

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE IN LUNAR RESEARCH? RESULTS OF AN OPINION POLL, A. L. Albee and R. A. Preston, Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, California 91109

This abstract summarizes the returns from a letter that was mailed to the community of individuals interested in lunar exploration on August 15, 1980, by the Chief Scientist of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. The letter to new lunar missions.

A total of 336 letters were sent to lunar and planetary scientists, supporters of lunar utilization, NASA Headquarters personnel and a few additional individuals with an interest in lunar exploration. Seventy-eight responses were received (23% return rate).

The answers almost without exception were thoughtful, as well as thought-provoking, and made for lively reading. Few of the responses could be described as dispassionate. Reading through the letters was much like having an intimate brainstorming session with a significant portion of the lunar community, a result that would be difficult to achieve at a large "workshop" meeting.

The expressed opinions covered a wide range. Most were favorable to lunar research, some were not. The most common opinions revealed by the poll were:

- . The next lunar mission should be a lunar polar orbiter. Follow-up missions should include sample returns, rovers, and geophysical networks (i.e., gravity, seismicity, and heat flow).
- . Lunar utilization should play a role in any future U.S. return to the moon.
- . A large conference is probably not the best method to re-initiate a lunar program. Small groups may be.
- . International cooperation should be pursued. POLO should be supported.
- . A manned base should be the long-term goal of a lunar program.
- . Military involvement should be discouraged.
- . There is a lack of leadership within the U.S. space program.
- . Lunar missions should be considered as just one facet of an integrated solar system exploration program.

In addition to giving the most common opinions on the future of lunar research, the final report will also try to preserve splits of opinion on various issues, and to identify minority or unique viewpoints. The reports will provide a summary of the poll results and a compilation of representative and interesting quotes from the replies. The goal of the report is to provide a means of communication between the various opinions of the lunar community on the possibility of reestablishing a lunar program. Hopefully, wide distribution of the report will spark new thoughts and perhaps act as a catalyst toward progress.