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GOING OVER PLANS — Students of Maui Technical School will help "rehabilitate" the Haleakala observatory of Dr. Grote Reber (left), who plans to resume solar studies here after a three-year absence. Dr. Reber is pictured above going over the plans with Duncan Sinclair, MTS principal. — Maui News photo by Ted Yoshizawa.

Sputnik Proves Russia Leads US In Satellites

By HANK SATO

The Russians may have launched "three or four" sputniks into space before they were successful, a solar scientist observed here on Wednesday.

Dr. Grote Reber, who returned to Maui last week after a three-year absence, made the observation after he had talked to students of the Maui Technical School at noon.

And the successful launching of the satellite has "surprised everyone, including the Russians," he said.

Dr. Reber was here in 1953 and 1954, using an observatory built on the Kolekole cinder cone to study "the stars." He has just returned from Tasmania, Australia, where he continued his work.

He spotted Sputnik while on a ship near the Fiji Islands. "It was pale blue when I saw it," he said.

"The Russians undoubtedly had a three-piece machine (three separate rockets) to launch the satellite," he continued.

"The secret of their success, however, is in their ability to route the satellite in such a direction that its orbit would not be blocked by the earth's surface."

Noting that what goes up comes down, Dr. Reber said that rocketing the satellite into outer space is not the most difficult problem.

"The problem is to get the satellite started on its orbit so that it will travel around the earth without hitting the earth," he reported.

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Sputnik

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Dr. Reber also noted that Sputnik does not travel around the equator — that is, in line with the equator.

"Not many people live along the equator," he said, "and the Russians' propaganda wouldn't be worth a darn if Sputnik travelled over" that imaginary line.

If and when the United States is successful in launching a satellite, what will it be called?

"Probably Putnik," said Dr. Reber, "in consideration for President Eisenhower's celebrated golf games."

Did German scientists contribute to the success of Sputnik?

"Undoubtedly, German scientists had a lot to do with it," Dr. Reber said. "But we must remember that even the German scientists need tools to work with. And the tools, I believe, were furnished by the Russians."

Dr. Reber also agreed that the Russians are ahead of the United States insofar as advances in technology and the sciences are concerned.

At the moment, Dr. Reber is busy "rehabilitating" his Kolekole observatory in order to commence his solar study.

Most of his work is done at night, he revealed.

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born June 7,
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Maui Memorial
Kapu Akiu, who

