

Expert Relates Problems In Taking Trip To Mars

By JOE LEWIS
FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. (AP)—If you think a trip to Mars is just around the corner, Dr. Earl C. Slipher has a word of caution for you.

Despite Sputniks I and II and Explorer, it may be 50 years before man is ready for a flight to Mars, says Dr. Slipher, director

of the Lowell Observatory, where the International Mars Committee makes its headquarters. At present, he adds, the task of propelling a space ship to Mars seems almost insurmountable. Man would need a fuel vastly more efficient than those now available.

If such a trip were possible, here are some of the problems Dr. Slipher believes would confront a traveler to Mars: "Temperatures in space would range from 2,000 degrees above to 300 degrees below zero, depending on which side of the space ship faced the sun. The ship would have to keep rotating in order to maintain even temperatures within.

"The space traveler would be

endangered by flying meteors and exposure to radiation from cosmic rays, about which we still know very little. "There would be the problem of supplying human needs in a space ship jam-packed with scientific instruments during a trip that probably would take two or three years. And there also would be the problem of a safe landing."

After landing, Dr. Slipher says, the space traveler would find Mars resembles a "particularly barren portion of the Gobi Desert." The red planet is dry, virtually cloudless and coated with sand and dust. Its reddish hue is caused by disintegration of rocks, a constant oxidation which soaks up the planet's dwindling supply of oxygen. Travelers would need oxygen masks because the atmosphere would be as thin as that atop Mt. Everest, the highest point on earth.

Mars is plagued by vast dust

storms unsurpassed in size or intensity by any storms on earth. It has no major bodies of water, not much water vapor and only brief rain storms. Temperatures range from 70-80 degrees above zero in the daytime to minus 90 at night. The force of Martian gravity is only three eighths that of the earth. It takes 687 days for Mars to orbit around the sun. Both earth and Mars belong to the "terrestrial group" of planets—those which have solid bodies and hard cores. Both have atmospheric blankets which include oxygen and water vapor. Both are about three billion years old.

In fact, Slipher says, Mars may forecast what the Earth will be like in a billion years because "Mars is smaller than earth and has run through its life cycle much faster. It is rapidly becoming a dead planet."

"It is losing its atmosphere. If there is or has been life on Mars, its chance for continued existence diminishes with time because

Mars, as a planet, is on the downgrade." Someday, Slipher predicts, the red planet will "die" and become merely an unchanging mass, devoid of atmosphere, suspended in space—something like the Moon. If life exists on Mars, Slipher explains, it would be only in its most elementary form. The climate and soil can support only the hardiest vegetation. There is reason to believe that Mars has vegetation, Slipher says because of its dark regions which

change color with the seasons, indicating growth of plants in summer and decay during the long Martian winter. Slipher says astronomers still don't know the answers to the mysterious "canals" sighted on Mars.

"It's generally agreed that something exists in the canals," he explains. "But contrary to science fiction, there's nothing to substantiate a belief that the canals were made by intelligent beings."

College Student Murders Girl 'To Satisfy An Urge'

PALO ALTO, Calif. (AP)—A Stanford University sophomore shot to death a 17-year-old Palo Alto high school girl "to satisfy an urge" last night, he told police.

The victim was Deena Bonn, only child of Mr. and Mrs. John E. Bonn. Police Sgt. Gilbert Chatterton said Thomas Wallace Cordry III, a neighbor of the girl, acted as if he were reporting a minor traffic accident when he walked into the Palo Alto police station shortly before midnight and said: "I want to report a killing. I shot a girl and she's out in the car."

The girl's body was in the seat of Cordry's 1957 convertible, a single bullet wound in the head. Capt. William Salt of the inspector's bureau, Santa Clara County sheriff's office, declared: "The boy has told us an incredible story. He said he bought a .22-caliber rifle yesterday afternoon for the express purpose of picking up a girl, killing her, raping her, and leaving her body in the foothills, in that order."

Cordry, 19, told police he "just had the urge to do this" and had had the urge before, Salt said. Salt quoted the good-looking, crew-cut son of a San Francisco insurance man as saying he bought the rifle and ammunition at a Palo Alto sports shop and drove around at random, looking for a girl. Unsuccessful, he went home.

At about 10 p.m., Salt continued, Cordry telephoned Deena, told her he had to take a trip and asked her if she would drive him to the station and bring his car home. She agreed.

He said after picking her up and sliding over to the passen-

ger's side, he told her he had to return a rifle to the ROTC armory on the Stanford campus first. She drove the two miles and stopped in front of the armory.

Cordry told officers he then fired once point blank into the girl's head. He then got behind the wheel, he said, and drove into the Stanford foothills, but had a change of heart and drove directly to the police station after a few minutes.

Salt said the boy claimed he did not rape the girl. An autopsy was scheduled.

Cordry was booked at the police station en route to the Santa Clara County jail on suspicion of murder.

The girl's father owns an employment agency in Palo Alto.

Firemen Quit Over Wages

SALEM, Mo. (AP)—Salem's 10 volunteer firemen and Chief Ray Johnson all quit in a dispute with the city council.

There were two fire alarms yesterday in this Ozark town of 3,600 about 100 miles southwest of St. Louis. The firemen stayed put. They were only small grass fires and nearby residents pitched in to extinguish them.

The firemen complained the Council refused to listen to their grievances at its meeting Monday night. The volunteers have been getting \$3 apiece every time they answer an alarm. They asked \$5.

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