



I WAS not surprised to hear about the satellite. Nobody who had followed the build-up of scientific and economic power which preceded it could have been surprised. Soviet technological achievement in recent years has been of a very high order. Scientists of the U.S.S.R. were the first to generate electric power from nuclear energy. They

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devised a more efficient hydrogen bomb—if you can call that progress. And they were first with

an inter-continental ballistic missile, partly I think because they ignored the Germans and their ideas about liquid fuels. The Americans employed most of the leading German rocket scientists after the war, but the Russians worked out their own ideas.

LOOKING AT THE SATELLITE

A cross-section of opinion from New Zealanders—specialists and laymen—on the first invasion of space.

All this was well-known. To build up morale in the United States the facts may have played down for the public, but U.S. policy-makers must have known about the power of the U.S.S.R. And it must be assumed they made their policy accordingly. Therefore I cannot see that U.S. policy is likely to change. Soviet policy, of course, has been unchanged for many years, and is likely to remain so.

What the satellite launching and its implications will do is to confirm the neutrals in their neutrality. They will see even less reason than before for

joining either of the two main power blocs. And some allies of the United States, especially those with strategic bases in their territory, may become restless. They would probably be devastated first in any conflict between the Soviet Union and the U.S., and must be concerned by that probability. I think for that reason we can expect to see the United States entering a period of greater isolation in the international line-up. She is not isolated at present, but she may find her allies trying to avoid closer commitment in the future.

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NOW there'll be no holding those careless writers for whom even the old-fashioned full moon rises in the west. Life becomes more complicated every day. I see that the Mullard Laboratory at Cambridge made its calculations for the first

GEOGRAPHER

two days without allowing for the curvature of the earth, and my department too must abandon its long-cherished motto: "The earth is flat."

One thing that will particularly interest geographers is the coming ability of artificial moons to photograph the earth from very great heights. I don't expect much from photographs of land and sea, but there should be an enormous fund of information from the cloud patterns, which should reveal something about weather distribution in a way never possible before.

Of course, once we get instruments outside this cushion of air which prevents us from being bombarded by meteorites or shrivelled by ultra-violet light we will be able to see the universe more clearly than ever before—but that's for the astronomer rather than the geographer. It's obvious too that man will soon be able to shoot things away into space for good. When New Zealand gets to doing this, I hope to its first space rocket it will attach the Ranfurly Shield. With that out of the way we might begin to re-discover the fact that Rugby is a game.

—D. W. MCKENZIE,
Senior Lecturer in Geography, V.U.C.

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WELL, of course, I was very excited at first. You couldn't help being excited at this first man-made world to circle in space. But about a day later my reaction changed and I began wondering, "What good has it done mankind?"

HOUSEWIFE

My husband said that was just like a woman, asking what good it

would do. He supposed a woman has

said that to every invention that man ever made.

I think it is the feminine reaction, to wonder how much it affects human happiness. I suppose the satellite could have some effect if it makes scientists from all countries come together—I hope so. The whole prospect of rockets and missiles is so terrifying that perhaps this latest development will force peoples to co-operate with each other.

Women just don't get wildly excited about these events, being much more interested in people than things. I'd be quite interested to see the satellite if it wasn't too difficult, but last night I was playing scrabble with a friend and she said, "Shall we go out and look for the satellite?" and we both agreed that it was much too cold to stand and wait. It's a very poor attitude, I know, but I think it's typically feminine. Baffles me anyway—how we can see it at all, since it's only 22 inches in diameter and it's 500 miles up. I don't understand it. My husband says when he has a free hour he'll explain it to me, but he hasn't done so yet.

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I'M as willing to lay down the law about it all as the next man, though I feel the need of a glass of beer in one hand and a bar under the other elbow.

My first reaction? The widespread, slightly malicious one. "Some people have been taught not to count their chickens too loudly, too long before they're hatched." Then I began to wonder whether it means that the period of American suprem-

PHILOSOPHER

acy is slowly coming to an end. If so, how much easier it will be to remember the many, many admirable and likeable things about American life which tend to get forgotten when American efficiency is rammed down our throats.

Does it make me afraid? No, I don't fear the foreign policy of the Soviet Union, even if I wouldn't care to live there.

From a philosophical point of view? I suppose that ought to mean something about wisdom. Well, surely, it's the sort of case that brings us up sharply against the difference between wisdom and knowledge. A trip to Mars won't add to our wisdom, unless in the unlikely event of our meeting people there who are wiser than we are. (They had better also be more powerful, or they'll go the way of the wiser but weaker.)

Without any accession of wisdom, I suppose we may be forced into relatively sensible behaviour by the sheer increase in our power to make a mess of things. That would be a good thing, but as far as wisdom is concerned I think I look



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