

SATELLITES AND

VIRANUS

SPACE TRAVEL

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TWO PIONEERS

Forty five years ago, in 1913, when Hanns Hoerbiger published his theory of planetary and lunar involution, the prospects of space travel in our time seemed remote, and there the wider implications of his idea were not fully appreciated.

Hoerbiger said that planets and moons travel around their main bodies in a series of inward spirals to an extent that after long periods of time they eventually come within what is known as Roche's Limit and are disintegrated by the forces of gravitation. In the case of a large planet such as Saturn by debris will continue to float around in rings for a long time, in the case of smaller ones, such as the Earth, they will rain down, covering some parts of the surface to a depth of half a mile or more.

Our present moon, Luna, seems to have been the last of at least half a dozen small bodies which have been picked up at one time or another, all the previous ones having been disintegrated. The history of the Earth may thus have been a succession of satellite free periods, the times of Paradise on Earth, followed by the minor disaster of picking up a moon - the acquisition of our present one 13,000 years ago may well have caused the Flood - and after tens of thousands of years by the breaking up of a moon with the close of a geological period and the starting of life again after a great catastrophe.

Inadequate measuring instruments have prevented astronomers from deciding if Hoerbiger was right, but the numerous errors in the calculation of Lunar eclipses in the last few years, may have been due to this. The successful launching of a Lunar Rocket by Von Braun or by the Soviets, should provide the answer to this.

The other pioneer is A. Durantou, whose negative mass hypothesis, published many years later, envisages that the planets from Saturn outwards may well be composed of negative matter. The idea which was published in detail in Britain earlier this year is fascinating, but again we must await the results of the first Lunar probe to discover how it works out.

When man gets into space in a matter of a year or

so, he will have a great indebtedness to pioneers like these two whose work may well solve some of the manifold difficulties encountered.

E.S.

THE PROBLEMS OF SPACE TRAVEL

The layman's conception of travel beyond the Earth's atmosphere is severely limited, to him it is just a question of the necessity for greater speed to cover the vast distances involved. The news media through which the general public receive their knowledge on the subject pays only brief attention to the many additional problems which have yet to be overcome. Several programmes on radio and T.V. and occasional articles in the press have presented a brief survey of the problems attending flights to the Moon and Mars; they have included diagrams showing "transfer orbits" and assessments of the chances a space ship has of being punctured by a meteor, so to the average "John Citizen" space travel is just another adventure, albeit a unique one.

"Unique" is just about the all embracing word to use when one discusses space travel with its multitude of varied problems. There are many things we take so much for granted on the surface of the Earth sustained and protected by our atmosphere, we take it for granted that gravity is a uniform, constant force and that the temperature of our atmosphere changes slowly if somewhat irregularly at times; we also take light for granted and our eyes are accustomed to its varying intensity.

John Citizen is fairly well acquainted with "G" force but there are many who would be puzzled by the phrase, "Zero gravity" and those who do know what it means are apt to treat it as a joke, picturing a spaceman groping round for a pint pot which has "escaped" from its hook on the wall. Space medicine experts treat the problem much more seriously although not as an insurmountable barrier to manned space flight. At present it is not possible to artificially induce a sense of weightlessness for a sufficient period of time

to enable its effects to be studied. Our bodies and senses are attuned to the force of gravity in many ways, our sensitive inner ear gives us a sense of balance, responding to the force of gravity as it pulls on a body in different directions according to the body's position. What messages our nervous system will send to our brain under conditions of zero gravity is something the space doctors are very interested in, they say we may have to depend on our eyes to determine the position of our bodies, we shall have to look to see whether our feet are on the ceiling or the floor... This is because gravity "pulls" a man's body downwards but the ground (or floor) "pushes" upwards and the nervous system reports the two conflicting forces to the brain which transmits messages to the appropriate muscles to resist the strain. The conditions of weightlessness is equivalent to that feeling experienced during the first brief moments of a fall and these sensations are communicated to the brain as an emergency message. The experts are anxious to know what will happen when the sensation becomes constant and not just momentary. More inconvenient are the complications likely to arise from the normally simple action of picking up a pen or a pencil from a table or that of stooping to the floor, in either case the body would move in the opposite direction to the applied movement and once more the man would lose his orientation until he could see where his feet were in relation to the floor. Even sleep would have its complications, especially if the unfortunate spaceman is prone to dreaming. If the man dreams he is falling for instance the sensation will not cease when he awakens up and he could injure himself, thrashing about before he becomes sufficiently awake to realize he was only dreaming. How much strain of this kind a human brain can stand is an important and difficult problem and to provide a space ship with "artificial gravity" is far from easy. Designs for an orbital space station which include simulated conditions of "one G" have been advanced by experts but not for designs for actual space ships.

