few minutes during which a direct hit is possible. It was this slender chance of a close encounter that was seized hold of by the popular press and turned into a sensational story. Some observations which seemed to show that the comet's nucleus had split into separate chunks, each with a possibility of hitting the earth, also turned out to be erroneous.

High Tech Polishing

Scientists at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory are using several new technologies in an effort to eliminate contact polishing from the process of manufacturing mirrors for the Strategic Defense Initiative. So for a team from Oak Ridge's Optics Manufacturing Operations Development and Integration Laboratory, which is run by Martin Marietta Energy Systems, has been able to machine a disk of chemical-vapor-deposited silicon carbide to a figure accuracy of less than one visible wave using a single point diamond turning lathe. Ion beam milling eventually will be used to polish mirrors made by such a process. New technologies are necessary to make mirrors affordable for SDI requirements and applications such as the detectors in commercial forward-looking infrared systems.

Mission to Pluto

Orbital Sciences Corp. and the California Institute of Technology are proposing that NASA send a small satellite to Pluto to explore the distant planet and its small moon, Charon. OSC would design and build the 140- 150-lb. spacecraft, while Cal Tech would be prime contractor and develop the imaging instrumentation. An OSC official estimated the program's cost, proposed under NASA's Discovery program, at about $130 million. The mission would take about 10 years if the spacecraft were launched on a relatively fast trajectory. The spacecraft would be launched on a Russian Proton booster. The Jet Propulsion Laboratory, a NASA facility operated by Cal Tech, has proposed sending two 330-lb. spacecraft to Pluto using Titan-4/Centaur boosters.

Errata

Corrections to 'Recent Variability in the S Doradus-type star AG Carinae' by T.P. Cooper, *MNASSA*, **51**, p122, 1992 (Paragraph entitled "Evolution of S Doradus Variables":

For 'spend about 3 x 10 years' read 'spend about 3 x 10^6 years'
For 'burning oxygen into helium' read 'burning hydrogen into helium'
For 'may last for about 10 years' read 'may last for about 10^4 years'

LETTER TO THE EDITORS

The following letter has been received from Jim Knight, Director of the Solar Section.

Dear Sir,

The June 30th eclipse has come and gone, and I trust it was an enjoyable experience for those fortunate enough to see it.