

Preface

My original purpose in writing this book was to tell the story of how the space shuttle came to be and how the American space station program was initiated. For much of that period (from 1969 to 1984) I had a good vantage point from which to observe the events that led to these developments.

Chapters I through XVII were written in the summer and autumn of 1984 shortly after I made the decision to leave my post as deputy administrator of NASA. I have made no changes in these chapters because I wanted to keep the description of the atmosphere in NASA and the space program at the time, and I also wanted to describe the attitudes I had toward the program before the loss of *Challenger* on January 28, 1986. I thought that these were worth preserving in print.

The last chapter of the book was written after the *Challenger* accident. There is no doubt that this event has, at least temporarily, changed the position of NASA and that it has been a major setback for the American space program. I felt that it would be worthwhile to put down my own reflections on the event and to draw some conclusions about the future of this nation's efforts in space operations when the impact of *Challenger's* loss is taken into account.

A great many people contributed to the writing of this book. The following individuals reviewed the manuscript and made valuable suggestions: Mr. Robert F. Allnut, Dr. Roger E. Batzel, Mr. James M. Beggs, Mr. Ben Bova, Dr. Harold Brown, Dr. Larry D. Carver, Mr. Arthur C. Clarke, Mr. Philip E. Culbertson, Mr. James C. Elms, Dr. Maxime A. Faget, Dr. Terence T. Finn, Dr. James C. Fletcher, Dr. Sylvia D. Fries, Mr. Robert R. Gilruth, Professor James E. Katz,

Mr. John G. Kester, Ms. Dorothy J. Kokoski, Professor Herman F. Mark, Mrs. Heather Moore, Mr. C. Thomas Newman, Colonel Gilbert D. Rye, U.S. Air Force (retired), Senator Harrison H. Schmitt, Mr. G. Harry Stine, Mr. Norman Terrell, Mrs. Josephine L. Watson, and Mr. John F. Yardley. I would like to express my sincere thanks to all of these people; the book is much better because of the time they spent making many comments and corrections.

I am particularly grateful to Ms. Dorothy J. Kokoski who typed the first draft of the manuscript and to Mrs. Sheila Simmons who did such an excellent job on the final draft. Mrs. Becky Boyer and Mrs. Sylvia Hodges also helped with the typing. The editor is a most important person in any enterprise such as this one, and I am grateful for the intelligence and the diligence that Mr. Reynolds Smith of the Duke University Press brought to this effort. Finally, I am grateful for the encouragement of my wife, Dr. Marion T. Mark, who had the idea that I should keep a daily diary when we moved to Washington in 1977. If she had not made that suggestion, this book could not have been written.

Hans Mark
Austin, Texas
January, 1987