Because the problem of zero gravity can only be studied out in space under conditions of free fall, the first space voyagers are likely to go along "just for the

ride in rockets designed to make the return journey under automatic control.

Some scientists consider that even although the crew of a space ship could be trained to overcome these abnormal conditions, it might be advisable for the normal operation of the ship to be done by an automatic pilot, a much advanced development of the ones used on commercial aircraft today.

With the advent of the transistor it has become possible to construct electronic brains which would not only be tough enough to withstand the stresses of a rocket take off but also small enough to be carried in one.

One of the latest designs of such machines carries out some sixty thousand calculations a second, something far beyond the capacity of the human brain. The uses of these computers is necessitated by the great speed at which a rocket will be travelling, anything from twelve miles a second on and the incapacity of human beings for taking the necessary decisions in the case of an emergency before it is too late.

Many other factors have to be solved before space travelling becomes a simple every day matter. At the moment it seems certain that anybody who is now under the age of ten will have an excellent chance of becoming a space traveller. For those above that age only the very expert will be able to go.

WHAT IS HAPPENING ON THE MOON

In the first days of November a Soviet Astronomer, Professor Nikolai Kozyrev reported seeing what appeared to be a volcanic eruption in the Crater Alphonsus, indicated on the attached map, a statement which was backed up by Professor Alexander Mikhailov, and given out by the TASS news agency.

Over many years there have been reports coming in of luminous emissions from the various Lunar Craters, and opinion has been divided as to whether they were actual volcanic eruptions or merely hot gas belching forth and catching the rays of the sun.

However the Soviet astronomical world has been taking up the study of the Moon very seriously, presumably with a view to assisting the development of interplanetary travel. Therefore any statements made by them officially must be given careful consideration.

Another, non Soviet astronomer Elgar reported some time ago that he had seen in the Eastern portion of Alphonsus a cleft passing underneath a ridge by means of a tunnel or opening.

As Von Braun is expected to launch the American Army Lunar Rocket at the end of November, and as he has a reputation for accomplishment, we may expect to have some interesting photographic or television pictures of the face of the Moon in the near future.

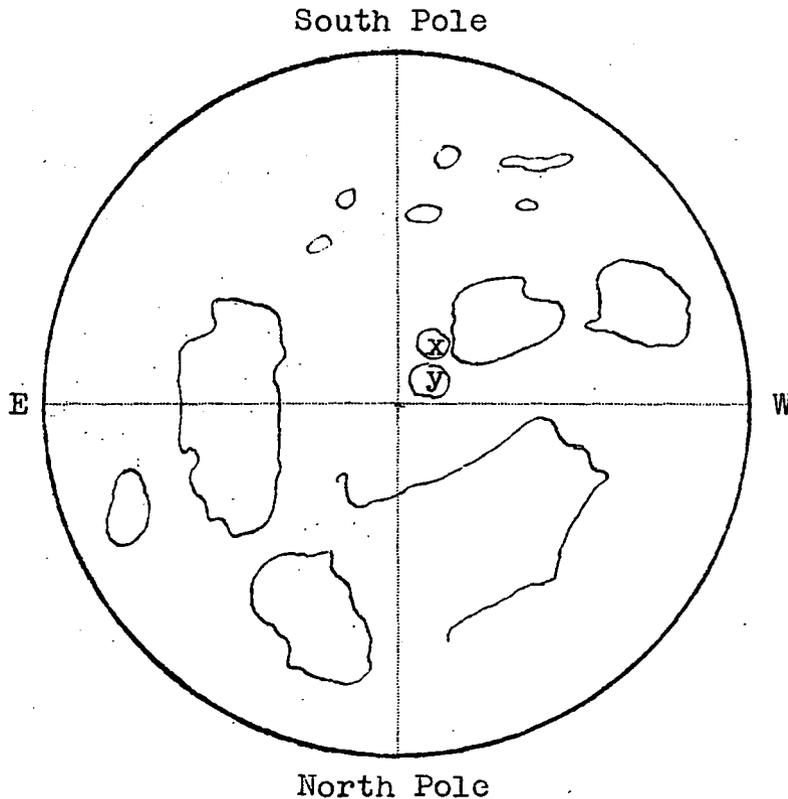
It should be observed that anybody with a two inch telescope, even of the most rudimentary type, should be able to spot the two craters without difficulty.

