

End of the Humankind Odyssey? Explore, Discover, Migrate, Adjust, and Survive ... or Become Extinct

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It is the unforgiveable tendency of domestic, international, and global policymakers to ignore the cosmic clock seemingly ticking with ever-increasing rapidity, and its interplay with the evolutionary progress of *Homo sapiens sapiens* ... with modern humankind; and the ability of that steadily ticking clock to compromise the survivability of biological and biotechnological sentience ... of humankind abstract conceptualization/perception relating to the as yet empirically unknown. Time truly is of the essence.

In 1991, the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) established an organizational entity to help “bridge the communications gap” between and among technology developers and users of the technology. The entity, referred to as the Space Propulsion Synergy Team or SPST, consists of multidiscipline experts whose work relates primarily to national Space launch vehicle propulsion and other forms of spacecraft movement and control. These experts worked in areas of concept and design development, testing and operations, and program/project management. They and others had and continue to have extensive experience in working with contractors, government departments and agencies, as well as academic experts, to help bridge that “communications gap”.

Recently, the SPST initiated the first publication in the instant journal *Space and Evolution* (hereinafter SPAEVO), and entitled, “The Justification for Human Space Development and Habitation beyond Low Earth Orbit: An Invitation for an Open National and Global Dialogue¹”. An attempt was made to refocus national and international Space efforts on the critical need to enhance human Space migration efforts as essential for the ultimate survival of *Homo sapiens sapiens* and its transhuman/post-human descendants². While essential to survival of the species, the focus was then redirected from saving the humankind species to saving and enhancing the presently diminishing U.S. (i.e., NASA, the Department of Defense, and dependent industries) leadership in most aspects of Space-related activities ... manned and unmanned. Referring back to the time critical element in this SPAEVO article, authored by current SPST president, John W. Robinson, the focus emphasized that the international community, as well as NASA, is “losing extremely valuable time critical

for planning and executing habitation beyond low Earth orbit”. This was considered particularly true as “Earth becomes ever less capable of supporting human population growth” run amok, along with all the terminal competitive activities usually affiliated with “overcrowding” experienced by any biotic entities competing for resources necessary for genome ... and, at the least, gene code and sequencing ... survival and perpetuation³.

In the context of the pressing nature of Space migration, the SPST article castigated the present leadership in the U.S. for not providing “adequately for a compelling long-term objective with a workable, affordable roadmap. One that is needed to enlist the support of the American people”. Without doubt, this would be the most difficult argument to sell to the general public, the support of which is absolutely essential to commitment of a mindboggling amount of funding and future credits to attempt perpetuation of humankind by an infinitely small number of individuals migrating into, and settling, near and deep Space. Additionally, the cost would demand not just significant international cooperation, but fiscal and policy collaboration on a fully-committed global basis ... perhaps even transglobal. Certainly, a global commitment to a mutually agreed upon underlying philosophic construct of species survival is unavoidable for any chance of success, whether conducted by governments, the entrepreneurial private sector, or a relatively unique combination of both. The current White House Space policy does not recognize the critical nature of Space migration, and most ongoing Space research and development by the government must depend significantly on international cooperation, both private and public, or a reasonable combination of both. For the present, traditional Space related R&D funding in the U.S. is being diverted to other perceived short-term requirements. And the past international cooperative programs of NASA are diminishing as former partners are withdrawing into their own national efforts or working with new partners.

These realities, along with the driving fiscal problems and currently shattering world economies, makes effective global collaboration almost unavoidable if species survival, as a recognized and accepted reality, can be pursued with any hope of short- and

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long-term success. In the SPST Space and Evolution article, and in the SPST White Paper expanding on the issue of Space migration and species survival that was distributed to members of the Congress, the Executive Branch, and the general public, SPST recognized this need, but, perhaps unfortunately, in a seemingly more nationalistic rather than global context, i.e., species survival was the motivating construct for funding necessary to the restoration and maintenance of U.S. leadership in Space exploration, migration, and settlement; and comparatively precious little time available is being lost to ensure this maintenance and restoration that is critical for the necessary planning and accomplishment of permanent human habitation beyond low Earth orbit. This is particularly true as the planet is becoming increasingly less compatible for supporting the explosive population growth and its related environmental degradation. Further, according to the SPST view,

“Economic growth resulting from developing Space transportation systems and the exploitation of resources in Space that are needed for exploration [i.e., the initial stages of biological migration] and habitation [i.e., successful biological/biochemical adjustment to a more survival favorable location] off Earth will lead to commercializing Space and globally provide countless critically-needed jobs ...”

