

Ukraine Providing an Important Testing Ground for Space-Based Weapons

Weapons Straight Out of a Science Fiction Novel Have Not Been Able to Turn the Tide on the Battlefield

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In his 1988 book [War Stars: The Superweapon in the American Imagination](#), H. Bruce Franklin traces a deep-rooted cultural belief in the magic of futuristic weapon systems that would enable the U.S. to defeat any foreign adversary.

Franklin dates the infatuation to the era of the revolutionary war with the development of the combat submarine by Robert H. Fulton to pulverize the British Navy.

He in turn shows a direct line through World War I and World War II and the development of air power and the atomic bomb, through the Vietnam War where sophisticated U.S. war machines could not defeat the guerrilla warfare tactics of the Vietcong.

Franklin could easily include a new chapter on Ukraine, whose [summer counteroffensive has fizzled](#) despite the country's function as a testing ground for new American weapon systems.

These include space-based satellites and sensors that have been used by the Ukrainians to track Russian troop movements and assist in navigation, mapping and [electronic warfare](#), and [positioning systems](#) that guide precision weapons and drones.

A [webinar](#) in mid-July hosted by the War Industry Resistance Network placed the U.S. strategy in Ukraine in the context of a broader attempt by the U.S. to militarize space and use it to destroy its leading geopolitical rivals—Russia and China.



Source: spacenews.com

The first speaker, Dave Webb, a retired engineering and peace studies professor from England, emphasized that the 1991 Operation Desert Storm set the groundwork for Ukraine as the first space war in which the U.S. showed off new satellite and precision guided missiles that wound up devastating Iraq.

In 1997, the U.S. Space Command outlined its goal of obtaining full-spectrum military dominance over land, sea, air and space by the year 2020—which achieved partial fulfillment with the Trump administration’s creation in 2019 of a new Space Force as a branch of the U.S. military.

By 2024, the budget of the Space Force reached \$30.3 billion, a 15% increase over 2023 and a doubling of the budget from 2020.



Workers prepare Space Test Program-3 mission for the U.S. Space Force's Space Systems Command on November 22, 2021, at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station, Florida, for mounting process with an Atlas V rocket. The mission sent two satellites into space. [Source: spacenews.com]

Congress has in a not so veiled way tried to legitimate these budget increases by holding [hearings](#) raising alarm about the threat of Unidentified Flying Objects (UFO's).

One in late July featured a former intelligence officer, David Grusch, who [claimed](#) that he faced retaliation at the Pentagon for his confidential disclosure that "non-human beings" had been retrieved from spacecraft.^[1]

On August 11, the 75th Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Squadron (ISRS) was [activated](#) at Peterson Space Force Base in Colorado. It has been tasked with identifying and destroying or disrupting adversary satellites and ground-based lasers aimed at preventing the U.S. from using its own satellites during a conflict.

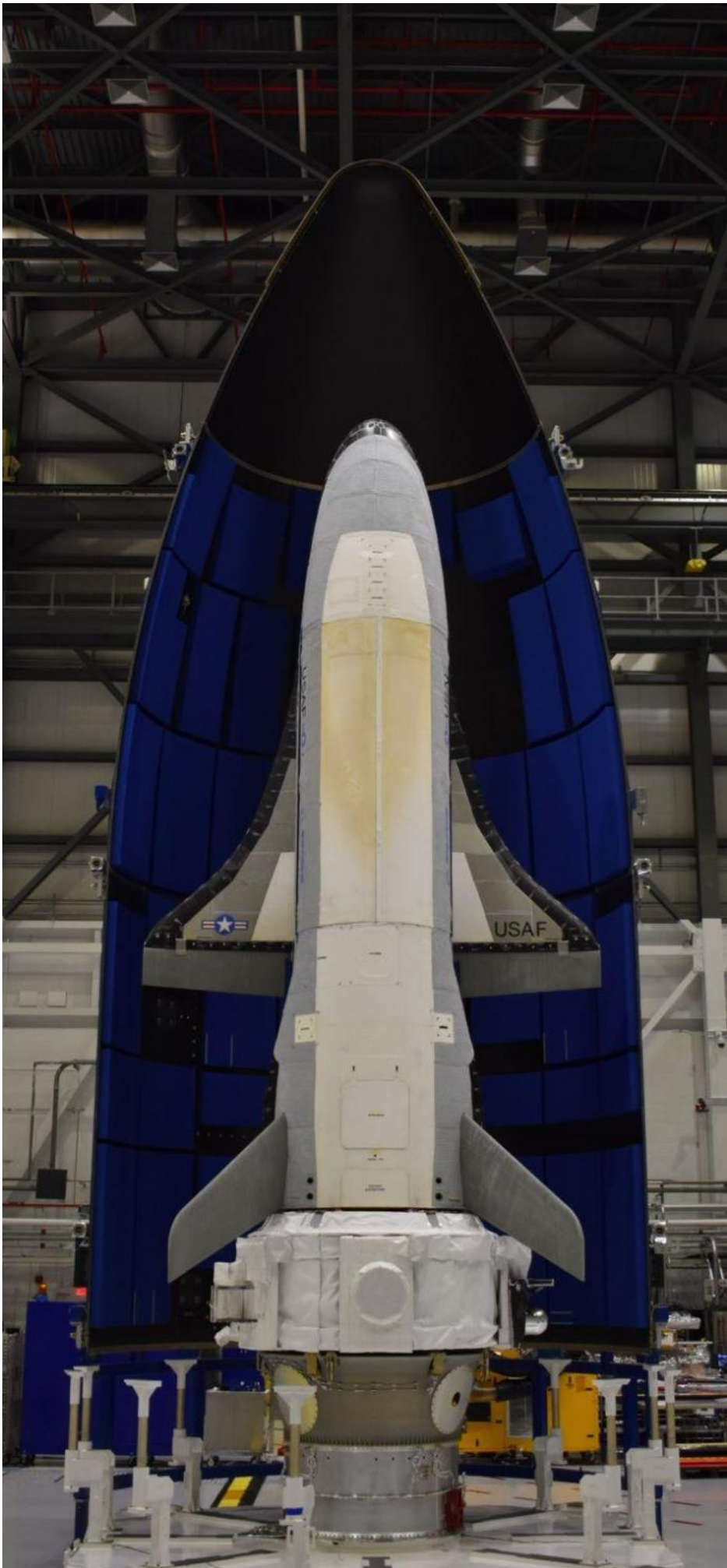
Space.com reported that the U.S. Space Force has conducted multiple training exercises to practice "[live fire](#)" [satellite jamming](#) [of Russian and Chinese space based satellites] and "[simulated on-orbit combat training](#)" as part of a growing commitment to space-based war.

