

## Making LaRouche 1980s SDI Proposal a Reality

The U.S. space agency, NASA, announced on Nov. 5, 2004, the imminent launching of the final test flight of the X-43A Hyper-X scramjet. This research vehicle will fly at an airspeed of almost Mach 10, or 6,800 miles per hour. The final flight was scheduled for Wednesday, Nov. 10, from Edwards Air Base in California, but delayed until no earlier than Nov. 15 because of bad weather.

In Lyndon LaRouche's 1988 broadcast "The Woman on Mars," he called for the urgent development of such an aircraft as part of a program for expanded economic development, space colonization, and defense, which LaRouche had proposed in the early 1980s, and which was partially adopted by President Reagan as the Strategic Defensive Initiative program. The excerpt from that 1988 broadcast dealing with the scramjet concept, has been posted on the larouchepac web site ([www.larouchepac.com](http://www.larouchepac.com)).

LaRouche explained in the broadcast that the hypersonic scramjet is the necessary next step in space exploration beyond the Shuttle. He mentioned there that he had recently visited the MBB aerospace firm in Germany, which was then working on a prototype of a hypersonic craft based on the design of German rocket scientist Eugen Sänger. LaRouche also showed mock-ups of an Italian scramjet design, employing the advanced aerodynamic principle known as the "Büsemann biplane."

NASA is now testing a vehicle like the one LaRouche described in 1988. NASA's Hyper-X test vehicle is launched from a B-52B aircraft and accelerated by an attached rocket. Once at hypersonic velocity, the craft flies on its own, burning hydrogen fuel mixed with atmospheric



*Launch aircraft takes off in March, carrying the hypersonic X-43A research plane on its wing for high-altitude launch.*

air, which enters the large intake manifold of the scramjet engine at Mach 10 velocity. One of the technological problems in scramjet design is to find a way to burn the fuel which is mixing with air at this high velocity, a feat designers have compared to lighting a match in a hurricane.

### White House Wants to Terminate X43A

In the wake of NASA's successful test flight last March, however, the Bush Administration announced that it was cancelling the follow-on effort to fly a larger test plane and move toward an operational vehicle. Thus, the next scheduled flight is set to be the *final* one in the program, unless appropriate political action is taken.

A definitive article by Marsha Freeman on the Hyper-X aircraft, including the history and development of the hypersonic concept, was the cover story of the Fall 2001 edition of *21st Century Science & Technology*, and is reprinted here.

—Laurence Hecht