The SPST article further asserts that the leadership presently existing in the United States “has not provided adequately for a compelling long-term objective with a workable, affordable roadmap – one that is needed to enlist the support of the American people”. Nevertheless, while the support of the American populace is critical even at this point in time, or at least the incipient stages of enlisting that broad support, the objective must be one leading toward a global and then transglobal undertaking. An even a more driving factor subtending the underlying and motivating philosophic construct of humankind species survival, is the ability of the species to continue the odyssey of its essence, or “nature” ... the seeking of the what and why of Creation. In this context, beyond soliciting the support of the general populace in the United States, the SPST article does recognize the ultimate philosophic and fiscal importance to, and responsibility of, the broad global populace, i.e.,

“Earth has limited resources to support life as we know it. This, along with ever-increasing internal global threats, as well as possible external threats [e.g., asteroids and meteoroids, etc.] conceivably could make Earth largely uninhabitable in the future. Therefore, Space development and human habitation beyond low Earth orbit are needed ur-

gently to extend life beyond ... Earth. A few compelling issues are 1) cooperation on a global level is essential ...”⁴

While transitioning from effective short- and long-term international collaboration is essential, that transition also must lay the foundation for a truly global and then “off-Earth” transglobal entity to facilitate the next step; one ineffectively constrained by parochial interests and without unrelated and debilitating effects of uninformed transitional politics and outdated geopolitical delimitations established by ever changing governing entities. If the private sector will be responsible ... as it has traditionally ... for solidifying and expanding governmental research and development of humankind Space migration and settlement, either independently or in reasonable collaboration with an alliance of participating governments, the next step is the structuring of an effective global entity that embraces and perpetuates the migratory and off-Earth settlement efforts for species survival beyond the experimental International Space Station. “Fiddling” by policy makers and lawyers with outdated treaties, solely for the purpose of political posturing and the perpetuation of certain societal representatives of the human species, is not adequate. This is particularly clear in the context of drastically changing national and regional economies, shifting defense alliances, and distracting impositions of policies representing what interest groups believe “ought to be”, without dealing with “what is”, first. This will contribute to a fairly certain loss of the next step in the survival and evolution of *Homo sapiens sapiens* and its transhuman/post human descendants.

The answer to human Space migration and species survival off-Earth may well lead to formulation of a new pseudo-nation in cyberspace, a sort of off-shore corporate transglobal entity that operates away from, and independently of, the geophysical constraints of Earth. Initially, however, the transportation system might operate offshore in the “high seas” arena off the planet’s surface. What is critical now is the need to attract disciplined, innovative management conceptualization necessary for an operating infrastructure of a transglobal private entrepreneurial entity with quasi-sovereign authority, and perhaps offering a new form of investor citizenship⁵.

Endnotes

¹ See, therefor, <http://www.eaglehill.us/spaev0>

² For definitions of transhumans and post humans in a biojuridical context, see G.S. Robinson, “Space Law for Humankind, Transhumans, and Post Humans: Need for a Unique Theory of Natural Law Principles?”. *In Annals of Air and Space Law*, McGill University, Vol. XXXIII (2008).

³ In this context, see, generally, by G. Robinson “The Search for Biogenesis and the Lurch Toward Space Law Secularism”, *In Annals of Air and Space Law*, McGill Univ., Vol. XXXIV, pp.645-712 (2009).

⁴ For further elaboration of these issues thought to be compelling by the SPST, see <http://www.eaglehill.us/spev>.

⁵ For an early discussion of the problematic issues of governments not stepping aside to allow the private sector to use properly for commercial purposes the results of governmental R&D, see, by G. Robinson, “Getting NASA out of the Business of Space Business”, *In Space Governance*, Vol.1, No.-2, Dec. 1994. The author states at p.19 that [w]e either believe in capitalism and the free market place with minimal essential governmental regulation, or we don’t believe in it. If we do, then our ensuing emphasis on the space program should, I believe, be on establishing a strong private sector policy-making capacity and the “exploitation” of our access to near and deep space with a reasonable minimizing of the impact of commercial regulation by the government ... More than ever it is not that we have access to space that is important, but how we go into space. The corporate sector has been inculcated with necessary social values by the U.S. Government through legislation [and now, apparently, by Executive Order attempting to bypass relevant legislative activity by the Congress] and contracting provisions. It is time ... for the private sector to inculcate the Government with the same values ... and the plenary authority to enforce those values”. See, also, by Robinson, “Future Private Commercialization of Space Resources: Foibles of Applicable Law”, *In Annals of Air and Space Law*, McGill Univ., Vol. XXVII, pp. 496-526 (2002).