

The Bandera PROPHECY

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Today in Texas History

By Bandera Spirits of Texas

On this day in 1958, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the National Aeronautics and Space Act, which established the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

The national commitment to a broad program of space exploration, including manned space flight, came in response to the Soviet Union's successful space launches, begun in 1957. In 1961, President John F. Kennedy set as a national goal the achievement of a manned landing on the moon by the end of the decade. NASA began to reorganize and increase its space establishments.

Central to the agency's new future was the construction of a manned-space-development aggregation, including facilities in Florida, Alabama and Mississippi.

NASA also elected to build a new space-management, crew-training and flight-control center on Clear Lake in southeastern Harris County, Texas, thanks to the efforts of Texas Congressman Albert Thomas. The Manned Space Center opened in 1963 and was officially renamed the Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center ten years later.