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(CLASSIFICATION)

*Fact
per Maj
Johnson*

Handle Via Indicated Controls



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*Memorandum:
This paper was the
basis of a status
report given verbally
to the USIB and the
5412 Group by Dr. McMillan
on 14 November 1963*

WARNING



This document contains information affecting the national security of the United States within the meaning of the espionage laws U. S. Code Title 18, Sections 793 and 794. The law prohibits its transmission or the revelation of its contents in any manner to an unauthorized person, as well as its use in any manner prejudicial to the safety or interest of the United States or for the benefit of any foreign government to the detriment of the United States. It is to be seen only by U. S. personnel especially indoctrinated and authorized to receive information in the designated control channels. Its security must be maintained in accordance with regulations pertaining to the designated controls.

This document contains information referring to Projects:

CORONA



LANYARD.. ARGON..



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(CLASSIFICATION)

13 November 1963

STATUS OF SATELLITE RECONNAISSANCE PROGRAMS

CORONA

The CORONA Program at present has two payload configurations--the basic single-recovery Mural configuration flown in 1962, spring and summer of 1963, and presently available as backup, and the dual recovery J configuration.

The most recent Mural mission (M-24) was launched on 9 November 1963 but failed to orbit when an in-flight malfunction in the THOR control system caused the vehicle to become unstable and to destroy itself. The malfunction has been isolated to the "engine follow-up" circuit but the specific cause of failure has not yet been determined.

This was the 79th THOR-AGENA launching (includes 10 Improved THORS) - 78 AF and one NASA. Of this number, previous mission failures due to THOR were two in February 1960 and one in July 1961. None of these failures was similar to the 9 November problem. (In addition, the first attempted launch of the Improved THOR failed in February 1963 due to improper connection of a plug to one of the three solid motors.)

EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC READING;
DIR. 5200.10 DOES NOT APPLY

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Total THORs launched to date (missiles and satellites)--210.

On four THORs there were problems which may be related to the one experienced on 9 November (although none of these was THOR/AGEMAs).

The next launch, scheduled for 27 November, will be Mural 25 on a basic THOR-AGEMA. Mural 26 on a TAT AGEMA (with [REDACTED]) is available for launch on 14 December if required. Mural 27 as a reserve vehicle (R-7) will be available in January and Mural 28, another reserve, in February.

CORONA J's will be utilized to provide future reserve as necessary after the Mural missions available in January and February are actually launched.

Two CORONA J missions have been launched. On each of these, the first half mission and recovery (equivalent to a full Mural mission) was successful, while the second half was unsuccessful. On the first, an inverter failure prevented main camera operation after reactivation and a battery failure prevented recovery chute deployment. On the second, secure command system problems prevented reactivation of the satellite after its deactivated period.

As subsequent J payloads experienced difficulties in the ground test cycle, decision was made to use the back-up Mural payloads in this time period while completing the R&D on the J configuration. The primary J payload problem is one of adjusting for proper tension in the

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Control System [REDACTED]

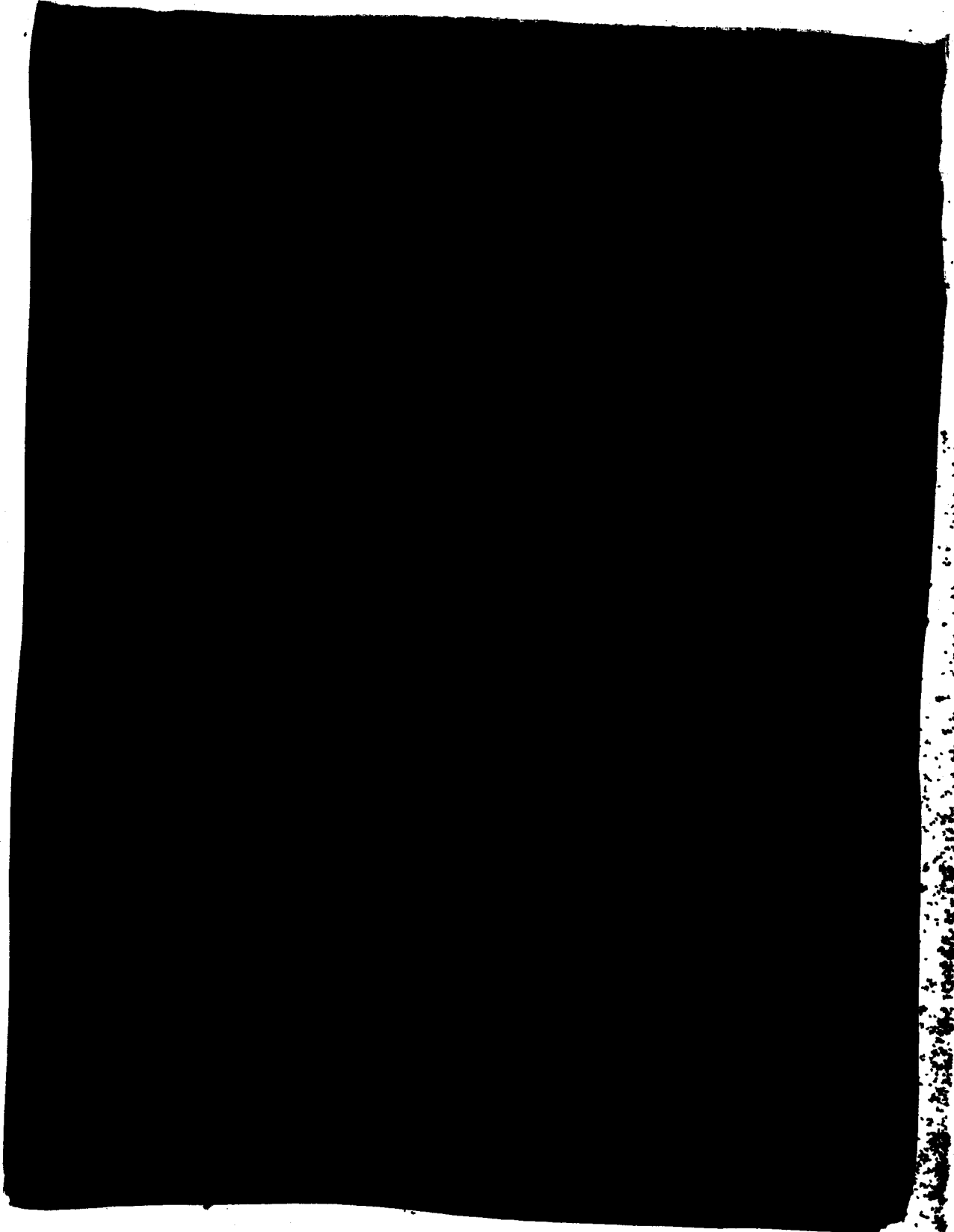
film transport system. Tests now underway at Sunnyvale are providing data on these adjustments. These tests are scheduled for completion on 18 November. After these tests are completed, a J payload will be prepared for flight and, if it successfully passes ground tests, will be available for launch about 20 December. In the meantime, other known problems in the J system (inverter and command system) have been fixed by providing redundant equipment.



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