Suppose the Soviets had managed to get their moon rocket working

and had made it first. They could have beaten us if either:

* Their rocket hadn't blown up on the pad thus setting them back,

and/or

* A Saturn V went boom.

If they had beaten us, I speculate that the US would have gone

head and done some landings, but we also would have been more

determined to set up a base (both in Earth Orbit and on the

Moon). Whether or not we would be on Mars by now would depend

upon whether the Soviets tried to go. Setting up a lunar base

would have stretched the budgets of both nations and I think

that the military value of a lunar base would outweigh the value

of going to Mars (at least in the short run). Thus we would

have concentrated on the moon.

/~~~(-: James T. Green :-)~~~~(-: jgreen@oboe.calpoly.edu :-)~~~\

| "I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving|

| the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the |

| Moon and returning him safely to the Earth." |

| <John F. Kennedy; May 25, 1961> |