

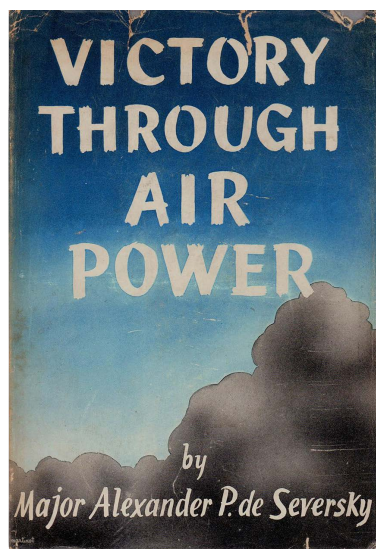
Victory through *Space* Power

Although the US Space Force was officially established on 20 December 2019, its future is hardly set. Nominally autonomous in its current form, it is still subordinate to the Department of the Air Force. With a minuscule personnel structure and budget relative to its peers on the DOD organizational chart, the Space Force would be rather easy to excise completely should future administrations wish to do so.

The last word is far from written, though one of the most recent is from Lt General Stephen Kwast, USAF, retired. Writing in *Politico* on 17 January 2020, he asserts that the US is “losing the race to space with China” because the Air Force is “trapped in an industrial-age mindset” that prevents it from effectively applying innovative solutions to the entirely unique domain of outer space, or even building the right kind of equipment.¹ He contends that the effectiveness of the Space Force—indeed its survival—depends on complete separation from the US Air Force.

Kwast is not anti-Air Force. He is simply making an argument that has echoed throughout America’s military history: it is the same one proclaimed in the need for an independent Air Force. That is, to maximize effectiveness, any operational area understood to be a unique war-fighting domain must have a fully autonomous service dedicated to it. Until it does, its value to the nation will be stunted.

The first words on air-domain-based service separation from ground forces were voiced during World War I, culminating in 1919 with the inauguration of Britain’s independent Royal Air Force. The essential arguments became widely known through the works of Italian theorist Giulio Douhet and America’s William “Billy” Mitchell in the 1920s. But as far as American airpower goes, the most comprehensive assessment was published in January of 1942, just weeks after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. *Victory Through Air Power*, by Army Air Forces major Alexander de Seversky, was an instant best seller.² It was immediately picked up by the popular Book-of-the-Month Club and sent out to its 400,000 subscribers. The work was considered so vital that Walt



Disney financed and released a Technicolor feature film of the same name starring De Seversky in 1943. The public—previously isolationist, but now thrust into a global conflict and anxious regarding America’s prospects—had quickly acquired a voracious appetite for treatises on military strategy and capabilities.

The situation appeared dire. *Victory Through Air Power* assured its readers that America, trailing its enemies in both armaments and military technology but possessing the indomitable character of its population, would surely prevail *so long as it embraced airpower* as its guiding principle. Unlike today, where no place on the earth is more than minutes away from a military strike, America was then protected by vast oceans. It would have the time to build a military juggernaut that would take the fight to Europe and Asia only if led by armadas of aircraft.

Willpower, technology, and industrial might were not enough to ensure victory, however. In the preface to the Book-of-the-Month Club edition, the editors point out that “Major de Seversky’s main conclusion is that the wisest air strategy cannot be expected from managers of the war who are primarily navy-minded and army-minded; they must be primarily air-minded; and this calls for a radical change in the very organization of war-management: specifically, for an Air Force wholly separate from the Army and Navy, but working closely with them as a third independent arm” (xii–xiii).³ To be sure, they stated, “the war cannot be won by either side unless a total supremacy in the air is achieved, and this idea itself must achieve total supremacy in the minds of our war-managers or we shall never do all that is needed, and all that we can do, to bring the war to a successful close for our side” (xiv). This argument resonates today with General Kwast’s position on space power.

