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**MOON CRATERS—OR
SECRET UFO BASES?**

**VIETNAM'S SAVAGE
"VICTOR CHARLIE"**



Exclusive

MOON CRATERS- OR SECRET UFO BASES?

After centuries of calling the Moon a dead body in space, scientists are now telling us that it's really a *sister planet* to Earth. What they haven't explained yet are the pictures taken of the surface showing strange "domes," mysterious "lights," and odd "craters" that look suspiciously like our own

ICBM silos!

By John A. Keel

□ If you had been sitting beside a "canal" on the planet Mars on July 14, 1965, and had happened to look upwards, you would have seen a very peculiar object gliding silently overhead, sweeping from pole to pole at incredible speed. And if you had a powerful telescope, you probably would have been able to make out the huge letters "UNITED STATES—NASA" emblazoned on its silvery sides. Perhaps if you had faithfully reported your sighting to the Martian Air Force, they would have scoffed at you and issued a formal announcement explaining the thing away as "swamp gas."

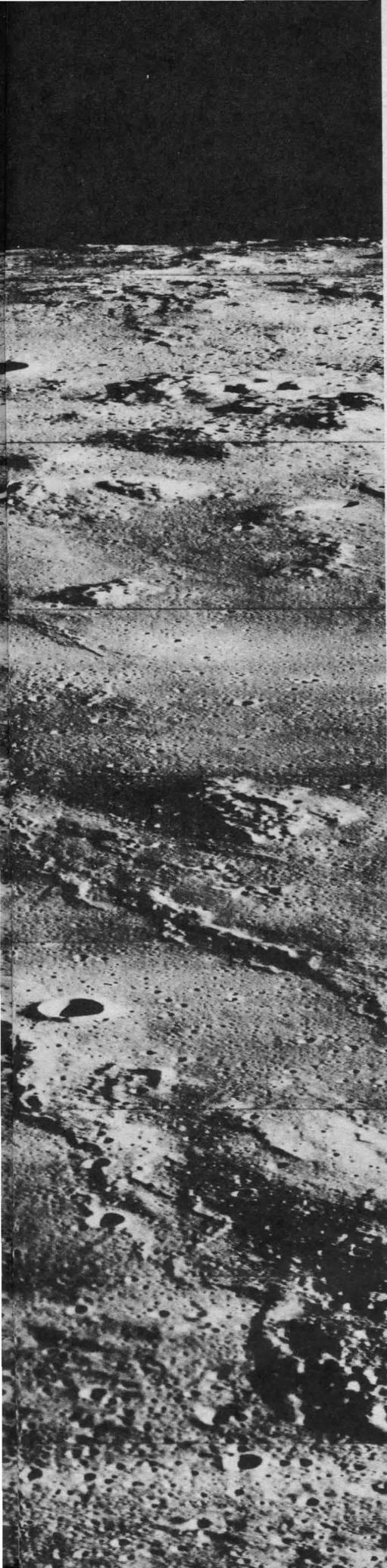
But it was a mighty expensive hunk of "swamp gas," representing not only millions of dollars from the pockets of U.S. taxpayers, but also a centuries-old dream of all Earthmen. On that date we finally photographed the surface of the Red Planet from the relatively short distance of 6,118 miles.

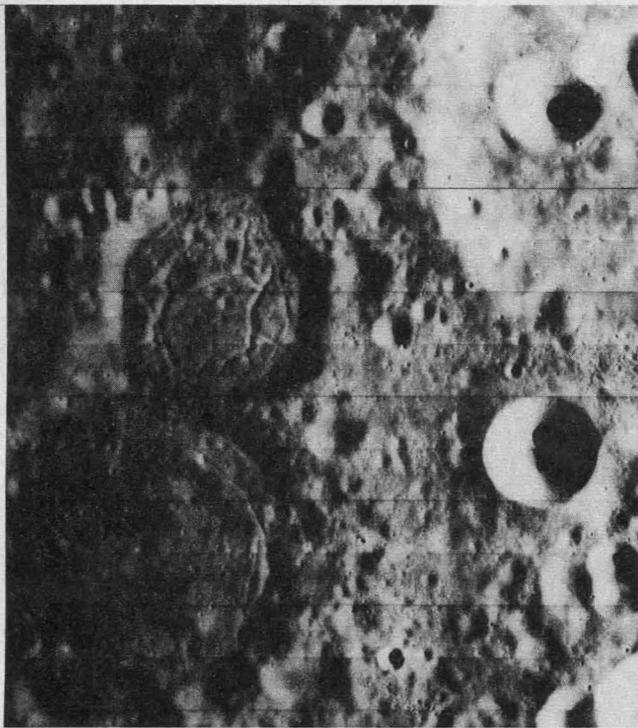
What did the 22 pictures really show? And why is it that we haven't heard much about them since the first burst of triumphant publicity on July 15th? Today the average man in the street thinks simply, "They showed a lot of craters, no signs of life," and dismisses

