

SPACE

Hunt is on for the real ET

ET is out there somewhere, alive and well. And scientists now believe we will soon be able to contact him.

The likelihood of Extra-Terrestrial life in our universe was outlined yesterday by one of America's top radio astronomers from the famous Harvard Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics.

Astronomer John Ball said: "Extra-Terrestrial life will eventually be found and contacted but it will probably be much more advanced than anything we expect.

"The evidence for ET intelligence is indirect, but the frequency of the planets and stars and the ease of origin of life are strong factors."

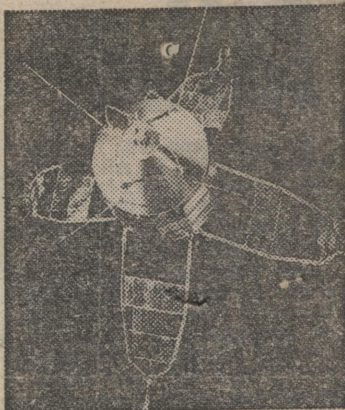
Primitive

Mr. Ball told scientists at the National Aeronautic and Space Administration research centre that we mere earthlings would be like "a primitive tribe" compared with beings from space.

"In the next few decades, I am convinced we will become aware of ET," he said.

Meanwhile, sixty-six of the world's leading scientists and astronomers have just signed a petition urging an all-out drive to make contact with civilisations on other planets.

The means are already available. The United States, the Soviet Union, Britain, Australia and Japan have powerful radio telescopes that can bend their electronic ears to any whispers from space.



Satellites — waiting for a sign.

The appeal signed among others by America's Carl Sagan—of TV Cosmos fame—Nikolai Kardashev, of the Soviet Union and Stephen Hawking, of Cambridge University, has had wide backing.

Sagan says: "The human species is now able to communicate with other civilisations in space, if they exist. The cost of a systematic international research is as low as a few million dollars a year, for one or two decades."

Within twenty years we could be talking to ET.

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