A recent issue of "New Scientist" reports that Professor Kozyrev has also managed to evolve a new hypothesis as to the Lunar magnetic, in which he is supported by Professor J. Dubois of France. Both these scientists are of the opinion that the moon has little if any magnetic field, their reasoning being as set out below.

"Some parts of the surface of the moon are luminescent, a fact which arises from certain substances being able to absorb light of relatively high frequency and to give it out again at lower frequencies spread over a longer period.

The high frequency light absorbed is not that from ordinary sunlight, but comes in spasmodic bursts from disturbed regions of the sun's surface. Owing to the almost total lack of a lunar atmosphere, these bursts impinge directly on the surface of the moon, from whence the aurorae detected by Kozyrev and Dubois appear to originate. This luminescence ceases when the sun sets on the moon, which indicates that there is no deflection of the solar corpuscles as in the magnetic field of the earth. The lack of evidence for any deflection shows that the intensity of the lunar magnetic field must be but a small fraction of that on earth."

The Moon as we see it from Earth



'x' The Alphonsus Crater, where the eruption was seen. It is 70 miles in diameter.

'y' The Ptolemy Crater is 90 miles in diameter, and in which a greenish tint has recently been seen by several astronomers, indicating some form of vegetation.

A further proof of this is that in the terrestrial magnetic field solar protons are accelerated by a factor of two or three. If such an acceleration were to occur on the moon the luminescence would be four times greater.

Another matter which is also arousing interest is the gravitational field of the moon. In the British Interplanetary Society Journal, Mr. Freddy Ba Hill of Rangoon suggests that gravity is a purely electrical force which can be fitted into Einstein's General Field Theory.

That may be quite all right but in that case how does this new theory fit into the ideas of Korozey and Dubois. Would this mean that the absence of a magnetic field on the moon would affect its gravity? An interesting possibility! However Ba Hill is not the only Richmond in the field. Quite a lot of first class minds have been studying the problem of gravitation of late, there are several groups working on it in the States at the moment.

In 1950 Father Glazewski suggested that gravity was a function of spin, and agreed with the ideas of Professor Blakett. However, if this is so, would the weakness of the lunar field and also the absence of a magnetic field be due to the fact that the Moon only turns on its axis once a month? If this were so all the ideas mentioned above would fit into the same framework.

Finally there is another matter very important for interplanetary flight and that is the classical "Theory of Tides", which works out the relationship between the Moon, the Earth and the Sun, causing tides and similar phenomena. According to a Parisian mathematician, the figures on which previous calculations have been made are erroneous and have therefore greatly affected the validity of the figures produced. M. Nahas has recalculated the lot, a matter of several years work, and his data will be invaluable for travellers of the future. In fact it is just this use of wrong data which may have caused some of the American failures in Moon Rockets up to now.

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INTERPLANETARY BASES PART IV

If the UFO's particular business is an extensive survey of our planet (and this is the only logical explanation in the light of a reluctance to contact us) it may be considered unlikely they occupy a planet beyond the orbit of Mars. Whatever else we may say about astronomers and their theories, there is no evidence to indicate the presence of any form of intelligent life on the giant planets and their even more remote neighbours.

The minor planets and asteroids mostly orbit between Mars and Jupiter, all are insignificant in size; Ceres, the largest is 500 miles in diameter and obviously has no atmosphere. It is possible that they are the debris of a planet which once occupied that same orbit.

