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Stride into Space

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stride into space

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ALREADY NOW it is clear that October 4, 1957 will go down imperishably in the annals of humanity as the date on which one of man's finest achievements was accomplished. That which was so recently a subject only for theoretical speculation or science fiction has now become reality: a man-made space satellite now revolves, for a time, around our globe. With that feat humanity has taken a giant stride toward space. The dream of the greatest minds among many past generations is now well on the way toward becoming reality. The sphere which now revolves in the heavens above us is the guarantee that man can soon break completely the fetters of gravity which have hitherto bound life to this tiny planet. The long road to the stars is now open.

It was the Soviet scientists and technicians who built and launched this concrete symbol of man's coming liberation from the forces which have hitherto bound him to earth. To them must go the congratulations of all humanity. This is a feat of which all mankind can be proud. The Soviet citizens who accomplished it set the peak on a huge tower which had been raised by men of many nations in the decades and centuries earlier. Newton and Kepler, Galileo and Copernicus, Tsiolkovsky, Goddard and Oberth, all these and many others made their contributions to building the edifice of knowledge which made possible this superlative achievement.

Every great achievement of modern technology opens up two roads before humanity. One is the road of hope and promise, a road made possible if men of all nations and all beliefs will work together for the good of humanity. The other is the road of despair and disaster, the road which is

followed if the great achievements of universal science are used for the purposes of aggression, death and destruction.

So it is with the space satellite. The rocket motors which sent it into the upper atmosphere can be harnessed for a great cooperative human assault on the barriers of distance which still separate us from even our nearest neighbors in space. Or they can be incorporated into intercontinental ballistic missiles delivering hydrogen bombs upon defenseless millions. It is for all mankind to decide which of these two roads shall be taken. And the fantastically rapid tempo of modern scientific and technical advance permits no dawdling over reaching the decision.

