

WAR IN 2080 Errata

War in 2080: The Future of Military Technology by David Langford was published in identical editions by Westbridge (UK), Book Club Associates (UK), Morrow (USA) and Cassell (Australia), all in 1979. This is a 1980 list of corrections and additions, mostly incorporated into the Sphere paperback (UK, November 1980). All page references apply to the hardback editions above. Copyright © David Langford (<http://ansible.uk>), August 1980. Not updated to 2017.

page 50, 3rd line from bottom, insert after 'blast damage':

In the words of its opponents, "This fiendish weapon kills people and spares property!"

page 55, Plate 8 facing, caption should read:

World War I defences, a far cry from the several feet of concrete required to protect against a nuclear attack. Even the horse-shoe is thought to be ineffective against neutron bombs.

page 56, italicized quotation: 'tactical weapons' should read 'tactical nuclear weapons'.

page 57, para 1; alter from 'The allotment ...' to '... hapless victim' as follows:

The allotment of an equivalent 0.3 tons of TNT to each member of the opposition seems more staggering than the power of the bomb itself. The energy of so much TNT would suffice to lift a separate ten-ton weight more than 12 kilometres into the air to be dropped on each hapless victim.

page 58, 9th line from bottom; insert after '... unknown':

An alternative form of this "MX" system would have the missiles constantly moving about in giant trucks, achieving the same effect without expensive tunnels.

page 73, insert new para 10 lines from bottom:

And yet even so, a test under ideal conditions has shown that a large atmospheric laser can destroy a small anti-tank missile at 1 kilometre range. It's a start.

page 77, para 1, change sentence beginning 'Moreover ...' to:

Moreover, even the improved Shiva Nova fusion research installation is not intended to implode pellets more than a few millimetres across (and so far Shiva Nova has failed to meet expectations when performing this, its intended task).

page 92, para 2, change sentence opening 'The abandoned Skylab ...' to:

Abandoned fragments of orbital debris can be repossessed and used in the building of space-stations larger and more permanent than the fallen Skylab – which would not have fallen had it been manned and maintained.

page 96, misprint in last line but 2: should read 'to disable an ICBM'.

page 99, line 8: change 'V-2' to 'V-1'.

page 99, para 3: change sentence beginning 'They are small ...' to:

They are small: up to 20 may be carried by a modern bomber, and many more by a ship or submarine.

page 99, add new paragraph after the third as follows:

It must be remembered, though, that this is a short-term argument. The cruise missile may emerge to reign supreme for years or decades; but inevitably something else will turn up. For example, low-flying cruise missiles would be highly vulnerable to

ground-based laser cannon or to tiny, "intelligent" interceptors whole orders of magnitude smaller and cheaper than those required to tackle ICBMs. Until a decisive war is actually fought, the slow battle for superiority in offence and defence is unending.

page 116, line 16: change 'perhaps millions' to 'many thousands'. At fourth line from bottom, insert after the words 'fusion reaction':

It is in fact generally accepted that the Siberian explosion was caused by a comet detonating at some 10 km height; the fusion theory is speculative.

page 131, para 1: insert after the words 'not for long!':

The same goes for the spraying of lakes with oil to reduce evaporation and hence the rainfall of neighbours downwind.

page 149, top line: change 'nearly 43 kilotons' to 'some 43 megatons'.

page 152, insert at end of first para:

(Actually most initial plans see power satellites being established in geosynchronous orbit rather than at the more remote Lagrangian points; but O'Neill fans consider them merely the first step towards inevitable colonies.)

page 173, para 2: change from 'At these speeds' to end of paragraph:

At these speeds the Universe becomes increasingly strange to the traveller's eye. Thanks to the distortions of relativity, the visible stars are crowded together before the ship and more thinly scattered behind; thanks to the Doppler effect, those ahead become bluer and those behind redder than normal. (This meagre view of the "starbow" has recently replaced the previous popular theory whereby – as a result of oversimplified calculations – it was expected that the stars would form a wide band coloured like a rainbow, surrounding a circle of near-total darkness directly ahead. There may be some obscure moral in the fact that this lovely and evocative image was the product of bad physics.)

page 175, misprint in line 7, which should read: 'One can never reach c ...' First para: change sentence beginning 'The black circles ...' to:

The clustered stars ahead crowd still closer together, brighter and increasingly blue-shifted; computers are needed to decipher the galactic map.

page 182, para 3, add after 'exceeding the speed of light':

Only the most revolting pessimists would dwell on other calculations which suggest that the ship would go through a sort of spatial mincer *en route* to arrive in the form of highly disorganized gravity waves....

page 205, 4th line from bottom: change 'less than two' to 'less than four'.

page 217, para 3, change from 'when all the mass ...' to end of sentence as follows:

when all the mass of our Universe has puréed itself through black holes and singularities into an endlessly uniform distribution of energy, and time itself ceases to have a meaning.

page 222, insert two extra names into the **Acknowledgements** as follows: Tony Berry (after Paul Barnett), John Foyster (after Mrs M.C. Evans).

page 224, insert the following into the **Bibliography**, between Langford and Machiavelli:

Laurie, Peter: *Beneath the City Streets* (revised edition; Granada, 1979)