De Seversky begins his treatise by asserting that the US had fallen behind the other great powers in military aeronautics and preparation, “whether measured by the yardstick of military performance [or] by the yardstick of planned strategy, tactics, and organization” (4). If the status of space power is not perfectly analogous to that of De Seversky’s assessment of airpower, it is certainly approaching that precipice if Kwast is correct in apprising the rapid rise of China and the resurgence of Russia. For De Seversky, a slumbering America was jolted from its insular malaise. He cautions, “As dramatically as though it had been staged by providence as a warning to the American people, our own entry into the war, on December 7, 1941, was signaled by a humiliating defeat through enemy air power. . . . The terrific danger was exposed for all to see” (4). Due to range limitations of enemy aircraft, the US population and industrial base were

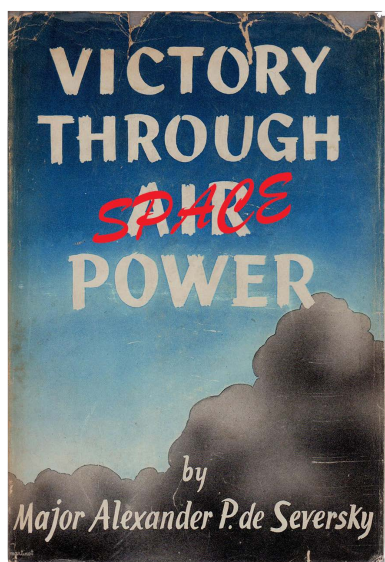
not threatened directly and had time to recover. Such is simply not the case today. Debilitating loss of space capabilities from a surprise attack; direct assaults with ballistic and cruise missiles; cyber strikes; or, in the near future, space-based weaponry could be anticipated within minutes. At the very least, America's military is currently ill-equipped to fight effectively beyond its borders without robust space support.

Given the situation in 1942, more armaments and better technology could overwhelm the enemy in time, but that was only part of De Seversky's victory equation for America. He notes, "Whether it utilizes these potentialities, or once more allows itself to trail along imitatively, depends on how quickly and thoroughly we cleanse our air power from the accretions of conservatism, timidity, and astigmatic leadership" (5). What follows is an argument for an independent Space Force directly lifted from and supported by extensive direct quotes from *Victory Through Air Power*, slightly altered by me [*substituting space-relevant words*] to accentuate common themes from then to now. In doing so, like De Seversky for air power, "I hope to contribute toward that emancipation of American [*space*] power. . . . Above all I hope to convey the sense of [*space*] power as a dynamic, expanding force, the growth of which must be anticipated by courageous minds. It happens to be a force that eludes static, orthodox minds no matter how brilliant they may be" (5).

Modifying De Seversky for Space 2020

De Seversky's observations about resistance to change remain pervasive. From his perspective, "throughout history, new weapons have imposed new tactical principles upon the science of war making. Throughout history, too, some nations have been quicker than others to recognize and apply those principles. In this, as in every other field of human endeavor, new ideas have had to contend with inertias of habit and enshrined precedent. The very military leaders who should be most keenly alert to detect and utilize new instrumentalities are often muscle-bound by traditional thinking. Only that can account for the stubborn reluctance of our own higher authorities . . . to project their thinking into the future, beyond current events" (121).

Today, our most pressing need is for a "separate and independent [*Space Force*], organized as an equal partner in the great triumvirate of our land, sea, [*and air*] services. . . . A new weapon functioning in a different element calls for a specialized organization to meet its needs efficiently and expeditiously" (254). But this view is far from universal. It had been opposed at the highest levels of the Department of the Air Force until recently, with



the secretary and service chief voicing opposition in testimony to Congress as late as 2018.⁴ Air Force arguments against separating space lacked historical acumen and were precisely the same as those of the Army against separating the Air Force in 1947. According to De Seversky, “There is a kind of desperation in the illogic of some of the arguments against freeing [*space*] power from its present subordination to the older services. . . . The simple truth is that a separate [*Space Force*] is not a wonder-working device to guarantee automatic military ascendancy, but *merely the minimal precondition for successful modern warfare*” (emphasis added) (255).

For those who argue that a separate Space Force would violate the principle of unity of command, De Seversky provides a unique rejoinder: “An overall command of all our forces would be a futile anomaly unless [*space*] had at least equal representation and authority in its councils” (257). This is a clear acknowledgment that *specialization* within a broader organization *enhances* cooperation and efficiency—it does not detract from it. De Seversky adds an additional factor when he offers the example of a painter who uses primary colors to achieve every possible combination of hue and tint. Innovation through creativity, critical to prevailing in an ever-changing battlespace, is lost without differentiation. Consequently, “an overall command would be stymied if it did not have the primary military services at its disposal” (257).

