

## Soviet Propaganda Loss From Mariner Is Noted

By HARRY SCHWARTZ

Soviet propaganda needs in the wake of Mariner 4's flight to Mars appear to have been influential in determining the timing of the latest Soviet space shots.

Moscow's decision to send up last Friday two rockets—one putting five small satellites into orbit and the second orbiting the heaviest man-made object yet put into space—seems to Western observers to be a transparent Soviet effort to counteract the propaganda defeat Moscow suffered as a result of Mariner 4's historic voyage. That defeat was all the greater because of the failure of the Soviet Mars probe, Zond, sent on the same journey at roughly the same time Mariner 4 was launched.

Western observers have noted repeatedly this last year that the Soviet psychological warfare leaders have been showing discomfort at the changing balance of their propaganda contest with the United States over space achievements.

### Made Most of Shots

In the early period of space exploration during the late 1950's, the Soviet lead over the United States in this field was so great that it was perhaps the main means of forging a new and better world image of the Soviet Union.

From the first sputniks of 1957 to the lunar flights of 1959 and then the first Soviet manned space flights of the early 1960's, Soviet superiority in space capability over the United States was marked and Russian leaders made the most of it in their propaganda. In those days it was common Soviet practice to contend that the "advantages of the Socialist

### New Space Shots Believed Attempts to Offset Gains by U.S. in World Image

economic system" explained repeated Soviet "firsts" in space.

Former Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev used to delight in those years in making fun of the small size of the first American artificial satellites, and in warning that the Soviet space accomplishments were tangible demonstrations of Soviet military rocket "superiority" on earth.

Perhaps the most noted Soviet use of space feats for propaganda came during 1959 when several top Soviet leaders visited the United States. Thus the visit here of Anastas I. Mikoyan early that year was preceded by a Soviet rocket launched toward the moon, but which became the first artificial satellite of the sun.

Later that year the visit here of Premier Khrushchev was preceded by the first Soviet delivery of a rocket to the surface of the moon, a feat the Premier mentioned often on his travels in this country. Shortly after Mr. Khrushchev's return home another Soviet rocket went around the moon and took the first—and to this date the only—pictures of the side of the moon always turned away from the earth.

But this last year the propaganda balance has changed rapidly as the United States' capabilities and achievements in space have gone far beyond anything known before.

The successful Ranger photographic flights to the moon and

the 20-minute space maneuver of Maj. Edward H. White outside his Gemini space capsule produced enormous impressions throughout the world. They gave this country propaganda dividends that were far from offset by the new Soviet space feats during this same period.

Soviet discomfort about these American space accomplishments was reflected in the very modest attention paid them in Soviet newspapers. Where comparable or even less impressive Soviet achievements had been made the subject of innumerable articles and of boasting for days on end, the American feats were reported briefly, factually and relatively inconspicuously. The Soviet press did not hide these American advances from its readers, but it seemed to be trying to make sure those readers got no very glowing ideas of American space capabilities.

The historic Mariner 4 flight—and particularly the photographing of Mars and transmission of the pictures to earth—thus presented the most acute and most difficult propaganda problem yet encountered by the men who manage the Soviet Union's thought-control machine. This realization is what makes Western observers believe last Friday's Soviet space shots were motivated at least as much by a desire to take some luster from the American space program as by the scientific and technical needs of the Soviet research program.

Moscow, these observers point out, has had many months to expect the possible complete success of Mariner 4 and to plan ahead for ways and means of minimizing the political damage that success might inflict on the Soviet image at home and abroad.