Jupiter, the giant planet beyond Mars is 483 million miles from the sun and has 318 times the mass of the Earth, but a density of only 1.34 times that of water. Despite its large size, 88,000 miles in diameter it rotates more quickly than any other planet in the Solar System; of its 12 satellites 3 have larger diameters than our own Moon, Io (2310 miles), Ganymede (3200 miles), and Callisto (3220 miles). Ganymede may retain some vestiges of an atmosphere. Observations suggest that Jupiter's red spot could be a mountain protruding through clouds of ammonia crystals, but it does not rotate with a constant period; a further suggestion that it could be "suspended in the atmosphere" does not appear plausible.

Saturn, is at a mean distance of 886 million miles from the Sun, it has an equatorial diameter of 75,100 miles and a polar diameter of 67,200 miles. Despite its size, its mass is only 95 times that of the Earth which indicates a low density. Saturn has nine satellites, of which Titan is the largest in our system (diameter 3500 miles) having an escape velocity of 2 miles per second. The rings of Saturn are probably the remains of a satellite.

Uranus is at a mean distance of 1783 million miles from the Sun and is 32,000 miles in diameter. The surface temperature is somewhere in the region of 200 deg below freezing point. The sizes of its five satellites are all uncertain, the largest, Oberon being some 1500 miles in diameter. Spectroscope research has revealed abundant methane and traces of ammonia, on Uranus and composition is probably similar to that of Jupiter and Saturn.

Neptune, the last major planet is slightly smaller than Uranus, having a diameter of 27,600 miles, its mass is greater being 17 times that of the Earth. It orbits at a mean distance of 2793 million miles from the Sun and has an even lower surface temperature than Uranus. Neptune has two satellites, Triton and Nereid. The former is almost as large as Titan while the latter is about 200 miles in diameter.

Pluto, the latest planet to be discovered, is 3600 miles in diameter and while being larger than Mercury, is out of place among the great outer planets. It may well be a moon that has managed to break loose from Neptune or even Uranus. From the point of view of space travellers it is most inhospitable, having a surface temperature of minus 400 degrees, black coloured rock, and a highly irregular orbit. Unless potential visitors come from planets having a similar temperature scale, there would be no point in landing except to avoid shipwreck or disaster.

Judging from knowledge accrued during the years of Earth's interest in the skies, the planets Mars and Venus are the only two worthy of consideration when discussing life in our own solar system.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN NICAP

This organisation has recently had an internal reshuffling, mainly due to the refusal of two members of its staff: Mrs. Rose Hackett Campbell, the Treasurer, and a Mrs. B.M. Clark, to accept the policy of the Director, Major Keyhoe, on contact claims, a viewpoint with which we are in full agreement, as not a single contact claim has stood up to the test of careful investigation.

Matters were brought to a head by the discovery that no less than seven contact claimants had received membership cards of NICAP, which had been issued without the knowledge or approval of the Director. All of the persons were written to explaining the situation and all but two cards, those of Mr. Adamski and Mr. Betherum have been returned.

This incident tends to pin point the difficulty with which all serious investigators into Flying Saucer matters are faced: Whether to accept the possible financial gain involved by teaming up with the contactees and their followers who refuse to face up to reality, or to disown them completely, as has been done by NICAP and, we may say by URANUS.

The Aug. - Sept. issue of the "U.F.O. Investigator" contained a reply to certain accusations made in an issue of "Saucer News". Major Keyhoe stated that he at first thought the accusations represented a malicious attack but an exchange of correspondence with James Moseley, the editor, proved this to be unfounded. Moseley has been invited to NICAP headquarters to see for himself the work which was being undertaken.

We recognise to the full the great efforts made by NICAP under the directorship of Major Keyhoe to make a fair and a dispassionate investigation into the whole problem of Flying Saucers and the like. We do not entirely share the view that the authorities in the United States are deliberately clamping down on releases about the subject as it seems that this is but a portion of a series of very complicated security arrangements

connected with other matters altogether of which NICAP and others are the innocent victims. While the destiny of humanity is being decided by the engineers and designers of the West and of the East, one cannot complain if from time to time we also get held up.

NICAP has something over three thousand members in North America, but the expenses of running the organisation probably eat up the whole of the revenue, therefore we cordially invite our American friends to give it their full support. We are endeavouring to help from this end but there are still sufficient restrictions on dollar transfers to make this rather complicated. Nevertheless we are hopeful of finding a solution.