Setting up a separate and equal Department of the Space Force can be done easily and quickly. This is “a necessary and preliminary step. A High Command can be set up almost overnight when decided upon; it requires only the selection of the proper persons and their investment with the proper authority. But the full development of an organization to provide us with [*space*] power will take some time and should be started without delay” (258). In this passage, De Seversky presages the current status of the US Space Force. Where Kwast differs is in his concern that the Space Force as currently constituted is too small and subordinated to the Department of the Air Force. His fear is that this will be the *final* reorganization plan. As a step in the right direction, it is laudable. As an end, it is lamentable.

“Another set of objections rests on a misunderstanding of the scope of a separate [*Space Force*]. It assumes that the new Department would arbitrarily gather in and control anything that [*operates to, in, and from space*]. Those who proceed from this false premise, those who advance such arguments, are like Don Quixotes fighting windmills. [For example,] no matter how military aviation may be organized, neither the sea nor the land service can or should be stripped of airplanes logically and tactically a part of its operations. Just as the Navy has Marines and other adjuncts which, in a literal sense, are land troops—just as the Army has transport boats and other sea-going auxiliaries—so both the Army and the Navy would continue to possess airplanes for their own specific purposes” (258). The same argument applies to space. The Army, Navy, and Air Force will retain such space assets necessary to their primary purpose—to command the land, sea, and air, respectively. If command cannot be achieved, then to deny command of those domains to adversaries is critical. Note, too, whereas the Marine Corps (as a functional service) is appropriately situated as an *adjunct* to sea power, De Seversky insists the Air Force (as a *domain*-based service) will be suboptimally utilized as a mere adjunct to land power. Likewise, the Space Force should not be a mere adjunct to airpower.

“The distinction that needs to be made is between *integration* and *co-ordination*. The U.S. Marines, for instance, are integrated with the Navy. . . . The Army coastal batteries, though intended to help the fleet in warding off assaults on our shores, are merely co-ordinated with the Navy” (emphasis in original) (258). Further, “in like manner, certain [*space power*] auxiliaries should reasonably be integrated with the land, sea, [*and air*] forces, as part and parcel of those military branches. That, however, does not affect the broader question of a self-sufficient [*Space Force*], developed to conduct [*space*] warfare against an enemy [*space*] power, and also capable of co-ordinated effort with the surface forces” (258–59). As is evident in this supremely cogent point, it is perfectly reasonable that a force dedicated to *securing* command of its unique domain should have the ability to *challenge* command in adjacent domains. A ground force does not want opposing air forces flying freely over it and so rightfully acquires surface-to-air missiles. A Space Force would surely have need to contest the ability to project power into it from terrestrial domains and must have the martial means—weapons—necessary to contest access there. To do nothing *from* space to oppose an attack *into* space from a ground-based antisatellite weapon (as Russia, China, and India have all demonstrated) is in this construction ludicrous.

It follows that command of a domain is only truly possible from military assets operating *in* the domain. We can envision an enemy being able to scour the skies from the ground or sea, for example, but that does not guarantee it can operate there if I also have that ability. In this case the air domain would be mutually contested, but not commanded. When command of the domain—either generally or locally, indefinite or temporary—is achieved, only then can effects *from* the domain be delivered. If you cannot get *into* the domain, you cannot *use* the domain. In times of war or conflict, a military force must be prepared to fight its way into a domain to use it. This is the essence of the “boots on the ground” argument in a land campaign. A similar argument is critical for the sea and air domain; let us call it the “oars in the water” or the “wings in the air” principle, respectively. If space power is as vital to America’s defense as General Kwast asserts, it cannot be maintained much less achieved if it is lost unless and until the US Space Force is allowed to develop the best means to fight *in* and *from* space.