them. However, there is more to the story than that. Much more. . . .

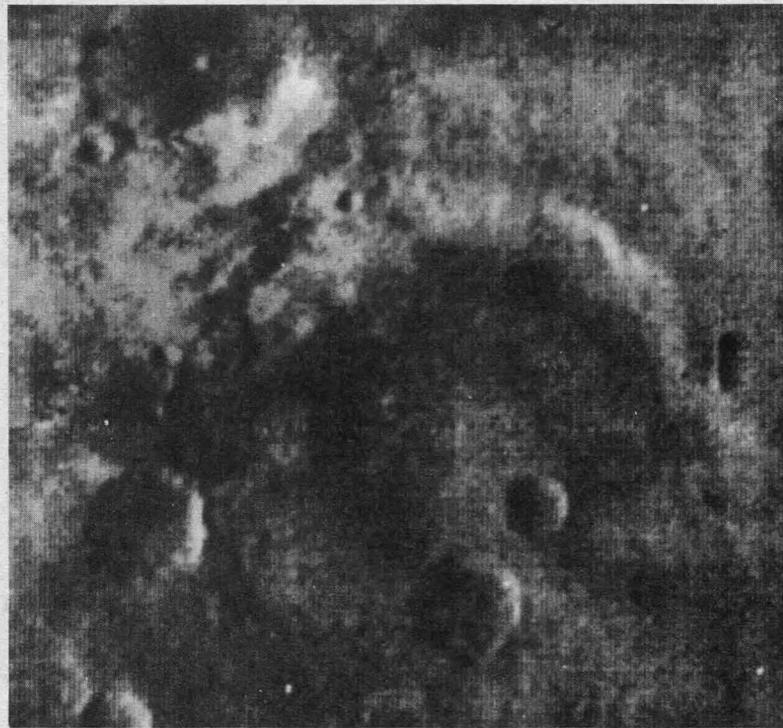
On November 28, 1964, after several delays and failures, the technicians at Cape Kennedy held their breaths, crossed their fingers, and watched *Mariner IV* roar skyward balanced on the end of a huge firecracker. They had planned to launch it the day before, but a last-minute problem with the craft's transmitter delayed the shot. Weighing only 575 pounds, the tiny *Mariner IV* contained over 138,000 different parts. Naturally, there were a lot of things that could go wrong with such a system. Earlier attempts had failed because one tiny transistor had become temperamental, or one thin wire had accidentally been grounded.

But this time everything seemed to be going perfectly. Now the satellite was on its way at last, and during its long trek through the blackness of outer space it responded to 79 different commands broadcast from earth, altering its course slightly, feeding back sundry bits of information. Finally, 228 days after launching, it closed with Mars and the order was sent out for the picture-taking to begin. The specially designed TV camera





Some scientists believe that the unusual pattern visible in this Lunar crater is the product of rational construction and not the result of volcanic activity, as NASA's experts claim it is.



The odds against the photo of the surface of Mars (left) and the photo of the Lunar crater, Clavius, resembling each other are over a billion to one. Yet, some scientists say they are almost identical.

focused on the surface of the planet, turning the reflected light into electrical impulses—there were some 40,000 such impulses to each picture—and broadcasting them back to Earth where the elaborate devices at Tidninbilla, Australia, and Goldstone, Calif., and other tracking stations would convert them back into photographic images.

Then something went wrong! The signals from the hitherto perfectly operating satellite were being jammed! The technicians at Tidninbilla, sealed inside their mammoth control rooms, frantically jabbed at switches and twirled dials. Something was amiss. But what? A desperate check of all the equipment indicated that everything was in order.

