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November 4, 1959TRIP REPORT
Project C - VAFB 11/1/59

At the request of [redacted] I visited VAFB on the evening of 1 November 1959 to observe the final assembly of the configuration scheduled for flight on 3 November 1959.

Although the LMSD crew had arrived only shortly before I did, they seemed very tired, almost groggy. I do not know whether this was an aftermath of excessive work at Palo Alto or not but, as previously observed, the loading crew is not split into shifts but works around the clock as necessary. On this occasion it was well after two in the morning before they were through.

While the building was cleaner than on a previous visit, there was still the same laxness in supervision. It is difficult to determine whether LMSD has three people in charge or none. But certainly there is no one individual who personally checks or reviews each operation.

The check off sheet is partly printed and partly in pencil but wasn't complete as we discovered after the nose cone was completely assembled to and including the parachute before someone (G.E.) remembered an operation that required its complete disassembly.

The air pressure test of the bucket revealed many leaks at bolts, connectors, etc. Most of these were sealed with epoxy, but some I suspect went uncorrected because of the method of inspection.

Frequently the question, "Does anyone remember what we did last time" was asked. With the exception of the ITSK representative, who seemed to have a firm grip on his problems, there was no system for filing the parts needed for assembly. Each item had to be searched for or the person who had cached it found. In some instances it was necessary to go "next door" for a specific bolt or nut.

Considerably more light is used when handling film than I would like to see but with the general lack of discipline I doubt if the situation can be improved without mutiny. In fact one of the supervisors turned on the ceiling lights once towards the end by mistake.

After final assembly the camera would not operate. Analysis indicated that an electrical connector in the interior had not been mated. After some considerable struggle, the connection was made without another disassembly.