

Luna City Or Bust!

It is a startling message, no doubt, but it is the right message. *The Moon is waiting, but we will not make her wait any longer!* The orb which hangs in our skies has had many names in story and song, from *the Queen of the Night* to *the North Wind's cookie*, but the time has now come to add a new sobriquet to the list : **home**.

We Can

- **Where men have gone before, men can go again.** *Apollo* furnished us with precious man-days of experience on the lunar surface, proving that humans can survive and do useful work there. We have a clear enough picture of the conditions that we can make our preparations without guessing, and with less margin for error.
- **Lunar settlers can live off the land.** Hundreds of kilograms of samples give us a clear picture of the lunar resources — oxygen, metals, stone and native glass, and other constituents. Much work has already been done on using these to supply life-support and other human requirements. Plants have even been grown in lunar soil.
- **Luna is within our reach already.** The months-long voyages to Mars or the asteroids demand new techniques for living without resupply, and elaborate safety measures for traveling out of reach of help. From Terra to Luna, on the other hand, is only a three-day trip, with clear communications all the way. The state of the art now suffices for the needs of the Lunar Settlement Plan, but could not handle the long hauls.

We Should

- **Luna is the key to the planets — including Terra.** Energy and resources from space can put the peoples of Earth in a much better position to meet the challenges of the coming decades. Perched on the rim of the terrestrial gravity well, Luna is a source of materials and a base of operations which can face outward to the Solar System or inward to Earth orbit with equal ease.
- **There must be a first step.** If humanity is to press outward to new worlds, the first permanent foundation beyond Earth must be made somewhere at some time. Lunar settlement can provide that first foundation, and it is surely better to take the opportunity we already have than to wait for some unknowable future.
- **A dream deferred is a dream denied.** We know that, if we rise far enough, the horizon will no longer hold us in and possibilities will stretch forever in all directions. If we hope ever to take any of those possibilities, we ought to begin now. While we remain where we are, space remains what it has been, the province and plaything of governments, a realm of astronauts and missions, rather than what it is in truth — the whole world.