A few miles away, at the Canberra airport, six men in the traffic control tower were facing another puzzle. A strangely glowing metallic object was hovering about 5,000 feet overhead. It was plainly visible to everyone on the ground—and no one could identify it. The men in the tower placed a series of phone calls. One of them

was to Tidninbilla. Reporters at the tracking station went outside for a look. They could see the thing, too, and some of them allegedly took photographs of it. (Although these photos were mentioned in the wire stories, none of them were ever released.) Then an Air Force plane was sent up to identify the object. As the plane neared it, *the thing simply disappeared.*

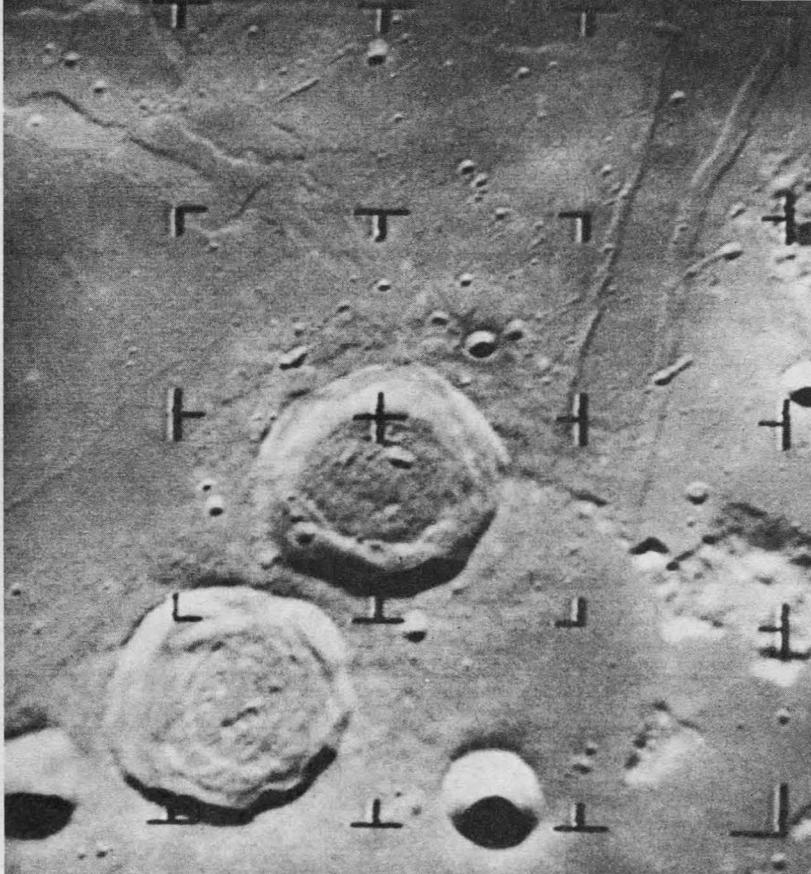
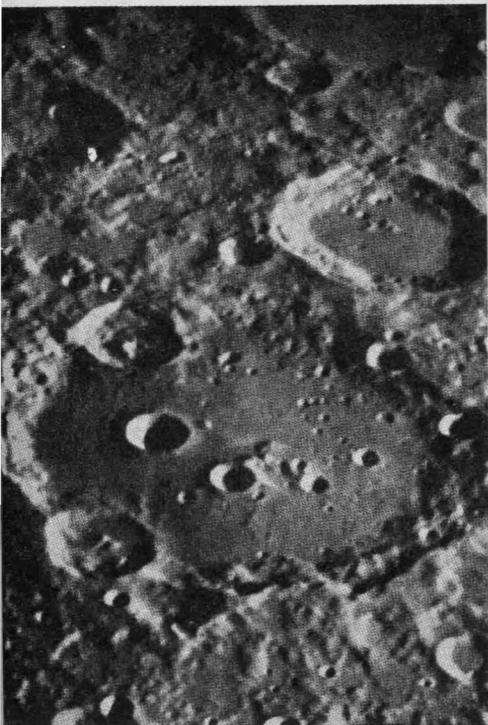
And once it was gone the signals from Mariner IV began to pour into the tracking station!

Slowly the pictures from *Mariner IV* came back, and the great computers straightened out the jumble of signals and reassembled the photographs while groups of astronomers stood by in anxious expectation. Every scientist had his own theory on what we would find there. Some thought the planet was capable of supporting life; others said it had to be a frigid emptiness.

