

cosmogram-13 1985 Mar 27
j. oberg, rt 2 box 350
dickinson, Tx 77539 USA

WHITHER SALYUT-7?? Is the Salyut really decommissioned? The TASS text (Mar 01) was: "As the planned program of work aboard the Salyut-7 orbital station has been fulfilled in its entirety, the station is now deactivated and continues its flight in an automatic regime" [at least one version of the broadcast TASS account left out the phrase "in its entirety"]. There were reports the station was radio silent and drifting, but a series of visual observations by me and friends showed it to be not tumbling. Radio silence is not unusual for the long unmanned mission phases. And if the station were to be abandoned, wouldn't it be de-orbited? Answer: No, recall Salyut-4 was allowed to naturally decay until only hours before reentry, when its engine(s) got switched on for the southern Pacific dump. Yet now we are faced with rumors of a sudden major systems breakdown aboard the station. My inclination is that the station was not supposed to be decommissioned this year (else why the tremendous effort to repair the plumbing last year?), in anticipation of further visits to it. If now in fact it has been written off, it could be a year or more before we see another Soviet manned spaceflight, Soyuz T-13.

SAVITSKAYA ON WOMEN: The Jan 22 Komsomolskaya Pravda in Lithuanian carries these remarks by Svetlana: "The number of women in the cosmonaut detachment is fairly large, and they represent the most diverse specialties. I am sure that flights by these women will take place. Doubts about the possibility or the need of having women work

in space have now been dispelled once and for all. I am also sure that the volume of operations performed in open space will increase from mission to mission." Rex Hall reports that in an interview with Air et Cosmos at the IAF in Lausanne, she said there were ten women in the program.

FRENCH SALYUT KMP-COMET EXPERIMENT. At the Lunar/Planetary Science Conference here in Houston, J-P. Bibring et al. gave a paper on their comet dust capture experiment. The box will be sent to a Salyut aboard a Progress, and exposed on the exterior in October by EVA, to capture dust from the comet Giacobini-Zinner. The crew will EVA again to retrieve the box and return it to Earth aboard a Soyuz. The boxes will be re-launched for Halley dust collection in May (sic!) 1986. So was this to have been aboard Salyut-7, or is a new Salyut to be expected by October?

C.P. VICK RECOGNIZED BY N.Y. TIMES Kudos to Charlie Vick for the great profile of him in the 84Dec25 edition. It praised the 'dapper' space sleuth for his 'Proton' drawings.

PROTON UNVEILED!! So we've finally seen the Proton, in the Vega launch sequences. But so far I've only seen the videotape of liftoff, no clear photographs. They cannot be far behind!

COSMONAUT ANOKHIN? Rex Hall reports that Kubasov's book Touch Space says eighth engineer cosmonaut from 1968 (1966?) selection was Sergey Nikolayevich Anokhin, who later dropped out for medical reasons. He was an AF colonel, Hero of the USSR, with the Korolev Bur., and was aged 56!
BARSUKOV BARES ALL. At the same Lunar/planetary conference here, Soviet scientists dis-

closed amazingly detailed plans for next series of deep-space probes. In June 1988 will be two Mars orbiters which will also perform Phobos rendezvous and (possibly) landing; if first attempt works, second spacecraft will go to Deimos. In 1989-90 will be a lunar polar orbiter to perform whole-body catalog of geochemical nature of surface, including search for polar ice caps in always-dark craters. In 1991 is planned (not yet approved) long-lived Venus lander with French hitchhiker for asteroid (Vesta) rendezvous and maybe landing. These incredibly explicit disclosures seem to me to be a sign of willingness to expand international cooperation.

SHUTTLE-SALYUT MARKS TIME. No progress on White House proposals for a near-term shuttle rendezvous with a Salyut (any Salyut). No Soviet response, but no rejection either. Candidate mission is Vance Brand's flight, Spacelab-4 (Life Sciences 1) in January, whose orbital inclination was recently changed from 28 to 57 degrees.

My KAL-007 "spy scenario" refutation article has finally appeared in London in the 1/2 1985 issue of Defence Attache, published March 18. I'd be obliged to anyone who sends clippings of any news media attention it engenders. Also, the same article appeared in the 1/2 issue of Strana i Mir, the Russian anti-Soviet emigre publication in Munchen, BRD. We'll see what reaction it gets inside the USSR!

SUMMER TIME. USSR continues to bounce around the changeover from standard (UT+3) to summer (UT+4) time, begun in 1980. This year's change will be Sunday, March 31, at 02:00

Moscow Time. Clocks will "spring ahead". It used to be April 1 no matter what day of the week it was; this change is supposed to make it consistent with other European countries. COSMONAUT RANKS. A roster in the January '85 issue of Aviatsiya i Kosmonavtika gave current military ranks of flown cosmonauts. Lt. Generals were: Titov, G.; Beregovoy; Shatalov. Maj. Generals were: Nikolayev, Popovich, Leonov, Shonin, Filipchenko, Gorbatko, and Klimuk. Everybody else (total 21) were full colonels.

HAPPY ANNOUNCEMENT: baby John Nicholas was born safely on November 21. Thanks for all the well-wishing and concern.

BOOKWORK: The magnum opus ~~ED~~ NEER Living Space, human life aboard permanent space stations, co-authored with Alcestis ("Cooky") Oberg, has been completed. McGraw-Hill is to publish it late this year. Also completed is Soviet Space Shots: Confrontation or Cooperation in Space, a review of recent Soviet military, manned, and planetary activity; my agent thinks it can also be published by early next year. On April 18 at the end of the CBS-TV mini-series "Space", author James Michener is to discuss "Further Reading Recommended by Library of Congress", and my Mission to Mars will be one of three such books suggested. Whoopee!

CONCLUSION: My apologies to many non-subscribers who have been asking me for material in recent months and have gotten no response from me. I have finally gotten my head above water, and am beginning to respond at last. Thanks for the compassionate understanding!