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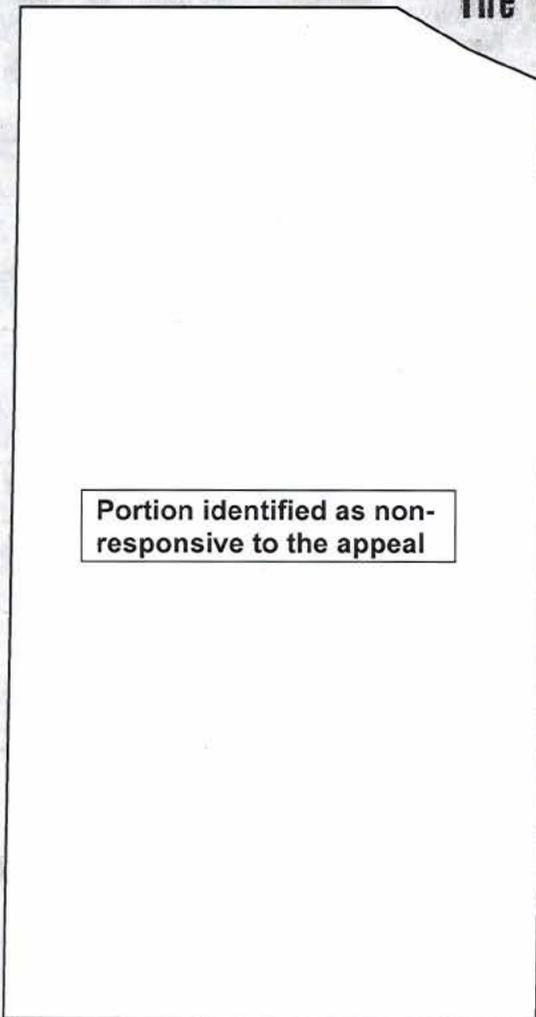
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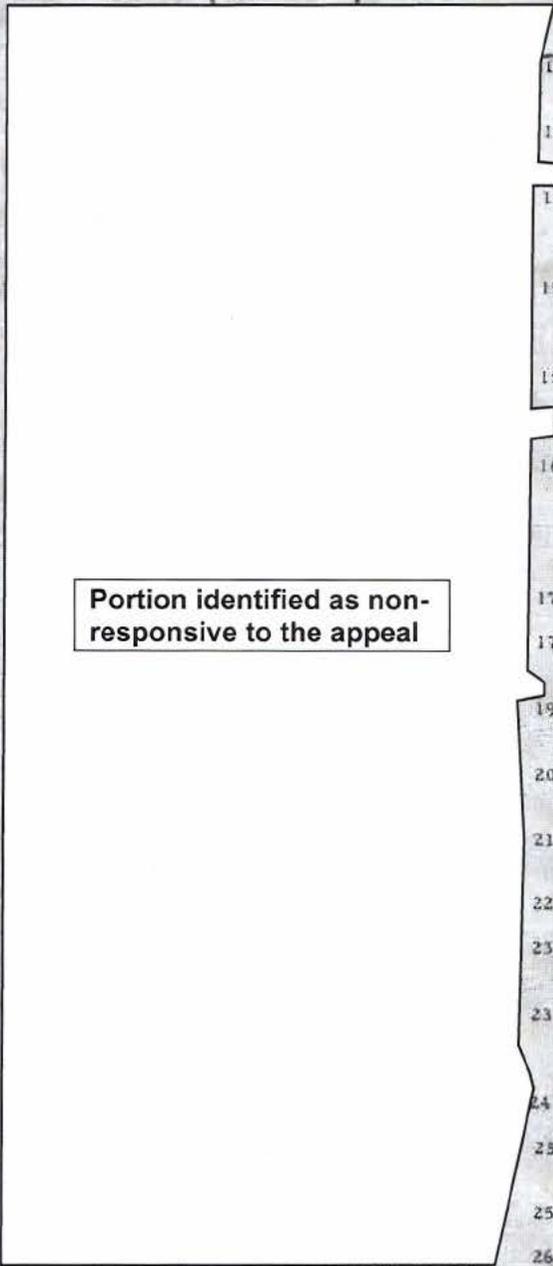
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Issue No. 10/68, 8 March 1968

The WIR in Brief



Portion identified as non-responsive to the appeal



Portion identified as non-responsive to the appeal

Space

ZOND 4 PROBABLY TEST OF RE-ENTRY SYSTEM FOR LUNAR CRAFT

De-orbit, recovery attempt may come 9 March.

COSMOS 204 PROBABLY A RESEARCH VEHICLE
Launched from Plesetsk,

COSMOS 205 IS SOVIETS' 3d RECCE SATELLITE THIS YEAR

Portion identified as non-responsive to the appeal

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NOTE: Pages 28, 29, 32, 33, 36, 37, 40, 41, 44, and 45 of this issue are blank.

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significant
intelligence
on space
developments
and trends

Zond 4 Probably a Test of Re-Entry System for Lunar Craft

Zond 4, which the Soviets launched from Tyuratam at about 1830Z, on 2 March 1968, is believed to be a test of a re-entry system which will be used by spacecraft returning from the Moon for recovery on Earth.

It was launched by the 4-stage SL-12. (The Soviets' largest known propulsion system, the SL-12 appears to have been developed specifically for certain lunar missions, such as circumlunar flights with return to Earth for recovery.) Zond 4 was launched into a parking orbit of 52-degree inclination; 75 minutes after launch it was injected into a very high, elliptical orbit of the Earth. At the end of its orbit, it will probably be de-orbited and an attempt made to recover it.

The precise trajectory of this spacecraft is not known. However, its trajectory may simulate that of a lunar mission, that is, go out to a distance about equal to that of the Moon from the Earth and then return to Earth. It is not, however, headed toward the Moon: it was launched into a direction opposite that of the Moon from the Earth, probably to avoid gravitational perturbations of the satellite. Assuming a 7-day orbital period for Zond 4, any de-orbit and recovery attempt would be made on 9 March.

The designation "Zond" (Russian for "probe") was first used to conceal two interplanetary attempts, both of which failed, although they went into heliocentric orbit. Zond 3 passed by the Moon, relaying to the Earth video of the unseen side of the Moon, and then went into orbit around the Sun. Zond 4, however, is an entirely different type vehicle. The Zond designation may have been assigned, in preference to Cosmos, for publicity reasons: the Soviets may want to distinguish this craft from the numerous (more than 200) Cosmos payloads, most of which have received little press comment.

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Cosmos 204 Probably a Research Vehicle

Cosmos 204, which the Soviets launched from Plesetsk at about 1120Z, 5 March, is believed to be a research space vehicle. Its exact mission, however, is not known. It was launched by the SL-7 propulsion system into an orbit with an inclination of 71 degrees and a 96-minute period.

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Cosmos 205 is Soviets' 3d Recce Satellite this Year

Cosmos 205, which the Soviets launched from the Plesetsk space and missile complex at about 1230Z, 5 March, is a military reconnaissance satellite. It carries a low-resolution camera system and is capable of collecting electronic intelligence. This spacecraft is the Soviets' third reconnaissance satellite of 1968. It will probably be de-orbited on 13 March.

This launch occurred about 70 minutes after the launch of Cosmos 204, also from Plesetsk. This is the second shortest time between launches of spacecraft from the same complex. In October 1966, two ESVs were launched from Tyuratam within a 56-minute time spread.

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