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(Complete translation: "Flight to Pluto Is Being Prepared," East Berlin, Neue Zeit, 29 May 69, p. 2)

Professor V. Ivanchenko Believes Manned Spaceflights Must Continue

[Following are excerpts of an interview with Professor V. Ivanchenko following the flight of Apollo-10.]

Question: What is your attitude toward the prospects of conquering space by automatic means and by manned spacecraft?

Answer: Modern automation is now in such a stage of development that, generally speaking, nearly all scientific problems in space can be solved with the help of automatic stations. Space flights have confirmed this in practice. The number of piloted craft is only a small part of the total number of space flight apparatuses. And this is quite understandable.

Automatic stations have many advantages. They can operate in incomparably more difficult conditions than men, and they do not need complex life support systems. Automatic stations need not be brought back to earth after fulfilling their tasks.

But of course, there are those scientific problems which are more rationally solved by men on board a spacecraft. I will not enumerate them. It is important to note something else. I will resort to a comparison to explain what I mean. Let us suppose you have to take a vacation on the Black Sea coast. You can, of course, send an automatic device in your place. It will accurately register the temperature of the air and the water, record the sound of the breakers, take color photographs, and then supply you with all these materials. Will you be content? As a research workers, to a certain extent maybe, but as a man -- hardly. I hope this facetious example will help you to understand that, apart from considerations as to which tasks can more rationally be entrusted to an automatic device and which to men, there are also other considerations which summon man into space.

There is no doubt that man's flights into space will continue. If we talk of the correlation between piloted flights and automatic station flights, then the deciding factor must be specifically the fact that automatic stations are responsible for paving the way for man in space, protecting his flights, and making them safer.

In my view, it is necessary that all the fundamental elements of a flight, especially those on which the lives of astronauts depend, should be accomplished not only with the participation of a crew, but also automatically by commands from the earth.

In conclusion, I would like to congratulate the participants in the flight and the entire program on the accomplishment of the very difficult preparatory stages preceding landing a man on the moon, whose results are very significant.

(Excerpt: "The Road to the Moon," by B. Koltovoy; Moscow, Izvestiya, 28 May 1969, p. 3)