

Men's Club: Woodlawn

~~FEDERAL~~ UNITED CHURCH: Supper-Meeting: May 18, 1961

Before proceeding to my subject: Astronomy, I want to say a few words about history.

Historians use facts as their data. From there they go on to study the causes and effects of these facts.

It is only in the past forty years, that historians have been paying due attention to the role of science in history.

Their studies have brought to light the facts, that at times science has influenced culture, and, at other times, culture has shaped scientific thinking.

Also: at times, science has been at the roots of war; and, at other times, wars has been an aid to science.

Perhaps, the most striking example of the latter effect has been the Second World War. Except for the war of 1939-1945, science, in the year 1961, would not be as far ahead as it is.

During the war, cost was no consideration, and scientists received aid to study the atom, and radio communications, in a way which they would never have been aided in time of peace.

The historians, a hundred years from now, will not fail to point out the influence of the second world war on science.

I suspect that they will also be pointing out, the effect of the post-war science on culture.

They will be saying that prior to the ninety-sixties, men were narrow-minded.

That all they thought of was of people on the planet earth. They never gave ~~any thought to the poss~~ serious thought to the possibility of people on other planets.

There may not be any planets of which we do not already know. And if there are ~~other poss~~ planets, as yet unknown to us, there may not be people on them.

I would like to say, briefly, a word on the possibility of people on other planets.