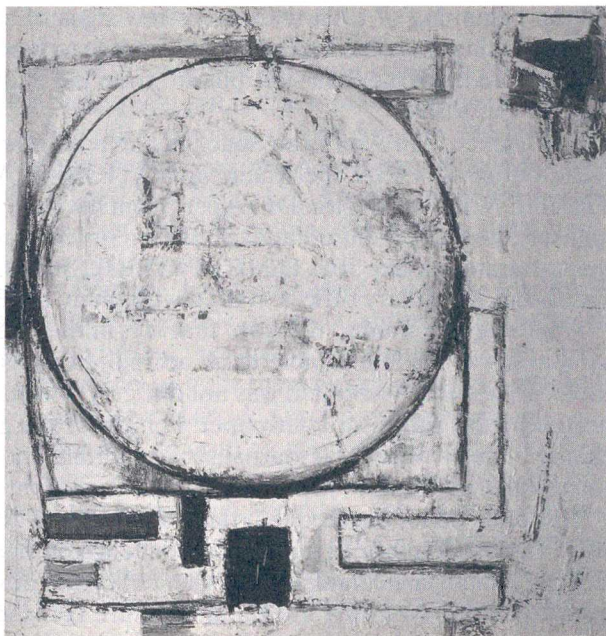


Title 107

A small aluminium girder of most unusual shape, which I found surplus in the Vertical Assembly Building of the Apollo 11 Spacecraft at Cape Kennedy in 1968, is the catalyst of an exhibition of drawings and paintings by Paul Feiler. It now stands on my desk as a treasured souvenir of my many visits to the Apollo Launching site which I made as the Science Correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*. When I showed it to Paul and asked him to paint a picture of the Moon for me, he incorporated its shape in the picture and painted a Moon above it. He told me many years later that this painting of the Moon inspired him to compose his two series of **Orbis** and **Lunatis**. © *Author's photograph*



By the beginning of 1965 there were few signs of an 'Utopian Future' — but the shape of things to come was visible in the race to reach the Moon. I could only fully report from the American side, but not from the Russian for which I had to rely on Agency reports.

The Chief of the American Space public relations was Julian Scheer, then at the Head Office of NASA, the American NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION, in Washington DC. Apart from his large staff at the Washington Headquarters, he had organised at each of the launch sites, like Cape Canaveral, and at the Laboratories, like JPL, the JET PROPULSION LABORATORY, in Pasadena, California, subsidiary offices, staffed with many highly competent press officers.

Anything one wanted to know, that was in the open and not secret, like military satellites, was made available to all accredited press correspondents. I was one of them. To become accredited was not difficult, a form had to be completed and supported by the Editor of your paper. For any really great event, like Apollo 11 for example, there were 2000 journalists accredited, and special tribunes were erected to view the great event, in relative comfort and from as short a distance as was safe.

This open policy ensured that the world knew of American progress in the Moon race. The economic and political consequence of this attitude, so contrasting to the European and particularly the Russian policy, has never been fully analysed and appreciated. One was fully informed of future launches, told in detail of any delays and, if the reasons for it were known, they were explained. And this applied not only to the many successes which the American Space Programme could achieve, but also when disasters occurred, for example for Apollo 13. Julian Scheer deserves great credit for carrying out this far-sighted policy of NASA.

It had its political reason as well, as NASA and in consequence the many industrial suppliers of rockets, engines, electronic equipment and the thousands of essential components of satellites and spacecraft, all depended on the mighty flow of finance authorised and issued by the US Congress. This meant that Congress, Representatives and Senators, had to become aware of their local industrial contributions to the space programme and thus ensure their re-election. This American "pork barrel" policy needed the 'open policy of information' which was of such great benefit to us representatives of the press.

Occasionally it led to bitter competition and battles in Congress when for example Texas and Florida fought for the site of the Apollo Headquarter. Let me recall here that Jules Verne, in his book of 1865 about a flight to the Moon, had precisely foreseen this fight. Texas won then and also now. [See also page 176]