This brings to fore issues of operational command that have been trotted out in opposition to a separate Space Force, again obviated by the experience of airpower. Going back to De Seversky, “the Army may retain minor aviation adjuncts—certain aerial transport facilities and local reconnaissance auxiliaries, for instance. But in operations where Army and Air Force are components of a larger team, there is no more reason for the infantry to own and control the aviation than there is for aviation to own and control the infantry and tank divisions. Whether the Army or the Air Force will command a given operation will depend on the nature of the job to be done. The success of the operation will depend upon how well each of these components has been developed in its own sphere, and how well they have been trained together. We can no more hope for maximum exploitation of [*space*] possibilities—in readiness for such operations—if development of the [*Space Force*] is subordinate to [*air*] minds than we could expect the best development of ground forces by subordinating them to naval minds” (259–60).

The nature of the job to be done is the central issue of the preceding paragraph. Airmen are acutely aware that their mantra “An Airman in charge of the air campaign” enhances coordination and is vital to the success of any large-scale joint operation. Further, “the guiding mind of a High Command or Commander in Chief must be taken for granted at all times. That applies to the Army and Navy [*and Air Force*] no less than to a separate [*Space Force*]. No military service in wartime acts on its own whims. Their coordination, however, does not require a merger of their internal organizations. Each derives its strength from its specialized per-

sonnel, its full sense of responsibility, its ability to extract the last ounce of effectiveness without interference from an alien mentality” (260).

“The task of the guiding intelligence is, in fact, enormously facilitated when it can deal with a self-sufficient [*space*] arm. There are then no leading strings held tight by the older services to hamper coordination. [*Space*] power would be available for use without bureaucratic impediments. The very principle of effective coordination calls for true independence and equality on the part of the collaborating elements. There can be no coordination between [an] Air Force and a [*Space Force*] that is subordinate to the [*Air Force*]; in that case there can only be orders based on [*aviation*] ideas and blind obedience by [*space professionals*]” (261).

“[*Space*], it cannot be too often repeated, is a separate element, distinct from land and sea [*and air*]—an element with its own [*spatial*] relations, its own laws and problems. It is a continuous and uninterrupted element enveloping the entire globe; strategically speaking every political division and every differentiation between [*space*]-over-land, [*space*]-over-water, [*and space-over-air*] is artificial and meaningless. [It] calls for a continuous and undivided [*Space*] Command and fully uniform [*space*] equipment, co-operating where necessary with the Army, Navy, [*and Air Force*] expecting their co-operation where needed” (263).

“On examination it becomes clear that [these are] the official views of the existing military Departments. These military minds are confusing two categories of unity. No one denies that [the] Army, Navy, [*and Air Force*] need unity of command in their respective spheres. This includes authority over their various auxiliaries and authority over units of other services working with them for specific tasks. If the sole function of [*space forces*] were to serve as the adjunct to the surface forces, the [views] would be entirely correct. Actually, it is only true so far as it goes—and unfortunately it leaves out of consideration entirely *the most vital and decisive [spacefaring] which operates alone* in its own environment” (emphasis added) (263–64). Just as with land, sea, and airpower, there are critical missions envisioned for space that require *it* to be the supported force. The entrenched “military minds do not grasp this idea themselves—that coordinated action with other services is a secondary function of [*space*] power. The primary function of [*military space*] power is to destroy the hostile [*space*] forces, to strike an enemy directly across long distances—in brief to take and hold [*space*]. That is as distinct an undertaking as the conquest and control of the seas by a navy used to be” (264). If all [*space capabilities*] were possessed “by the ground, sea, [*and air*] forces [as mere] adjuncts, [we] should have no genuine [*space*] power at all” (264).

In an eerily parallel analogy, De Seversky was significantly concerned with the reorganization of the land and air forces that had recently occurred, much as Kwast is today skeptical of the less than fully independent Space Force. De Seversky states, “The War Department in the late spring of 1941 presented the country with a minor reform dressed up to look like a major reorganization. It announced the ‘unification of its air activities in a new unit to be known as The Army Air Forces.’ In informing Congress of the plan, the Secretary of War emphasized the ‘autonomy’ of the new setup and its ‘unity of command’” (266).

He continues: “This verbal garnishing was most unfortunate. Insofar as it created the illusion the Army had made a ‘compromise’ on the issue of self-administered air power, the public was being misled. Actually the reorganization merely revamped one of the Army’s subordinate sections, while keeping it as subordinate as ever. The ‘unification’ announced did not even touch the basic issues raised by advocates of an Air Department. No one can object to necessary internal reform of the Army’s aeronautical structure. But there is every reason to object strenuously to an attempt to palm off a departmental reform, such as frequently occurs inside any service, as a substitute for a separate Air Force” (266).

