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## Chairman's Introduction

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## Chairman's introduction

BY R. WILSON, F.R.S.

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Although I consider it a privilege to open this meeting and to act as your Chairman for this first day, I do so with considerable sadness. I deputize for Sir Harrie Massey, F.R.S., who died at his home only eleven days ago after several months of illness. I happen to know how committed he was to this meeting, the great importance he attached to its subject matter and how very, very much he wanted to be here today. This is not the moment to outline his many achievements but I am sure you will allow me a brief, personal tribute, to which you may wish to subscribe. No one contributed more to the early development of space activities in this country or, indeed, in Europe than Harrie Massey. More than anyone else he provided the leadership and the inspiration. We will all miss him.

I must now turn to my introduction to this meeting, and I would like to say how appropriate I think it is that the Royal Society should be the host of a meeting on the subject of The Industrialization of Space. British space research was initiated in the aftermath of Sputnik and the American commitment to a space programme. It was then scientifically oriented, and was led, funded and managed by the Royal Society via its National Committee for Space Research, which was chaired by Harrie Massey, to whom I have just referred. British Industry cut its 'space teeth' on this programme, which included, for example, the U.K. series of Aerial satellites, and this gave it a competitive edge in seeking international as well as national space contracts. In addition, U.K. hardware, funded for science but involving British Industry, was flown in many N.A.S.A. and E.S.A. satellites such as N.A.S.A's Copernicus and Nimbus satellites, E.S.A's TD-1 and the N.A.S.A.-E.S.A.-S.E.R.C. satellite IUE; there are many other examples. These contributions, although minor in terms of resources, were major intellectually because of the degree of know-how and skill that was deployed. The returns to the U.K. were also major.

Since those early days, the whole pattern of space research has changed and expanded dramatically into many areas of applications and commerce. The extent to which this has already happened, together with the exciting possibilities for the future, is the subject of this meeting on the industrialization of space, for which the organizers have assembled a very distinguished list of speakers. It is very appropriate that the first speaker should be someone who is personally committed to the aim expressed in that title and who is the Minister responsible for it in the U.K., namely the Rt Hon. Kenneth Baker, Minister of State for Industry and Information Technology.