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February 3, 1983

SHUTTLE ORBITER PRODUCTION CAPABILITY

The Senior Interagency Group (SIG) for Space, established to implement my National Space Policy, has examined the issue of whether Shuttle Orbiter production capability should continue beyond the four Orbiters currently scheduled for delivery.

After reviewing various options presented by the SIG(Space), I have decided that maintaining Orbiter production capability is in the best interests of the Nation. This objective will be achieved through the production of structural and component spares necessary to insure that the Nation can operate the four Orbiter fleet in a robust manner. These spares will provide the necessary assurance that Shuttle operations will continue in the face of minor problems, modifications or other periods of extended Orbiter outages.

While this decision does not constitute approval for procurement of a fifth Orbiter in FY 1984, it does partially preserve this option for a future decision should optimistic estimates of demand materialize and other conditions dictate. It is my intent that the full potential of the Shuttle concept as originally envisioned is achieved and commercialization of space becomes a reality.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration is directed to submit to the Office of Management and Budget for inclusion in the Fiscal Year 1984 Budget a request for procurement of structural and component spares that will carry out this decision.

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