

Letters on the Moon landing anniversary

22 July 1999

Dear Editors,

As with other articles from WSWS, I find McLaughlin's "Moon landings in historical perspective" insightful and a joy to read. The space quest is the epitome in human endeavor to find out who we are. Yet, space explorations have mostly been a trickle-down byproduct of political confrontations and military spending which, in profit-driven economies, are nothing more than an exercise in greed.

McLaughlin's article also vindicates the effectiveness of large scale planning in human interactions, especially in material production and communications. When the production process has to deal with the limited global resources against the incessant demand from a population growing exponentially, global planning should be logically far more superior than any other alternatives. It is high time to realise that all productions are planned, whether at individual firms' level or otherwise. Yet planning at such low level is most ineffective and is contradictory to the whole idea of planning in the first place. And the capitalistic form of market competition should in time be proven to be the most wasteful in resources, like oil has to be kept away from the market via oil tankers' mishaps and regional wars, not to mention the incalculable human and ecological costs of these incidents.

Any past ineffective implementation of large scale planning should not dismiss its inherent superiority in solving human problems. And with an ever increasing mass of accumulated information and the technology to store and use them, maybe large scale planning's time has finally come.

LC

Australia

20 July

Yeah! Your article is great in two aspects: firstly, for mankind to conquer space it must be united on a socialist basis; secondly, the nation state and production for profit are the two main fetters to

progress of the whole planet.

DI

Britain

20 July

Just a humble little correction to the first paragraph of your article—4:17 p.m. (EDT) was when Armstrong and Aldrin LANDED the Lunar Module "Eagle" on the surface of the moon.

Armstrong actually set his foot on the moon later that evening at 10:56 p.m., shortly followed by Aldrin.

RM

Denver, CO

20 July

The World Socialist Web Site regrets the error and will correct the posting accordingly.

I was greatly involved in the space program and in particular the unmanned exploration. I left as soon as possible after the cancellation of the "DynaSoar" program and the hassle between the Generals and Admirals over who was going to control the space fleet. I was not by myself, as most persons knowledgeable of anything had or were trying to leave.

There existed a tentative schedule for exploration—an example was in the book *2001*. We were to be exploring the moons of Jupiter but we really have no way to do so now except to undo 30 years of hero achievement and reinstall the collective idea that the sum of a group is greater than the sum of its parts.

Instead of a thriving base there was a toy placed on Mars. The search has been toyed with recently of trying to find a new type of lifting body to construct a station. So much for two lost generations of hype.

W

20 July

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