SOVIET VIEWS ON FLYING SAUCERS

Senhor Escobar Faria, our correspondent in Brazil, has furnished us with some details on what is thought of Flying Saucers on the other side of the Iron Curtain. It is significant that the majority of the information comes from Polish and East German rather than Soviet sources. But, none the less, the news is of considerable interest. Ed.)

In Soviet Russia Professor Kukarkin the well known astronomer gave his opinion several years ago that Flying Saucers were a pure case of "War mongering psychosis"; on the 13th August, Radio Moscow announced that UFO's had never been sighted over Soviet territory; while Victor Tomarev of the Moscow Planetarium stated that the stories were fabrications of the American press. But on the other hand David Zaslavsky stated in "Pravda" that Flying Saucers were American Pirate Aircraft, on which basis one might be entitled to assume that all the Flying Saucers seen in the States were of Soviet origin.

A fairly recent issue of "Literaturnaya Gazeta" (Literary Gazette) contained a very critical review of a Flying Saucer book. Against this, however, a Polish journal gave a good review of Cramp's "Space, Gravity and the Flying Saucer".

The East German publication "Neues Europa" (New Europe), recently carried a story: "UFO's from Venus", allegedly based on information received from the Soviet Space Academy in Moscow. According to this the saucers are not illusions or mirages, but solid objects made of some hard but elastic material of unknown origin. 90% of the saucers are stated to be from Venus but because of the differing gravitational and atmospheric conditions no landings have as yet been made, but the Academy considers that this will be the case within the next thirty years.

It must not be forgotten that it was a member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences who published the report that the famous Siberian meteor of 1907 might well have been a space ship which blew up on landing. There is also a theory that whatever hit the earth might have been composed of negative matter owing to the immense area of destruction, something like 90 miles in diameter.

SPACE TRAVEL - THE COLD WAR AND PHILOSOPHY

Though the Soviets were the first to succeed with an artificial satellite, the American "Pioneer" launched from Cape Canaveral at 3.42 a.m. local time, (8.42 a.m. GMT) on the 11th Oct, 1958 probably raised more eyebrows among the more casually interested because it was "aimed" at the moon. Its failure to orbit the moon detracted from the first sensational announcement so far as the lay public were concerned but its performance has been described as a "tremendous success" by many scientists here and in the U.S.A.

The Pioneer blasted its way further into space than any other rocket has ever done, 79,000 miles from the Earth, the fact that it failed to behave as planned was attributed to an error in the launching angle though some sources indicate a break in the "count down" as being the cause. Anyhow, this is "old hat" now, the third attempt on Nov. 8th was also a failure, the third stage failing to ignite. Among the objectives

of the Moon probes' "mission" was the detection and measurement of a lunar magnetic field (see "Lunar Magnetism") and a measurement of the intensity of cosmic radiation beyond the Earth's atmosphere. Cosmic radiation is regarded as a hazard to manned space flight and it is thought it may only be safe for a manned space vehicle to leave the Earth via the North or South magnetic poles where the intensity of radiation is least.

Whether the Pioneer failed or not it has given a tremendous boost to space travel and the time is not far off when the successful launching of an artificial satellite will be granted no more publicity than the testing of a new a/c is today. With the fast approaching stage of perfection in guidance techniques we may expect the actual race to establish a space platform to develop rapidly. The accent is on military preparedness of course and there are not many who deny that the first power to establish such a base will hold a tremendous advantage over their adversaries but the scientists engaged on missile work are also aware of the space platform's potential value with respect to space travel. These men (and women) are unanimous in their opinion that a launching platform is necessary if man proposes someday to travel to the planets, and some will say that once such a base is established the road to the planets is well within the scope of present day technology. The chorus of misgiving on this view is not so loud today as it was even two years ago and Dr. Wernher von Braun's ambitious project is not greeted with so much scorn as it used to be. Von Braun's space station would orbit 1,075 miles above the Earth at a speed of 15,840 mph, he estimated that 15 rockets each carrying a 36 ton payload would be sufficient to build his station in space; the cost - 4 thousand million dollars. Many experts still shudder when Von Braun's project is mentioned but some will admit that most of the "ingredients" are now available - guidance techniques, rocket motors, communication, a vast amount of progress has been made in these fields and more information is now to hand concerning meteors, cosmic radiation, and the problem

of zero-gravity. The space medicine experts have been keeping pace with the technical progress and the "G" force problem is no longer regarded as a major hazard to manned space flight.

