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### **Rumsfeld Announces Merger Of Commands**

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld announced yesterday that the Pentagon will soon merge the U.S. Space Command and the U.S. Strategic Command into a single new command responsible both for defense against missile attacks on the United States and for long-range conventional attacks against foreign targets.

The new command will be based at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska, home of the Strategic Command, which controls the country's nuclear missiles and long-range bomber force. Although Rumsfeld did not say who would head the new command, defense officials indicated that President Bush would likely nominate Navy Adm. James Ellis, who heads the Strategic Command.

Air Force Gen. Ralph Eberhart, head of the Space Command, has been nominated by Bush to head the newly created Northern Command, which will begin directing the military's role in homeland defense on Oct. 1.

Gen. Richard B. Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and former head of the Space Command, said the merger of Space Command and Strategic Command "will increase the military effectiveness providing the appropriate support to our combatant commanders around the world and, for that matter, responsiveness to the president and to the secretary of defense."