically Significant Civil Defense System ...	146
Costs .....	150
Conclusions .....	150
<b>APPENDIX G: THE SOVIET VIEW .....</b>	<b>151</b>
The Soviet Situation with Respect to a New Order of Arms Race with the U.S. ....	159
The Specific Question of the Impact of High Frontier on the USSR ...	163
<b>APPENDIX H: DISCUSSION OF IMPLEMENTING MEASURES .....</b>	<b>167</b>
Discussion of the Alternatives .....	168
Overall Direction .....	169
The Systems Selection Process .....	169
The National Space Council .....	170
The Space Consolidated Program Office .....	171
Departmental Roles .....	171
<b>TAB: PREREQUISITES FOR RAPID AND EFFICIENT ACQUISITION .....</b>	<b>173</b>
Key Actions .....	173
Organization .....	173
Personnel and Continuity .....	174
Decisionmaking Process .....	174

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## FOREWORD

Lt. Gen. Daniel O. Graham USA (Ret.)  
Director

High Frontier is a privately funded effort, conducted under the aegis of The Heritage Foundation. Its purpose is to seek answers in U.S. technology, especially space technology, to the strategic problems that plague the United States and the Free World.

The origins of the effort lie back in the days when I was a military advisor to then-candidate Ronald Reagan. Early in the campaign I was among those insisting that the only viable approach for a new administration to cope with growing military imbalances was to implement a basic change in U.S. grand strategy and make a "technological end-run on the Soviets."

As far as I could determine, all advisors to Mr. Reagan agreed with this conclusion at least in principle at the time. However, as time passed, this more fundamental approach to national security issues receded into the realm of theory; the team of advisors on security matters began to concentrate instead on the amounts of money needed to revitalize ailing, ongoing Pentagon programs and on the "quick fixes" necessary if the United States were to hold its own within the context of *current* strategy and doctrine. The Carter defense budget was gone over line item by line item with a view to repairing past damage to U.S. capabilities with increased resources. New program expenditures were recommended to plug as quickly as possible the strategic gaps between U.S. and Soviet capabilities which are known collectively as "the window of vulnerability."

Some of the team continued to believe that a strategically and technically sound alternative to this incremental approach could be found, but none of us were quite sure at the time what the alternative might be.

In early 1981, Congressman Newt Gingrich of

Georgia and I discussed the future of the new Administration in the national security field. Mr. Gingrich shared my apprehension that large Department of Defense budget increases alone would not solve military problems, and might not be sustained even by the new pro-defense Congress for more than two years. We discussed the possibilities of setting forth a new strategic approach and a technological end-run on the Soviets to meet President Reagan's commitment to a "margin of safety." We decided to go to work in earnest to formulate such an approach.

The fundamental strategy change required was the replacement of the Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) doctrine which had shaped—rather, *warped*—our strategic force posture and had undergirded the U.S. approach to arms control. The MAD doctrine postulates that strategic *defensive* systems are destabilizing and provocative, a theory that has led to a Free World seriously vulnerable to nuclear attack and blackmail.

Although military spokesmen had from time to time denied that MAD was U.S. policy, the political machinery adhered to it in essence. Certainly SALT negotiations had been conducted as if MAD were official U.S. strategy. SALT I attempted to disallow strategic defense by negating any significant antiballistic missile efforts. On the other hand, SALT I accommodated a massive offensive nuclear buildup then under way in the USSR and permitted a proliferation of city-busting MIRVs on our side.

U.S. negotiators later accepted a SALT II Treaty which was badly flawed in detail and which in general merely increased overall the limits on offensive nuclear power to accommodate quite obvious Soviet programs. Before the Senate rebelled and permitted SALT II to die, the stan-