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DURING INCIDENT AT THE KREMLIN: Soviet astronauts and an escorting motorcyclist turning their heads during parade on Wednesday. This is believed to have been at the sound of shots a man fired at the closed car just behind this one, wounding two men.

Soviet Astronaut Quips About Kremlin Shooting

By **THEODORE SHABAD**
Special to The New York Times

MOSCOW, Jan. 24—A cosmonaut who took a "walk" in space in March, 1965, Col. Aleksei A. Leonov, dismissed with a quip today the incident two days ago in which a man fired several shots at a car occupied by himself and three fellow astronauts.

In answer to questions at a news conference, the 34-year-old colonel compared the state of weightlessness in space with the sensation of being exposed to an assassin's bullets.

"The weightless state is hard to explain and even more difficult to reproduce on earth," the astronaut said, "but this feeling [of being shot at] can be easily reproduced on earth and incidentally has been repeatedly described both in the Soviet Union and abroad."

The news conference, before 2,000 people in the main auditorium, was devoted mainly to the space experiment last week in which two manned Soyuz craft, carrying a total of four men, linked up in orbit and two of the astronauts transferred from one craft to the other.

Attacked at Kremlin Gate

The shooting occurred as cars carrying the astronauts, their colleagues and members of the Soviet leadership were entering one of the Kremlin's gates. The driver of the car in which Colonel Leonov was riding was seriously wounded and a member of the motorcycle escort was also wounded. The assailant was promptly seized.

Since a brief statement yesterday by Tass, the Soviet press agency, giving the bare facts of the incident, Colonel Leonov's remark has been the only official additional comment about the shooting.

Judging from past Soviet practice, no new information may be expected to be made public in the next few days or even weeks pending investigation of the assailant's identity and his motives.

It was presumed that the gunman fired at the closed car in the belief it was occupied by some of the Soviet leaders. The closed car was traveling in second position in the motorcade immediately after an open

Leonov, at News Conference, Says That Weightlessness Is Harder to Explain

convertible, in which the four astronauts were waving to crowds. High Soviet officials were in cars farther back in the procession of about 20 vehicles.

The new astronauts, Col. Vladimir A. Shatalov, Col. Boris V. Volynov, Col. Yevgeny V. Khrunov and Aleksei S. Yeliseyev, a civilian engineer, reported on their flight at the news conference, which was televised. Their prepared speeches, of about 10 minutes each, added little to details about the flight published in the press.

The audience, which had become slightly drowsy at the recitation of familiar details, perked up when the chairman, Dr. Mstislav V. Kaldysh, president of the Academy of Sci-

ences, called on Colonel Leonov to reply to a series of questions concerning the shooting incident.

But aside from his quip, the plump astronaut, holding a sheaf of written questions, added little to yesterday's Tass statement beyond confirming that the shooting had taken place, as reported previously by informed sources, when the motorcade was passing through Borovitsky Gate into the walled Kremlin.

Professor Keldysh, in reply to questions, made a few general comments about the Soviet space program.

On prospects of joint United States-Soviet flights he said, "We have no objection in principle against such flights."

Matter for Distant Future

But he indicated that this was a matter for the distant future when he added that such cooperation might involve manned expeditions to the planets or the construction of large space platforms in orbit around the earth.

The scientist said that, contrary to previous practice, the Soviet Union was now able to put men in orbit in winter because close coordination of recovery teams and accurate landing techniques insured the safety of astronauts.

When asked whether last week's link-up of the two Soyuz craft represented a "new high level" in space exploration, he said this depended on the priorities of a nation's program.

The Apollo-8 mission around the moon last month, he added, also marked a "new high level" in the United States undertaking to put a man on the moon this year. New flights of Soviet automatic stations toward Venus now on their way, also constitute a major advance in the exploration of the planets, he said.

During the question period, Colonel Khrunov, one of the two astronauts who transferred to another craft, said the Soyuz ships were so designed that more than two could be linked up to form a space station. It had been thought by some observers that the design of these vehicles limited the docking to two ships.