“True, our General Staff now provides equal representation for air officers; the fifty-fifty arrangement ought to result in better air-ground coordination,” De Seversky adds. “The air members, having had Army training, understand ground problems and can be most useful in formulating co-operative efforts. The ground members, however, having had no . . . aviation training, can make no real contribution to purely air strategy. On the contrary, they will act as a brake on real aeronautical thinking and a constant source of interference. The Air Forces will be even more firmly tied into the ground strategy than before” (278–79).

The similarity to the Space Force is striking. “The common denominator of all the objections to an independent [*Space*] Force is that the United States has built [*space*] forces of a sort under the aegis of the [other] services and can therefore improve them without limit under the same monitorship. . . . The answer is that *at present we have no [space] power at all* [emphasis in original]. We have a miscellany of [*space assets*], good, bad, and indifferent, but no [*space*] power in the sense we have defined air power in these pages [because] those [assets] will not reflect a unified [*space*] strategy to be used by a unified [*space*] command” (279).

The full emancipation of air and space forces is only the latest iteration of a long debate. That is, “the inquisitive might go back to the debates on a separate and independent Navy Department in the last decade of the

eighteenth century, before the Navy was given autonomous status in 1798. It is an enlightening experience. You will find that the War Department used substantially the same arguments for holding onto the naval forces that are now being used against emancipation of [*space*] power; and you will find, too, that the spokesmen for genuine sea power used about the same reasoning in support of their thesis that is being advanced today by advocates of a separate [*Space*] Department” (282).

De Seversky reflects, “Reading the Congressional Record of April 25, 1798, I thought I was listening to typical . . . objections to the freeing of air [*and space*] power. Congressman Livingston, for instance, grew ironical about the silly business of a separate Navy. ‘To carry this idea to its full extent,’ he explained, ‘it would not only be necessary to have separate departments, but also a great variety of subdivisions; they must have . . . commissioners of gun barrels and of ramrods.’ How often have we heard the same type of irony from naval men asking if we also wanted a separate department of submarines or naval artillery” (282)!

“On the other side of the debate were men like Representative [Harrison Gray] Otis [Federalist-MA] who insisted that ‘the services of the War and Naval Departments were . . . perfectly distinct,’ adding, ‘as well might a Merchant be sent to do the business of a Lawyer; a Lawyer that of a Physician; a Carpenter that of a Bricklayer; or a Bricklayer that of a Carpenter,’ as expect Army men to lead the Navy. And Representative [Samuel] Sewall [Federalist-MA] declared that ‘it was well known that an officer might be well acquainted with the business of the army, without knowing anything about the business of the navy.’ Navy men opposing the separate air [*or space*] power might recall the fact that the bill authorizing the formation of a separate Navy passed the house by the narrow margin of 47 to 41” (283).

The echoes of that historic deliberation reverberate in Kwast’s argument. Further justifications for separation—based not on a hatred of the parent or extant services but a genuine desire for the full potential of the new domain to be realized—follow logically. “The technology of war advances with such rapid strides that it quickly outstrips the mental pace of humdrum old-style leaders. Today tactical vision must be coupled with engineering vision. Military leaders must be able to foresee both the new equipment and the tactical implications of that equipment. . . . Even men trained in aviation have difficulty in visualizing the air power of tomorrow; how hapless, therefore, are those trained in totally different fields, who psychologically are incapable of considering space as a separate tactical sphere! That is why a realistic program calls for unequivocal separation of new

weapons from old assumptions, especially in relation to [*space*] power, the newest, the fastest-growing, and most revolutionary military force” (284).

“A new military art, such as inherent in [*spacefaring*], must not be restrained by subservience to . . . old military conceptions. To do so is to lose . . . by default. I am not reflecting on the intelligence or the patriotism or even the professional competence of the Army, Navy, and [*Air Force*] strategists. I am simply taking note that they think as infantry and naval [*and air*] leaders and can never release their minds for [*space*] warfare. [They] will accommodate [*space power*] to their strategy, instead of accommodating their strategy to [*space power*]. Only 100 per cent [*space professionals*] can conceive and carry through a 100 per cent [*space*] strategy” (284–85).