When the first Martian photograph spewed out of the computer the astronomers who supported the "it has an atmosphere" theory patted each other on the back. There on the edge

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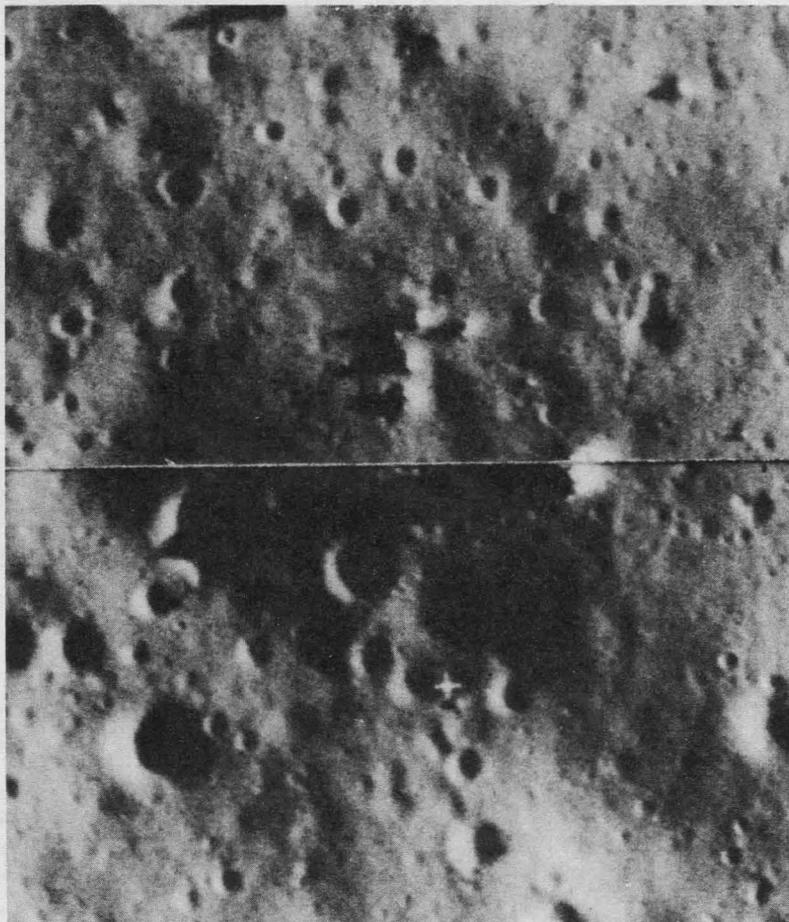


NASA officials can offer no explanation for the white cross or the lengthy shadows (just above the bright cross), visible on the Moon's surface in photo below. The brilliant cross is not similar to the black reference marks used by space cameras (above).

of the planet (astronomers call it the "limb") there was a cloud-like smear rising some 50 miles above the surface. But their elation was shortlived, for as picture after picture emerged from the machine it became clear that Mars was strangely pockmarked with craters, looking more like the Moon than anything else. Furthermore, a preliminary examination showed no signs of the famous "canals." The learned men of science muttered in their beards. How could this be?

Over the past century a great many strange things have been observed about Mars by highly distinguished astronomers. All of the men gathered at the Goldstone Tracking Station had hoped that the *Mariner IV* pictures would help to explain some of these unusual observations. Instead, the photos only posed new questions.

Although Mars had been carefully studied by hundreds of astronomers since the invention of the telescope, no one apparently noticed the two Martian moons, Deimos and Phobos, until 1862. (Continued on page 58)



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Long and thorough examination of these two bodies has led most astronomers to the conclusion that, because of their curious unnatural orbits and speeds, they may be hollow and are *probably artificial constructions*.

The celebrated "canals" were first charted by the Italian astronomer Schiaparelli, in 1877, and have been a center of controversy ever since. Some astronomers stubbornly maintain that the "canals" do not exist at all. Others insist that they have seen them and that there is no question of their existence.

For some very strange reason, astronomers have kept this controversy alive to this day and have quietly kept secret the fact that the "canals" were first plainly photographed over 15 years ago, and have been photographed again and again since. Yet these photos have not even been published in the obscure scientific journals.

Why are they keeping the pictures of the "canals" of Mars a secret? No one has been willing to answer that question.

