

Call for mission to investigate 'city' on Mars

By ADRIAN BERRY, Science Correspondent

PHOTOGRAPHIC evidence of what may be relics of a vanished alien civilisation on Mars is to be presented next month to President Reagan's science adviser by a team of American scientists.

They hope to persuade the Government of the desirability of sending a joint American-Soviet mission to Mars to investigate the evidence before the Russians decided to do it alone.

The evidence includes a mile-wide rock apparently carved in the perfect semblance of a human-type face and several pyramids arranged symmetrically in what appears to be the remains of a city.

All these objects are located in the region called Cydonia. The "face" is at 41 degrees North and nine degrees West.

Research expanded

The research has been expanded to include the Congressional Research Service in Washington and a group of many different fields of expertise from the University of California.

The photographs were taken in 1976 by the orbiting American Viking spacecraft. But, because the craft took many thousands of pictures, nobody until recently took the trouble to examine these ones in detail.

The space community is strongly divided over whether these objects are really artificial or merely freak conditions of nature. The NASA photographs, taken from altitudes of approximately 900 miles, are freely available and have been discussed in pamphlets by two scientific groups, Mars Research of Glenn Dale, Maryland, and the Independent Mars Investigation Team, of Oakland, California.

Processing of the picture of the "face" by the Maryland group has shown details of its left side which in the two photographs were hidden by shadow. These show a left eye socket, a pupil, an eyeball, and a continuation of "hair" around the forehead of the face.

Warm period

In the opinion of Mr Richard Hoagland, organiser of the California team, these discoveries "effectively eliminate" the idea that the face is a trick of lighting and points to it being the result of artificial construction.

Mr Hoagland said that if this was the case, then the most recent period for the construc-

tion of the objects was half a million years ago, when according to current theories about the history of Mars, the planet had a warm, wet period.

Mr Hoagland said the geology of this region of Cydonia suggested that the objects were on the shore of an ancient lake. The face would have formed an island, with the pyramids on the shore beside it. The sun would have risen directly over the face. But the supposition is that if the objects really are the work of alien beings, then these creatures could not have been of a species native to Mars.

All evidence from space probes and earth-based telescopes suggest that Mars, unlike earth, never had a sufficiently thick atmosphere, or sufficient warmth, for a long enough period to support the evolution of an intelligent race.

The theory is, therefore, that any beings who long ago walked on its surface and who left these supposed artifacts were travellers from another solar system, whose ships crossed the vast gulfs between the stars.

Soviet plans

They would then either have perished on Mars or departed from it as they came.

There is growing evidence that the Soviet Government not only believes that the objects may be artificial but is planning new missions to examine them more closely, perhaps involving robot descents to the surface.

According to Mr Reginald Turnhill, editor of the new *Jane's Spaceflight Directory*, the Russians are planning to return to Mars in 1986 after a gap of 15 years.

"They hope to bring a Martian orbiter within a few thousand metres of Phobos (one of the two tiny Martian moons) and then fly in formation with this Martian satellite to obtain high resolution photographic and other data," Mr Turnhill said.

Mr Turnhill, a highly respected writer on space technology, declined to disclose his sources for this information on Soviet space plans, which are seldom



The mile-wide "face" on Mars. Imaging techniques have revealed details of the leftside of the face that are hidden in this picture—an eyeball, an eye socket, a pupil, and a continuation of "hair" around the forehead.

officially announced in advance. Evidence that the Russians are planning, in addition, a manned mission to fly in orbit around Mars has been recently given by Dr Harrison Schmitt, a former astronaut who has walked on the moon and served a term in the Senate.

Dr Schmitt pointed to the existence of a huge launching rocket, nearly as big as the old American moon rockets, seen recently at the Baikonur cosmodrome.

He suggested that the Russians would like to have a "space spectacular" that would have a stunning prestige effect on world opinion, to mark the 75th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1992.

A still more ominous possibility is that the aliens, if they existed, may have left something potentially deadly on the surface of Mars. If they created the "face" in order to attract attention, they might also have left a "library", a store of technological information such as would have been amassed by a star-faring civilisation.

"Unusual Martian Surface Features," by Vincent DiPietro and Gregory Molenaar, Mars Research, P.O. Box 284, Glenn Dale, Maryland 20769.

"Preliminary Report of the Independent Mars Investigation Team: New Evidence of Prior Habitation?" by Richard C. Hoagland, 551 62nd Street, Oakland, California, 94618.

Prince's alarm at threat to wildlife

DAILY TELEGRAPH REPORTER

PRINCE PHILIP fears that a "pretty daunting" world population of 10,000 million by the middle of next century, will leave no room anywhere on earth for wildlife.

The Prince, president of World Wildlife Fund International, told more than 200 guests at a fund raising dinner in London: "The wild populations of plants and animals which share this world with us are rapidly disappearing because of four major threats.

"The first, is the human population threat. The world human population has been growing at what can only be described as a suicidal rate. Two hundred years ago it was 1,000 million which is roughly what China has today.

"Today, it stands at about 4,000 million and it will be about 6,000 million by the end of the century. It may level off at about 10,000 million by the middle of next century."

The prospects, said Prince Philip, were "pretty daunting" and the threat to wildlife simple, "there is simply no room for it."

The second threat was commercial or illegal exploitation of wildlife, whether it be whales, rhinos, monkeys, leopards, parrots or trees from tropical forests.

Inhabitants of the seas, he said were particularly vulnerable "as they are free for all to take as they will."

Development was the third threat. Ambitions to improve the lot of poor communities by financing massive development projects was "entirely reasonable and praiseworthy," said Prince Philip.

"But the development must provide for sustainable improvements without causing damage to the natural environment.