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The WEEKLY SUMMARY, issued every Friday morning by the Office of Current Intelligence, reports and analyzes significant developments of the week through noon on Thursday. It frequently includes material coordinated with or prepared by the Office of Economic Research, the Office of Strategic Research, and the Directorate of Science and Technology. Topics requiring more comprehensive treatment and therefore published separately as Special Reports are listed in the contents pages.

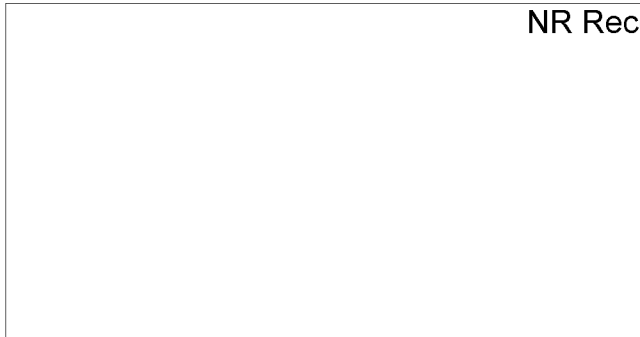
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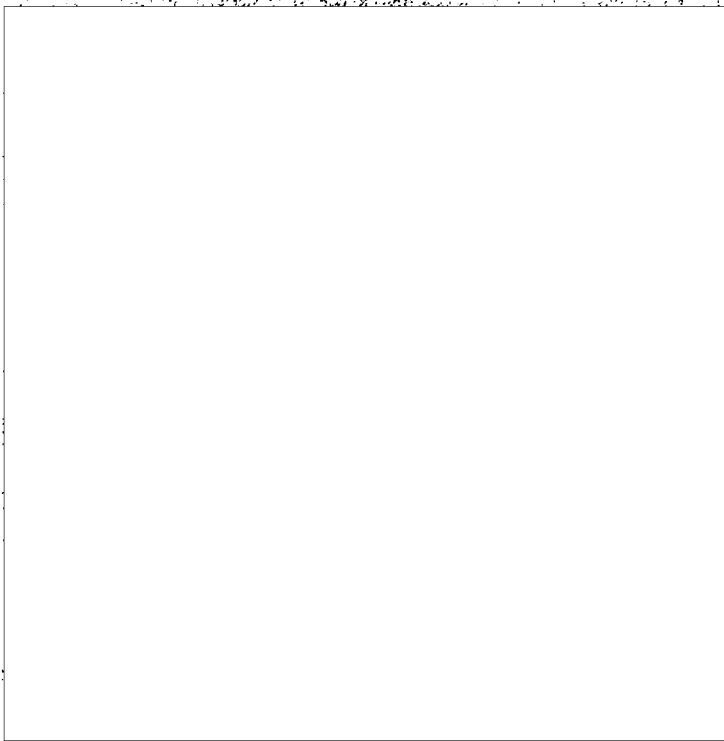


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12 USSR: Economy; Space

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~~SECRET~~**THE SPACE SUIT GAP**

57 The Soviets are trying to improve their space suit technology in anticipation of further manned missions. They will require space suits like the ones used on US Apollo flights, and they are actively trying to obtain US suits for technical exploitation.

Soviet development of space suits has lagged considerably behind the US. Since the start of their manned space program, the Soviets have introduced only two types of pressurized space suits—both in the early 1960s. These suits were cumbersome and, when inflated, greatly restricted the movements of the cosmonauts.

57 At a recent meeting of the joint US-USSR working group in space biology and medicine, Soviet participants showed great interest in the space suits used in the US lunar-landing program. They referred to a pending request to the National Aeronautical and Space Administration to buy several suits from the US manufacturer.

62A In comparison with Soviet models, US space suits are relatively compact and flexible, allowing the astronauts considerable freedom of movement. The advanced technology of US suits would help the Soviets in designing better suits. A US-type suit would be essential for a Soviet lunar landing, where mobility would be a critical factor. Such a landing attempt is not likely for at least several years.

The Soviets have not used pressurized suits on manned space flights since 1969 when two crew members transferred from one spacecraft to another. In the six subsequent manned flights, the cosmonauts have worn only flight suits, apparently because the Soviets do not believe that pressurized suits are necessary for mis-



Soyuz-11 Cosmonauts in Soviet Spacecraft

sions involving no activity outside the spacecraft. The Soyuz-11 cosmonauts who died during re-entry last year probably would have survived the sudden depressurization of their capsule if they had been wearing pressurized suits. The couches in the Soyuz re-entry capsule, however, could not have accommodated three cosmonauts wearing the bulky Soviet suits.

Changes in the Soyuz spacecraft probably were made as a result of the Soyuz-11 accident and presumably were tested earlier this month during the flight of Cosmos 496—an unmanned Soyuz vehicle. As a safety precaution, the Soviets may also introduce a new space suit or a modified version of an older model during their next space mission. There are indications that another manned flight is planned within the next two weeks or so, probably involving another extended stay by cosmonauts aboard a Salyut space station.)

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