There are numerous other mysteries about our nearest neighbor in space. In 1900, the famous astronomer, Lowell, reported seeing a large beam of light shoot up from the surface of the planet like a gigantic beacon. He reported that it remained in view for several hours. In 1937, and again in 1954, astronomers said they saw a series of brilliant flashes of light on the surface. These flashes were far brighter than any volcanic activity could have been, according to *Sky and Telescope* magazine. What were they then?

Strange gray clouds were also observed on the planet in 1909, 1911, and 1950. And astronomers still can not explain the origin of the huge W-shaped cloud some 350 miles in diameter which appeared there in 1954.

The possibility of life on Mars has been a favorite topic of the Sunday supplements and science-fiction writers for years. However, the U.S. Air Force took it quite seriously back in the late 1940's when they assigned Dr. J. E. Lipp and others to study the possibility that the "flying saucers" might be coming from the Red planet. These scientists quickly discovered that saucer reports usually hit a peak during "oppositions"—when Mars was closest to the Earth. This pattern, according to NASA astronomer Jacques Vallee, still continues.

A few months ago, Dr. Carl Sagan, the loquacious Harvard astronomer who has repeatedly dismissed the possible

existence of "flying saucers," announced that he had studied the photos and data from the *Mariner IV* mission and that he believed Mars had an atmosphere capable of supporting life.

In December, 1965, one of the world's leading astronomers, Dr. Clyde Tombaugh, the man who discovered the planet Pluto in 1930 and who believes that UFOs are spaceships because he has seen one, held a press conference at which he said that he had found traces of those elusive "canals" in seven of the 22 *Mariner IV* photographs. He claimed that these markings coincided with studies he had made by telescope. Dr. William Pickering, the head of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California, backed Dr. Tombaugh and admitted that some "canal-like" markings were, indeed, visible in the photos. The markings were most noticeable, they said, in pictures #11 and #12.

Astronomers remained sharply divided, however, on what these "canals" might actually be. Laid out in perfectly straight lines radiating from hubs or "oases," when viewed with a telescope the canals suggest some kind of planned, intelligently conceived construction. But they could be giant cracks and fissures, or belts of vegetation.

Writing recently in the British journal *Orbit*, one James Goddard unveiled his own careful analysis of the *Mariner IV* photos. He claims to have detected several minute geometric formations, including triangles and circles which seem to be laid out in an organized manner. Other astronomers, both amateur and professional, have had a field day with the pictures. All have found something in them to support their own pet theories.

Dr. Gerard de Vaucouleurs of the University of Texas examined the pictures by a special process which canceled out the natural blurring caused by the Martian atmosphere, and he uncovered the long straight line or "canal" called Pyliphegethon. Two other men, Dr. Robert P. Sharp and Dr. Bruce C. Murray, both from the California Institute of Technology, say that the craters of Mars show signs of erosion. Their rims have been worn down—but by what? As near as can be determined, there are no eroding elements on Mars such as rainstorms, wind, or flowing water. *Or are there?* Dr. Murray speculates that there may be a lot of moisture in the Martian soil which freezes during the cold nights there and then thaws during the day, causing an endless cycle of expansion and contraction which could produce

changes in the planet's surface.

The atmosphere of Mars is estimated to be as thin as the earth's atmosphere at 130,000 feet. Yet several different groups of scientists recently declared that they have found traces of methane gas ("swamp gas") over the Red Planet. Others insist that the Martian air consists mostly of carbon dioxide. Still others ignore the clouds that have been seen—and the extensive spectrographic studies that have been made—and stubbornly stick to the notion that the gravity of Mars is not strong enough to hold onto any kind of an atmosphere.

When you sum up all of the learned scientific papers that have spewed out of the world's observatories and universities, you can only conclude that we really don't know a damned thing about Mars. The scientists responsible for this endless outpouring of speculation and contradictions are the same men who were arguing that the Moon was not solid enough for a rocket landing. They continued to argue right up until our first Lunar Vehicles touched down there. Then the diehards said that we were lucky that the vehicles had just happened to land on solid spots. These are also the same men who soberly insisted for generations that the planet Mercury revolved on its axis only once for each complete revolution around the sun, therefore one side of that planet was burned to a crisp while the other was a frozen wasteland. This, they insisted, was a scientific fact and it was taught to millions of school children. Then, two years ago, radar experiments discovered that Mercury was actually revolving slowly and steadily and was not the half-and-half world the scientists had long considered it to be. Last year these same profound gentlemen suddenly decided that Jupiter was not a planet after all, but was a dead star! Next year they may tell us that the rings of Saturn are really a swarm of fireflies.

