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When Ray Bradbury was asked why his stories did not come true, and humankind still does not explore Mars, the writer replied: “I am often asked about this, and I like to fantasize over the answers. So that they are different! Today's answer: because people are idiots. They did a lot of stupid things: they came up with costumes for dogs, a job as an advertising manager, and things like an iPhone, and received nothing in return, but a sour aftertaste. But if we developed science, mastered the Moon, Mars, Venus ... Who knows what the world would be like then? Humanity was given the opportunity to surf space, but it wants to engage in consumption - drink beer and watch TV series”.

He also said: “We could have built a colony on the moon and moved on to Mars. We need something larger than ourselves — that's a real religious activity. That's what space travel can be - relating ourselves to the universe. ... NASA is to blame - the entire government is to blame — and the end of the Cold War really pulled the plug, draining any passion that remained”.

Yes, the space race between the USSR and the United States was a terrifying expenditure of what is now called "taxpayer funds", accompanied by human casualties. But it is only thanks to the achievements of the space program that we live in a world in which there is a Teflon coating, digital cameras, zip pants and Velcro sneakers. As well as weather forecast, satellite TV and GPS navigation, Google maps, the Internet and actually iPhone.

Opponents of space exploration argue that it is senselessly expensive and dangerous, that a person is not adapted to stay in space, that modern technologies do not allow space exploration efficiently, there are many other problems on earth.

And all this is absolutely true.

However, human civilization has the means to manufacture and maintain a multi-billion-dollar arms market. We can afford to release dozens of new smartphones models every year, although the existing ones cover the needs of a person for 10 years ahead. Is all the efforts and money of civilization aimed at finding a cure for cancer or restoring the environment, or maybe at building homes for orphans, that we cannot find the money for space exploration?

Cosmonautics is not about throwing money into space, but additional efforts to expand the comfort zone in which a person can live and develop. Even if it is not very

comfortable there now, we know what awaits us and what we need to be prepared for. In the same way, people once walked under the dark vaults of caves, pushed off the shore on rafts made of straw, lifted structures made of plywood and canvas into the air. They had much less than we have now. And they risked.

We need something larger than ourselves. We need a passion...