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# To Infinity And Beyond! (Your Ad Here)

By Marty Kaplan

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The launch of Discovery brought an undeniable Buzz Lightyear rush. But the NASA voiceover that accompanied it — “beginning America’s new journey to the moon, Mars and beyond!” — was a rude reminder of Bush’s “national greatness” strategy to deflect our attention from the mess he’s made on Earth. Dreams of the Red Planet are the contemporary equivalent of Roman circuses. I’m all for galactic exploration, but the Shuttle and the International Space Station are relics, Tomorrowland curios from the Jetsons era. Robotic space exploration may not get network anchors to gush, and it’s not a surefire source of Congressional pork, but it’s real science. Providing thrilling entertainment and diverting us with feel-good propaganda shouldn’t be NASA’s mission; NASCAR and Scott McClellan are demonstrably cheaper ways to accomplish that.

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