From the time a launching platform is established an even more rapid progress will be made than has been the case during the last ten years. This is the stage when the accent on military preparedness may possibly retard man's greatest adventure for it seems unlikely that the world governments who have access to the enormous financial resources necessary for such a venture would make these available for a purpose other than the strengthening of their military position. An artificial satellite revolving around Mars or even a landing on that much discussed planet would hardly contribute to a country's immunity from attack. It seems then that the attitude of the major powers toward each other will have to undergo a radical change within the next few years, if not, it is just possible that two major powers will be so closely matched in technical resources that both may embark on a space station project at the same time and end up firing missiles at each other a thousand miles out in space.

Thousands of scientists engaged at missile centres, at White Sands, Woomera and in Russia must be privately hoping this will not happen, there are bound to be many philosophical men and women amongst them who believe man's destiny is in the stars. One cannot think about true space flight and refrain from being philosophical and it is just possible that a sufficient number would be Earth ambassadors who will combine their technical knowledge with human wisdom and discover the means to impress our politicians with the many faceted importance of the glorious undertaking of our journey into the vast unknown.

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LIFE ON OTHER WORLDS

Several readers expressed great interest in the article "A Significant Change" which appeared in our Sept/Oct number. In this article we quoted Willy Ley giving some of his opinions about the possible forms life on other planets may take. Willy Ley has aroused interest in this very important topic in America also and Justin Case, writing in "Saucer News" disagrees with the views expressed by Ley.

We present extracts from this latter article below.

"Mr. Ley gave reasons why he thinks visitors from space will breathe air, eat vegetables and animal matter, will weigh not less than 40 pounds nor more than 250 pounds, possess a skull, two eyes, ears, hands and feet.

'They will probably bear a strong resemblance to the man next door so the chances are that you wouldn't give them a second look". (Case was referring to a longer article by Ley in "This Week").

Case cited Ley as stating invaders from space would originate from a planet very much like our own Earth, and translates this to indicate Ley as considering only our humanoid form of life as capable of attaining that degree of intelligence necessary for space flight. Continuing with this theme, Case proceeds to accuse Ley as "giving comfort" to authors and believers of contact stories, also of debunking science fiction writers who have depicted space visitors having other than human form.

Case continues; "So let us see who is more likely to be right, Mr. Ley or the science fiction writers.

1) The variety of vegetable and animal life on our planet seems almost limitless. Many different forms thrive side by side with others in the same surroundings, anyone who studies a few square feet of grass will be amazed at the variety of life to be found there.

2) Life is very persistent and tenacious, existing under seemingly impossible conditions. Thus, vegetable and animal life are found everywhere, even in deserts, on mountain tops, under icebergs and even on ocean

bottoms. It is very difficult to kill off.

3) In the growth and development of life, nature takes many different paths to accomplish the same result. For instance, consider how some animals protect themselves, the porcupine rolls itself into a ball with its spikes extended, a turtle withdraws into its shell. Other animals protect themselves only by means of speed. Thus evolution is random though directed toward the same end.

4) This choice of paths is partly accidental, and if wrong, it leads to extinction.

5) Man, the only animal on Earth intelligent enough to develop space flight, is a product of a very long and complex process of evolution, during which time he was affected by a very intricate series of biological and physical conditions and accidents. He is therefore partly a product of chance. If he were destroyed, it is extremely improbable that anything similar to him would again evolve. The conditions under which he developed could not be reproduced in the same order, to the same extent and for the same length of time. Other animals, such as those who use their forefeet might possibly develop and take his place".

Case claims that Biology and Evolution show that man is the result of a very special set of conditions and accidents that can never be duplicated here on Earth. He then proceeds to investigate the chances that such conditions and accidents might be duplicated in the same sequence and for the same length of time on planets elsewhere in the universe and further, what are the chances of any life which does develop picking out our planet to visit from the millions which probably exist.

"Considering the almost limitless variety of life and the wide range of conditions possible on other planets in our galaxy, such chances of man-like creatures developing and coming to visit us are so infinitesimally small as to be impossible. Therefore there is very little chance that Willy Ley's invaders from space will closely resemble the man next door. It is much more probable that they would be so different from

us that we would give them a lot more than a second look if we saw them".

