

THE LITTLE LISTENING POST at Washington, D. C., sends us the following story of special interest:

"To the Editor - -

"Herewith is a recent letter written by Arnold Kruckman, veteran international correspondent of Washington, D. C., to Mrs. Helen Jackson, head of the Washington UFO Discussion Group. Mr. Kruckman is a pioneer in aviation activities. He organized all the great cross-country flights of America prior to World War I and arranged details for the first round-the-world flight ever made. He was the first aeronautical editor ever to be appointed by any newspaper. From this colorful background he sees striking parallels between the present interplanetary activities and the early phases of aviation. He is, therefore, in a unique position to recognize the vast importance of the popular approach, particularly as represented in saucer activities the world over. His letter, in part, follows:

"When I was very much involved in the pioneer phases of the airplane we had a situation that was much the same as that which confronts those concerned with interplanetary space problems today. Before the airplane came as a permanent integral in flight activities we had an Aero Club in America as well as Aero Clubs in Paris, London, Berlin and other great cities of the world. These Clubs were principally devoted to the popular aspects, particularly to the sporting events that had to do with ballooning. The active members were either those who owned balloons or those who flew with the pilots in balloons. The Clubs were aimed at fostering the sport of ballooning, at keeping the records of competitions between balloons, and it was their major purpose to preserve the history of flight and to sustain popular interest. Thus hundreds of thousands, possibly millions, were either directly or indirectly drawn into contemplation of the whole spectacular art of flight. You will readily recognize that this early activity of the Aero Clubs had the effect of preparing public interest in the airplane, and in creating what you might call the consumers who later provided the support for the industry which sprang out of the creation of the airplane.

"I think you will see that the people who were identified with ballooning and with the early Aero Clubs had the same relation to popular interest in flight that organizations like yours have to interplanetary travel. The Aero Clubs had within them the backbone and the substance and the solid elements of the whole group who furnished the momentum and the finance and the popular favor that made the airplane industry possible. In contradistinction to the Aero Club we had the Aeronautical Society of America which was chiefly devoted to the technical problems and to establishing the science of aerodynamics - the basis of the establishment of human flight. Naturally its great interest was the airplane. The space groups, together, as a whole, might form The Space Club of the Americas.

"It seems that the same division of interest occurs now in interplanetary activities. Organizations like yours foster, and are responsible for the popular interest and the widespread attention. The popular interest is reflected in the reports of the innumerable saucer sightings that are fundamentally valuable in the study of the whole interplanetary subject, and which supply the substantial bulk of information necessary to properly equip the scientific organizations with information. Organizations like yours maintain the interest that

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assembles the invaluable observations and data which will enable the scientist and others to make the essential studies that will supply the scientific answers to the problems that confront us today. Saucer clubs, like the Aero Clubs of the earlier days of flight, are responsible for sustaining the popular interest and gather the facts that make the activities recognized and respected. This is absolutely essential work and can be done only by organizations like yours. It depends on volunteers as do those units which today are organized as airplane watchers. What you, and others like you are doing, is absolutely necessary work. It is the foundation upon which rests the whole momentous exploration of interplanetary affairs. I know only too well that to do what you are doing is often discouraging, and that the expense in both money and time seems thankless and futile. But please be assured that everything of this kind that is done is, in the end, worth all the expenditure of time, energy and money put into it."

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Mr. Kruckman will shortly produce a new monthly periodical to be known as SPACE ADVENTURE. It is addressed to the Junior Group. It will provide the stimulation to imagination which will divert many youngsters from the search for adventure which today leads them into collision with the law. The first issue, eagerly awaited by many, will appear around November 1, 1956.