Science is not infallible and many of our scientists are hogbound by dogma and tradition. They accept only what fits into the neat little theories they favor at the moment. When something turns up that doesn't fit in with their notions, they brand it as "erratic" and sweep it under their laboratory carpets.

If Mars should have an atmosphere of carbon dioxide (a combination of oxygen and carbon, both necessary to sustain life) then it may very well have many forms of plant life and, possibly, animal life. Methane, on the other hand, is a gas which is deadly to oxygen-breathing forms of life. It is made up of carbon and hydrogen and here on

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The one-time official spokesman for the Air Force's UFO investigating "Project Bluebook," Al Chop, is now a top man in the NASA public relations office at the Houston Space Center. For years Chop was an outspoken believer in UFOs. He endorsed the work of Maj. Donald E. Keyhoe, head of NICAP, and issued a number of statements expressing the belief that flying saucers were machines controlled by intelligent extraterrestrial beings. A few months ago, however, he publicly declared that he no longer believed in UFOs. "I use to believe in Santa Claus, too," he said.

Does all of this mean that NASA is covering up something? And is that something so important that they would dare switch pictures in the *Mariner IV* series? We can only point to the above facts.

Actually, as we all know, the best way to hide something is to put it right out in the open where it will be overlooked. Perhaps this is NASA's current policy. They have released some amazing photographs of the Moon containing details which NASA's astronomers simply can not explain. These pictures have been widely published in the national press, along with bewildered captions, and then the newspapermen and the public forgot about them.

However, a few people did pursue the subject. Their conclusion? There is *something* on the Moon—something no one has been able to explain. Astronomers are currently juggling a whole collection of new theories to answer the mysteries revealed in these photos.

For over 400 years astronomers have been reporting strange lights on the Moon. Scientists at the Goddard Space Center have admitted that there have been more than 200 sightings of "bright spots" and strange moving lights around the craters of the moon in recent times. On October 29, 1963, for example, astronomers at the Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff, Arizona, watched a weird group of 31 objects moving about the surface of the Moon in organized geometric formations. Some of these objects were estimated to be three miles wide. About that same time, the Soviet astronomer Nikolay Kozyrev was observing a very bright light in the crater Aristarchus. What were these things? Today we are told that it was all "volcanic activity." The Moon, it seems, is blessed with walking volcanos.

A total of 35 space probes have been fired at the Moon since 1958. Fourteen of these, seven American and seven Russian, have been successful. For centuries Man believed that the craters on the Moon were caused by meteor impacts,

in spite of the fact that although millions of man-hours have been spent studying the Moon since the invention of the telescope not one single astronomer has reported seeing such an impact. For centuries, also, scientists have been convinced that the Moon is nothing but a dead hunk of rock trapped in the earth's gravitational field. Now, suddenly, these "facts" are being dumped. Now these same men are telling us that the Moon is actually a *planet*, a sister planet to the earth and that it is alive with volcanic activity. Again, millions of photos have been taken of our "sister planet" and not a single one has caught a volcano in the act of blowing its top.

Scientists at the Douglas Aircraft Co. who have studied the Lunar photos have finally come up with an explanation for the mysterious "domes" which appear all over the Moon and have baffled scientists for years. These domes, they tell us, are volcanic—mounds of moon crust forced up by the pressures of gases underneath. It's a comfortable theory until you examine a large number of Lunar photos and realize how many of these domes there are. The Moon is literally covered with these bubbles, indicating incredible seething beneath its surface. If the Moon really had all of the volcanic activity currently being blamed on it, it must be a molten mass inside—ready to explode. For these reasons, many astronomers refuse to "buy" the volcano explanations. And why would NASA have bothered to "classify" an early photo showing one of these domes?

Before you get too confused, let's take a look at some of the other Lunar photos. On November 22, 1966, NASA released a blow-up or a photo covering a small section of the Moon measuring only 750 by 550 feet. In this picture there is a series of long pointed shadows such as a church spire might cast when the sun is low in the sky. NASA estimates the largest of these objects, the one in the center, to be 50 feet wide at its base and from 40 to 75 feet high. What's so exceptional about this? First of all, such tall slender spires of stone are quite rare and are found on earth in areas where there has been centuries of erosion—wind, rain, etc. So far as we know, there are no eroding factors on the Moon. So the first mystery is how these spires were formed.

