



Arnaldo Tamayo Mendez, first Black man in space.

## Reaching the cosmos

On September 18th, 3:11 p.m. EST, the Soyuz-38 spaceship was launched in the Soviet Union, carrying the first Black cosmonaut, Arnaldo Tamayo Mendez, citizen of the Republic of Cuba, into space.

Soyuz-38 joined Salut-6 orbital station twenty-three hours and 49 minutes later, and the two cosmonauts were welcomed aboard by the two Soviet cosmonauts who had been in orbit for 160 days. Popov and Riumin offered the newcomers, their fourth set of visitors, the traditional bread and salt.

Tamayo was born on January 29, 1942, Guantanamo, Cuba. In those days a boy born into a poor family had little chance of gaining an education, but Tamayo managed to complete the eighth grade by picking crops, shining shoes and selling vegetables.

He was almost seventeen when revolution triumphed, an event he said "was welcomed with infinite joy by my poor family and immediately made it possible for us to improve our living conditions and gave me the opportunity to make my most cherished dream come true, that is, to continue studying."

"And something much more important than that, looking back from today's vantage point: January 1959 opened a new world for our country, because, in a single stroke, the revolution cut the chains that tied us to an old society that held us in bondage and discriminated against us."

Listening to the radio in 1960, Tamayo heard Fidel Castro asking young people to join youth work brigades. The youth were promised teachers, and, for the most diligent, technological institutes and scholarships to the university.

As a member of a brigade, he helped build schools, camps and housing, and continued to study. When he learned that cadets were needed for the Aviation School, he decided to be a pilot.

Tamayo was still in Aviation School when called to defend the country against the U.S. backed invasion at Playa Giron (Bay of Pigs). Several days later the students left

for the Soviet Union to receive a one-year crash training program in conventional piston engine airplanes and jets. When he returned to Cuba he transferred to a pursuit unit, where he served until selected for the cosmonaut program.

Tamayo's service record includes air missions during the October Crisis in 1962 (Cuban Missile Crisis) and in 1967 he visited North Vietnam and "had the opportunity to be selected to form part of a military delegation of our Revolutionary Armed Forces to visit that sister nation, to study the development of modern technology in the struggle against the enemy air force - in this case the U.S. Air Force."

The first steps toward the Intercosmos Program were taken in 1965 when representatives from nine socialist countries met in Moscow to organize for cooperative space research. "Without the existence of this program," Tamayo commented, "it would have been impossible for a country with limited resources such as ours to carry out experiments in space, much less to be able to send one of its citizens into space."

From a two-year process of elimination, two pilots were chosen from several hundred candidates - Lt. Colonel Tamayo and Captain Jose Armando Lopez Falcon. They began then training in the Yuri Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center near Moscow in March of 1978.

Tamayo's wife and sons, Orlando, 10, and Arnaldo, 11, accompanied him to the USSR.

The space flight conducted a series of twenty experiments, some of which were part of the continuing Soviet research and some of which were designed by Cuban scientists. Although most of the experiments were medical, some explored the natural resources of Cuba.

The Cuban experiment "Cortex" undertaken for the first time, consisted of a study through encephalograms which measured response in various parts of the brain and provided information on brain function during spaceflight and determined changes in the



Tamayo prepares for countdown.

brain's electrical activity during the flight and after return to earth. EEG recordings are routine on spaceflights, but on previous Soviet and U.S. spaceflights they were taken only occasionally and only in relation to sleep and regular patterns. The Cuban experiment includes periods of doing simple mental exercises and responding to stimuli. "Support" is aimed at determining recovery and adaptability to normal conditions of gravity and stability of the locomotor system after return to earth. The lack of gravity and the lack of pressure on the soles of the feet bring about loss of calcium in the bones during spaceflight. Tamayo wore supports to provide pressure on the soles of his feet for four hours a day to determine the relation of decalcification to brain response to pressure on the sole.

The joint Soviet-Cuban spaceflight had a particular characteristic that one of its crewmen was a Black man from the tropics, the other white from the temperate zone. "Balance" compared any changes in the Cuban cosmonaut's hydro-mineral balance with those of the Soviet cosmonauts. The test included: water intake, urine excretion, body weight, and blood tests. Analyses were made of the content of sodium, potassium, calcium, magnesium, chlorides, creatinine and other substances to see how they are metabolized during spaceflight.

The spaceflight has been used as an educational experience for the entire nation, with school children and adults watching on television the experiments taking place in the space vehicle.



On board the orbital space station Salut-6, Tamayo and Yuri Romanenko demonstrate experiments for the television audience. In the background are Leonid Popov and Valeri Riumin, pilots of Salut-6. (Photo by: the Granma, from Cuban television)

### CORRECTION

The Portland Police Bureau extends its apologies to the Black United Front for using their name in its personnel advertisement of October 9, 1980, and to the Albina Ministerial Alliance for omitting its name. The Bureau is sorry for any embarrassment we have caused either of these organizations.

### OFFICIAL NOTICE

The Portland Branch NAACP, in accordance with Article V, Section 7 of the NAACP Constitution, hereby notifies you of the NEXT THREE branch meetings which will carry out the NAACP biennial election process for officers.

1. October 26, 1980 at 4:00 pm - Highland United Church of Christ on 9th and Going. ELECTION OF NOMINATING COMMITTEE, of which not more than two members shall be officers of the branch or members of the Executive Committee.

2. November 16, 1980 at 4:00 pm - St. Mark Baptist Church at 103 NE Morris. The Nominating Committee must submit a report at this meeting. At this time additional nomination may be made for all officers and elected members of the Executive Committee by Written petition signed by three or more members in good standing as of the time of the meeting. No one shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee or by petition without first having obtained his or her written consent. Branch elects Election Supervisory Committee.

3. December 14, 1980 at 3:00 pm - Hughes Memorial Methodist Church at 111 N.E. Failing. ELECTION OF OFFICERS. (No further nominations permitted.)

Branch shall choose one Regional Board Member and six Members-At-Large of NAACP National Board.

Who is eligible to vote: Anyone over 17 years of age who has been a member 30 days previous to the election date.

Lucious Hicks IV, President

Betty White, Secretary

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Dr. Arthur F. Scott, Chairman, Scientists' Committee on Energy, Professor of Chemistry, Emeritus, Reed College, and one of Oregon's most respected scientists.



Oregon loses if Ballot Measure 7 wins. We lose the option to use nuclear power when and if we need it. This means less energy independence and increased reliance for America on OPEC oil. Oregon jobs and growth are also at stake. Higher energy costs could result. Keep the nuclear option open.

## VOTE NO #7

The anti-nuclear ballot measure that would effectively ban an important energy resource.

Oregonians Against Banning the Nuclear Option, 607 Oregon Bank Building, 319 S.W. Washington, Portland, OR 97204  
Co-Chairpersons: Mary Roquejolt, Dr. Bernard Sprad, Treasurer: Richard Russett

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