Cosmological Conundrums

Challenging the brain is recommended – especially for people of my era – I admit to having watched Monty reviewing his troops in 1944 on the sports field opposite my home.

With this good advice in mind, one morning recently, I sampled an article in the Economist headed *"Dark Side of the Universe"*

Herewith a few extracts:

- *when it was just 380,000 years old* [not 400,000 mind, or 390,000] *studies showed that the universe, then & now, was "flat" but.....*
- *the power of Albert Einstein's theory of general relativity lies in its interpretation of gravity in terms of curved space*

- *The rate at which stars and galaxies are moving away from Earth can be worked out from their redshift.*
- *What the Supernova Cosmology Project & the High-z* [that's High-zee not hazy, like your state of mind; do pay attention] *Supernova Search both found is that distant exploding stars are dimmer, & so farther away, than their redshift implies they should be, if the universe has been expanding at a steady clip throughout. The expansion must therefore have sped up recently – some 5 billion years ago.*

- *The cosmic-expansion conundrum presents scientists with an existential quandary. Some researchers may begin to feel time would be better spent on other scientific pursuits.*

Surely not !

- *Dark energy – or whatever else is causing the universe to speed up – is probably too big a conundrum for one generation to crack.*

That could indeed be so

Surely a flat (or curved) universe expanding ever faster from the moment of the "big bang" presupposes something before it & something beyond it.

Will someone please explain ?

The Astronomer Royal ? The Archbishop of Canterbury ?

…....or even Richard Dawkins ?

Michael H Peters
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