

XE128.0586566  
5-23-66

## News Release

# GRADUATE RESEARCH CENTER OF THE SOUTHWEST

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RELEASE ON RECEIPT



AD1-1471  
Extension 25

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### NASA ASSIGNS EARTH-MARS ATMOSPHERIC EVOLUTION

### STUDY TO BERKNER, MARSHALL AT GRADUATE RESEARCH CENTER

DALLAS--

Study of the "Evolution of the Atmospheres of Earth and Mars" will be made by Dr. Lloyd Berkner and Prof. Lauriston C. Marshall at the Graduate Research Center of the Southwest.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration has requested the research, and granted \$88,876 for the program.

Doctor Berkner and Professor Marshall have carried out a related study on the history of oxygen formation in the Earth's atmosphere during the past three years. Their conclusions are that free oxygen first was formed from volcanic outpourings, then was produced by primitive life itself after ultraviolet light from the Sun reacted with water in shallow pools. The study links evolution of life and its spread to land with critical levels and increasing speed of oxygen's build-up.

Doctor Berkner, former chief scientist at GRC and its first president, is now chairman of the board of trustees as well as a research professor. Professor Marshall has recently been appointed as director of the GRC Materials Sciences Laboratory.