The Space Force's operations have been made possible by a \$1.5 billion space surveillance radar center built by Lockheed Martin in an atoll in the Marshall Islands, which became operational in March 2020. The center now tracks more than 26,000 objects in space, some the [size of a marble](#).



An aerial view of the U.S. Space Force's Space Fence on Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands. [Source: spacenews.com]

Additional surveillance centers have recently been built in Texas, Australia and Great Britain while Boeing is building a secret military space plane, the X-37B, which can carry out orbital space flight missions.



Webb ended his talk by noting that the spirit of a 1967 Outer Space Treaty that was designed to prevent the militarization of Outer Space is not being followed.

Space exploration is giving way to space exploitation and growing competition with Russia, which has developed its own space-based weapon systems in response to what the U.S. is doing.



Signing of the Outer Space Treaty in 1967. [Source: spaceflight.com]

The second speaker at the webinar, Bruce Gagnon, coordinator of the [Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space](https://www.gnpspace.org/), pointed out that, for the last quarter century, Russia has presented its demand for a new cooperative space treaty before the United Nations but has been blocked by the U.S., Israel and a few of their allies.

The Russians have stated unequivocally, as have the Chinese, that they do not want to devote their countries' resources to a destructive and fruitless arms race in space, though the U.S. believes it can be master in space and has been taken over totally by the military-industrial complex.

When the creation of the new Space Force came up for a vote in 2019, the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives supported it, though it had wanted to call it Space Corps.

Growing up in a military family, Gagnon said he experienced a political awakening while enlisted in the Air Force in 1971 when he came in contact with peace activists at Travis Air Force Base in Fairfield, California, where he was stationed.

Gagnon's concern about the militarization of Outer Space began when he read a book by Linda Hunt called *Secret Agenda*, which detailed the CIA's recruitment of Nazi scientists

under Operation Paperclip who helped found the U.S. space program.

Chief among them was Wernher von Braun, who had helped develop the V-2 rocket in Germany using slave labor.

Gagnon said he finds it chilling that the U.S. Space Force carries out yearly war-game exercises where they simulate fighting using space-based weapons right out of science fiction novels. Among these is the “Rod from God,” a weapon in which tungsten steel rods are fired from orbiting satellites, smacking the Earth from the sky as if sent by God.

Right now, Gagnon says, we are living through a Cuban Missile Crisis in reverse as the U.S. has pointed nuclear weapons directly at Russia from a U.S. military base in Deveselu, Romania, and another in Redzikowo, Poland off the Baltic Sea.

The U.S. goal is to break up Russia as it did Yugoslavia in the 1990s because Russia is the world’s largest resource base and threatens the ability of the U.S. to extract resources from the Arctic unencumbered.

Along with World War III, the current U.S. space strategy is threatening to unleash a major environmental catastrophe as space-based satellites and weapons are leaving debris that cannot be cleaned up.

According to Gagnon, exhaust from escalating numbers of rocket launches is diminishing the ozone layer, and the growing space debris could even cause the Earth to go dark as collisions become more likely.

Back in 1989, Gagnon organized a protest at the Kennedy Space Center at Cape Canaveral that was attended by Navy Captain Edgar Mitchell, the only astronaut known to have ever attended a peace rally.^[2]

Mitchell told the crowd at the protest that, “if there was ever a war in space, it would be the last war humans ever fought because it would create so much debris orbiting around the planet, there would be no way to clean it up.”

Mitchell’s warning makes clear the importance of supporting the efforts of peace groups to try to prevent the militarization of space and to fight the military-industrial complex, which is a cancer not only to our own planet but to the entire universe.

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Notes

1. The disclosure it should be noted was based on second-hand information.
2. Born in Hereford, Texas, in 1930, Mitchell obtained a Doctor of Science degree (equivalent to a Ph.D.). from MIT and was the Lunar Module Pilot for the 1971 Apollo 14 mission who was the [sixth man to walk on the moon](#). During his travels to space, Mitchell said that he had an epiphany that led him to work for the rest of his life to “broaden the knowledge of the nature and potentials of mind and consciousness and to apply that knowledge to the enhancement of human well-being and the quality of life on the planet.”

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