Obviously this picture was taken from almost directly overhead. If so, the tall, narrow spires would have reflected very little light and would have been somewhat darker than the other flatter features in the picture. But at the base of each shadow you will see a very bright

spot—*brighter than any of the other features*. How come? No one at NASA can answer that question.

This picture was widely published when it was released, however, most newspapers cropped out the most interesting feature—the *small white cross*. According to NASA, this cross is a "reference mark used by scientists in photographic measurements." Oddly enough, when the author went through hundreds of photos in the NASA files in Washington, D.C., recently, this was the *only* picture containing such a cross. True, some of the Lunar photos did have crosses on them. Lots of them—big and *black* and sharply angular. Since this particular picture is an enlargement of a section of another photo the cross must have been almost microscopic originally. When closely examined, this cross appears to be a three-dimensional object rather than a simple "reference mark."

As an experiment, we had this picture reversed so that the shadows came out white and the cross became black. The cross now resembled a winged formation above the craters. It still didn't look like the familiar "reference marks."

One scientist who examined this picture said that he thought the long shadows were falling the wrong way. That is, all the other formations in the picture were casting their shadows opposite to the pointed spires. What are these things really? They hardly seem volcanic.

On December 14, 1966, newspapers across the country carried another interesting Lunar picture. This one showed the broad limb of our "sister planet" and revealed that the terrain was covered with several groups of well defined craters. But these craters are unlike those which appear in many other Moon photos. These are *perfect* circles which, when carefully studied and measured, prove to have *lips* which are all the exact same height from the surface. Even more intriguing, these circular features are all aligned in neat rows. Some of the rows pass from east to west and intersect the rows going from north to south. When studied with magnifying glasses and plastic grid sheets, we find that these "silos" are laid out in an intelligent pattern, not in the random, haphazard patterns of nature. In short, these "silos" (they do resemble our underground ICBM silos) appear to be deliberate constructions spread at planned intervals over a large portion of the surface. Volcanos and meteors rarely, if ever, form perfect circles. Nor do they produce an organized sequence of features. NASA blithely ignores these "silos" and points out, instead, the mounds or "domes" which are also in the picture

and which, says NASA, "confirm the fact that the Moon has had a long and complicated history of volcanic activity." The area covered by this picture is roughly the size of the states of Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island combined. This would mean that the "silos" are actually miles apart from each other.

Back in 1952 a UFO researcher named Albert K. Bender suggested that there might be flying saucer bases on the Moon and that these bases might take the form of "silos" with launching platforms that could be lowered out of sight when not in use. Bender became a legend in the flying saucer field, when, in 1953, he suddenly destroyed his files and discontinued his research, claiming that he had been warned or threatened by "government agents."

Naturally, no one can really say what's up there. Future picture-taking satellites will almost certainly come up with new mysteries for us to ponder. Unfortunately, many people do have the uneasy suspicion that if NASA *did* actually take a photo of a flying saucer base on the Moon, or Mars, or anywhere else, our chances of seeing that picture would be rather slight. For some unascertainable reason, the government does seem determined to conceal hard data on the unidentified flying objects from the American public and from the world at large, even though it is spending millions of dollars in space projects and in UFO research.

Of course, in the end, we may find out that Mars *does* look just like the Moon, and that all of the peculiar features on the Moon were created by natural forces. But that still wouldn't explain the mystery of the unidentified flying objects or tell us why the worldwide "flap" of UFO sightings began anew on July 14, 1965, the same day that *Mariner IV* swept over Mars. That "flap" continued unabated through 1966 and is still going on.

Perhaps when our astronauts finally set down on the Moon they will find some of the answers. Back in 1957, Dr. V. Davydov, of the U.S.S.R.'s Shternberg Astronomical Institute hinted at what the astronauts might discover. "If visitors from outer space wished to leave some token of their presence," he said, "they would place it not on Earth, but on our Moon, where the destructive action of wind and water is absent."

From the steadily mounting mass of evidence, our astronauts should not be too surprised if they discover that some unknown extraterrestrial "Kilroy" has reached the Moon before them.

★ THE END