THE FAILURE OF THE LUNAR PROBE

Just as we go to press we learn that the latest lunar probe rocket has failed by a margin of $4\frac{1}{2}$ seconds. This is most annoying as it will be some months before another trial can be made.

It would seem that the succession of failures of lunar probes, whether put up by the Army, the Air Force or by anybody else lies not so much in the inadequacy of the control arrangements, but rather in a defect in the fundamental calculations necessary before a successful take off.

As most rocket experts know one of the fundamental equations involved in calculating the power necessary to escape from the Earth is that of the "Theory of Tides", which concerns the effect of Lunar attraction of the tides, etc.

It has recently been proved by a French mathematician that the calculations involved in this theory are wrong. Not to any great extent but to an amount sufficient to have caused all the failures recorded to date.

The point at issue is that there is not only a triangular relation of forces but also a tangential one involved, and the complex calculations required to work this out have not been touched for many years, presumably on the grounds that everybody concerned thought it was too much bother to check up on what has always been assumed to be a standard.

However the proof of the pudding is in the eating, the minor differences of seconds in time and in degrees of aim are both in all probability due to a trifling error in the calculations which could easily have been corrected had the new figures been available.

It has been officially announced that the United States will try a rocket to Mars and/or Venus in the near future, so we shall soon know if either of these inner planets are really being used as saucer bases.

The recent eruption on a lunar crater, referred to elsewhere as having been reported by a Soviet scientist, might well have been caused by the landing there of the first Soviet Lunar Rocket. The possibility is an interesting one.

Where the Soviets seem to score in this rocket business is that they always seem to have a far larger margin of fuel and power in hand than is ever the case with the USA. One has the horrible feeling that the real sinner in the background in the USA is some accountant or the like who invariably cuts down expenditure on important items.

What really is certain is the rivalry between the three Services of the United States in the whole field of Rockets and Missiles is a stupid waste of time, energy, material, and money. Surely inter spacial exploration could be raised above the level of an inter college football match.

ODD BITS

On Saturday, Nov. 1st a vivid blue-green flash lit up the sky over the Western end of the English Channel, several newspapers gave publicity to the incident. Whatever caused the flash must have been of considerable proportions for the flash was seen from places a hundred miles apart, a Danish ship a few miles NW of Guernsey reported seeing "a strange object about 45 to 50 degrees above the horizon which gave the impression of an explosion. Several other observers presumed it to be a meteorite but a weather expert said "no". A spokesman at the Royal Observatory excluded the possibility of it being Sputnik III.

As usual the newspapers presented confusing accounts so your ed' enquired from the Coastguard at the Lizard and to the A.M. what extra information they had available. At the time of writing, no reply has been received from the A.M. but the Station Officer at the Lizard has written to say that he received the impression that the source of the flash was probably in the direction of the Bay of Biscay or even further. One rather peculiar point

arose out of this letter; the station officer remarked that several "shooting stars" were moving into the sky before and after the flash. The Earth's orbit does intersect a meteor shower (the Taurids) at the beginning of Nov. but the frequency of these is too low to indicate "several shooting stars moving in the sky....."

Any readers on the West coast of France who may have seen anything in the sky at 1907 hrs, GMT are requested to write in.

Miss Lou Zinstag of the UFO Informationsblatt, Basle, Switzerland, is usually fairly accurate in what she writes, it is a pity she has slipped up badly in an article published in "Flying Saucer Review" for September/October, in which she describes the notorious Monguzzi photographs as "The F.S. Protographs of the Century". These pictures when they were first published in 1952, were stated to have been taken in the Bernina by a Mr. Giampiero Monguzzi of Milan, while on holiday with his wife in the Bernina hills. They showed a saucer on the ground with a figure standing next to it, and also a saucer in the act of taking off. This sounds quite impressive until one realises that even in 1952 the French magazine in which they were published discovered that the saucer was made of painted cardboard and the figure of the spaceman out of modelling clay. The 'mountains' in the background were pebbles and stones.

With the best will in the world we must consider that such a credulous acceptance of a batch of photographs which could easily have been checked up on, constitutes one of the episodes which have brought the whole flying saucer question much unfavourable publicity. Our attention was drawn to this by the Tees-Side UFO Research Group.

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