Further evidence of entrenched and obsolete thinking is what happens to so-called reformers. They are labeled radicals and zealots. They are vilified, and their careers are threatened. De Seversky specifically recalls “the crucifixion of General Mitchell,” who spoke out for full development of airpower and was court-martialed for it (285). “Even if never expressed in words or orders, those preferences percolate down through the ranks. They make themselves effective in subtle pressures of obedience to authority, loyalty to superiors, and honest hunger for promotion. To the extent that a [*space power*] idea infringes on the traditional sphere of an older service, or throws doubt on the efficacy of that service in a given situation, it is slowed up and frequently doomed to premature death. The channels through which it must move are adjusted to the needs and inertias of an older tradition. Military services, like everything else that is alive, [instinctually have] a will to survive which fights, consciously or unconsciously, against every reality that limits their functions” (285–86).

“The most talented [*space*] strategist or designer cannot contribute all that he has when he is condemned to work within the framework of limited and essentially false basic plans of strategy. It is not merely a matter of ‘guts’ in speaking out. No one can deny the importance of discipline in the armed forces. Once he has made his recommendations to his superiors, a [*space*] officer feels it is his soldierly duty to say no more—even if he is heartbroken by the manner in which his deeply felt views are filed and forgotten. . . . The subject [*of space power*] is ringed with a taboo. . . . The [*space*] industry, too, is effectively silenced. It does business with the same generals and admirals. Moreover, it is sworn to secrecy in a manner that precludes practical criticism of [*space*] policy” (286).

De Seversky quotes a then-recent Navy memorandum to complete his point: “No officer in the Army or Navy who is even slightly familiar with his profession fails to realize that aviation is a major and essential com-

ponent of both services. Moreover, the airmen who are most vocal in urging now the formation of an additional independent air force are men who are not in the Army, not in the Navy, and are either unfamiliar with or not keenly interested in the broader aspects of national strategy, national defense, and the science of modern warfare.” De Seversky responds that “it does not take a mathematical genius to figure out why the most vocal airmen are not in the Army and not in the Navy! The personal tragedies of those who dared to be vocal are only minor items in the larger tragedy of an American air force condemned to domination by the older services” (285–86).

De Seversky goes on to cite a contemporary book of the time on air-power by the chief of Army aviation, Gen Henry H. Arnold, as “a convenient case in point (of airman’s inherent subservience, I suppose)” (289). He notes Arnold’s admission that “the air forces of all countries will eventually be separated from land and sea forces” and, further, that in America “this long step should be taken, if it is taken at all, only after careful planning and mature thought, and with no zest for radical reform. There should be a stage of gradual evolution as against other knife-cutting of binding ties.” De Seversky adds that Arnold “almost in the same breath . . . contradicts himself by writing: ‘*We shall be fortunate if our time for that reorganization of an independent air force comes in the relative calm of peace or at worst in the preparatory and not in the fighting stage* (emphasis added)’” (289). A continuing argument against an independent Space Force is that it will not be ready until after it has armed combat experience in war, as in the case of the Air Force. I am reminded of the story of the man who would not go into the water until he knew how to swim. To wait until war comes to be properly organized, trained, and equipped for war fully is not an argument made by serious military strategists.

De Seversky notes about Arnold that “this sort of double talk, if it is not the product of honest confusion, may be a device for conveying the truth to those who understand, without offending the powers that be. The general surely knew when he wrote [this] that we were close to the reality of war and that there was no time for the ‘gradual evolution’ he proposed. He must be quite adequately aware that twenty years of delay—from the time when General Mitchell first demanded independence of aviation, have brought an evolution of approximately zero. Evolutionary processes, too, can be arrested by artificial restraints” (289). Space power has suffered even more impediments.

By 1958 the Air Research and Development Command (ARDC) was soliciting ideas and developing plans that “outlined a rationale for an

‘Earth Military Orbital Space Force’” in the “1965–1980 time frame.”⁵ In April 1959, Adm Arleigh Burke, chief of naval operations, with the concurrence of Army chief of staff Gen Maxwell Taylor, proposed creation of a single unified military space command. However, Gen Thomas White, Air Force chief of staff, “opposed the proposal because . . . it violated the practice of treating space systems on a functional basis and integrating weapons within unified commands. He argued that space systems represent only a better means of performing existing missions and should be assigned to the appropriate unified or specified command.”⁶ De Seversky had deftly rebutted these arguments against independent airpower, as cited previously in this article.

