



Bush, left, discusses SSIA's success with Hannah

— Post photo by Audrey Ueckert

Bush expects bright future for private space ventures

By **BILL HENSEL JR.**
Post Reporter

Pointing to the recent success of the Houston-based Space Services Inc. of America firm, Vice President George Bush Saturday predicted a "tremendous future" for both public and private-sector ventures into space.

Bush, after meeting with SSIA board chairman David Hannah Jr. Saturday morning, said he thinks the effort the firm is taking to reach space via free enterprise exemplifies the philosophy of this country's private sector.

After the meeting, Bush said Hannah — a longtime friend — "took some risks, came in for some ridicule," but "stayed in there for a very successful launch."

The vice president was referring to SSIA's Sept. 9 launch and suborbital flight of Conestoga I from Matagorda Island.

"I THINK WHAT Hannah is doing is

News photographers were allowed into Bush's hotel room briefly during the private meeting between him and Hannah Saturday. The pair discussed the possibilities for private-sector space programs.

During their conversation, Bush remarked that "we can be helpful to Third World countries." Hannah said the "real pressure" is for Third World countries to not feel they are taken advantage of because of the advanced space technology of other countries.

HANNAH, SPEAKING on the same subject after the meeting, said one of the concepts with which SSIA is working is to keep technology — such as messages being sent and received by satellite and data gathering — simple to allow less advanced countries to feel they are "into the space age."

He said an expenditure of about half a million dollars by such countries would allow their participation and also possi-

He said the Ugandan representative went so far as to stand up and "make a plea for the private sector to be given an opportunity in space."

Although only government officials were allowed in the conference, he said, contacts were made by SSIA at receptions and other functions held in conjunction with the week-long meeting.

HANNAH SAID THE Conestoga launch earlier this month would likely have cost the government about \$15 million, and said it was "certainly cheaper and quicker" with Space Services doing it.

He said his conversation with Bush Saturday consisted mainly of a discussion of principles involved in working on the space program and was to inform him of SSIA's objectives and progress. He said the meeting was not aimed at getting "an endorsement of what we are doing."

SSIA is an investor-owned company with 57 principals. The company has sev-