In late 1981, frustrated by the soaring costs and lack of progress that appeared to have allowed the Soviet Union to leap ahead of American military space capabilities, Congress passed House Resolution 5130 requiring the US Air Force to report to Congress on the feasibility of establishing an independent space command.⁷ Entrenched interests in the DOD strongly opposed the move on the grounds it was not needed, would duplicate bureaucracies, and would cost too much despite the findings of a January 1982 General Accounting Office report that a separate space command coordinating all military space activities would instead result in overall cost *savings*. Two years later, the first US Space Command was inaugurated with the goal of transitioning to an independent Space Force by the end of the century.⁸

And still, military space progress languished. In 1999 Congress authorized a commission headed by former secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld to investigate. The commission’s warnings were chilling. Its 2001 report stated flatly that the US was unprepared for “a Space Pearl Harbor,” a devastating attack in space that would render its military incapable of projecting power effectively overseas.⁹ Among the report’s recommendations was to begin preparations for the establishment of an independent Space Force, beginning with a presidential advisory group within three years and full transition within 10 years.¹⁰ Two years later, US Space Command was decommissioned.

History matters. Major de Seversky will get the last word in this essay—modified for today in terms that echo resoundingly in General Kwast’s clarion call: “At bottom the objectives to true and independent [*space power*] derive from a flaw in vision. The critics are unable to see the potentialities of [*space power*] beyond the horizons of its present equipment and its present tactics. They do not take in the full majestic sweep of the inevitable progress of [*spacecraft*]; they base their thinking on [*space-*

faring] as they know it today. . . . Not only developments around the corner, but immediate possibilities which trained [*space*] minds know to be simple and sober realities, orthodox strategists dismiss as fantastic and far-fetched” (290).

“The eventual emancipation of [*space power*] from . . . its ‘subordinate status’ is inevitable. With that emancipation will come a blossoming of [*spacefaring*] talent, a heightened morale among [*space*] personnel, [and] a long-delayed chance for American [*space power*] to come into its own. . . . Every week of delay is a costly and futile restraint on that unfoldment, and a postponement of victory” (291). **SSQ**

Everett C. Dolman

Air Command and Staff College

Notes

1. Stephen Kwast, “Where the Space Force Must Go,” *Politico*, 17 January 2020, <https://www.politico.com/>.

2. Alexander P. de Seversky, *Victory Through Air Power*, Book-of-the-Month Club ed. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1942).

3. Page numbers for references to De Seversky’s *Victory Through Air Power* are indicated in parentheses throughout this article.

4. See CQ Staff, “Air Force Opposes Creation of Space Corps,” Roll Call, 22 June 2017, <https://www.rollcall.com/>; Sandra Erwin, “As Acting Air Force Secretary, Donovan Takes Lead Role Advocating for Independent Space Force,” *Space News*, 17 July 2019, <https://spacenews.com/>; and Sandra Erwin, “Air Force Changes Message on Space Force amid Criticism It Stifled Debate,” *Space News*, 2 September 2019, <https://spacenews.com/>.

5. Brent Ziarnick, *Tough Tommy’s Space Force: General Thomas S. Power and the Air Force Space Program*, Drew Paper no. 34 (Maxwell AFB, AL: Air University Press, 2019), 55, 57, <https://media.defense.gov/>.

6. David Spires, *Beyond Horizons: A Half Century of Air Force Space Leadership*, rev. ed. (Maxwell AFB, AL: Air University Press, 1998), 76, <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/>.

7. Thomas Karas, *The New High Ground* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983), 17–20; and Spires, *Beyond Horizons*, 76.

8. Spires, *Beyond Horizons*, 217–21, 230–34.

9. *Report of the Commission to Assess United States National Security, Space Management and Organization* (Washington, DC: The Commission, 2001), xiii–xv. <https://aerospace.csis.org/>.

10. *Report of the Commission to Assess United States National Security*, 80, 83–84, 94.

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