

Space. . .

Skylab flips to extend life

United Press International
 HOUSTON—The abandoned Skylab space station, which has troubled NASA engineers with its unpredictable tilt, was sent end over end Friday in a maneuver that prolonged the craft's orbital life. Flight controllers at Ascension Island in the South Atlantic Friday flipped the 85-ton station so that its altitude control system will be able to draw energy from the sun. The maneuver began at 6:52 p.m. (CST) Friday and was completed by 8:28 p.m. and confirmed on subsequent orbits. "It's the smoothest maneuver we've ever had," said Skylab coordinator Bob Allen. The adjustment was required because seasonal change altered the sun's angle, causing one of Skylab's gyroscopes to be shaded too long and cooled too much. The change threatened a lubrication breakdown. "By turning Skylab around in its orbit before mid-November, the gyroscopes will be exposed to more sun and normal temperatures can be maintained," Johnson Space Center spokesman Terry White said.

White said the opposite maneuver, flipping Skylab back around, will be carried out next spring. The operation was part of a save-Skylab effort that began last March after NASA experts discovered the orbit of the station — last occupied by men in 1974 — was deteriorating more rapidly than expected. Skylab's orbit as of Friday was about 234 miles, six miles lower than when the mission started. The orbit is decaying at the rate of about one mile a month. Flight controllers initially had difficulty keeping Skylab in the desired flight profile — horizontal with the earth's surface with its narrowest portion forward — minimizing the drag of the faint outer edges of the atmosphere. Skylab initially was placed in minimal drag altitude in June but wobbled out of control repeatedly through June and July. In mid-July, it was placed in streamlined profile again after detailed computer re-evaluations. Redmond said it has remained stable since. Scientists are hopeful they can keep it flying until 1980.

NASA indicates shuttle plans

United Press International
 HOUSTON — NASA administrator Robert A. Frosch has told a group of scientists it will be at least 12 years before there is any private takeover of the space shuttle. Frosch told a group recently that NASA had its own plans for the shuttle, except in ground-support systems. "We will be the space transportation for the military, for our own needs, other agencies, for business and for foreign missions," Frosch said. The shuttle is expected to fly its first mission next year.

Frosch told the closing session of the American Astronautical Society the agency will be going back into space for particular reasons and become less a user of its own product. "NASA is becoming a data-producing agency," Frosch said. He said the dominant characteristic of the agency in the next few years "will be finding out things for other people and building the technology to enable us to keep doing this." He said the space agency will be getting back into the research and development of satellite communications. Frosch said industry — like the Boeing aircraft company — might supply some crews for the space shuttle.

Soviets criticize U.S. in spy case

United Press International
 MOSCOW—The Soviet Union called the New Jersey spy trial of two Russians a farce Saturday and the government newspaper Izvestia said the judge who sentenced them to 50 years in prison was promised political support for the state governor's race. The Soviet Union, in a formal protest, called the trial a farce and said it was a "premeditated provocation of the U.S. governmental special services (FBI)." In Washington, the Soviet Embassy delivered a note demanding the United States close the case and allow Valdik Enger, 39, and Rudolf Chernyayev, 30, to return home. Enger and Chernyayev, who were employed at the United Nations, were convicted Oct. 13 on charges of spying a U.S. Navy officer more than \$20,000 for military defense "secrets." They were sentenced to 50 years in jail by U.S. District Judge Frederick Lacey, but allowed to remain free pending appeals. Soviet commentator Genrikh Borovik writing in Izvestia said the FBI engineered the trial to "put up a new obstacle in the way of normalizing relations between the Soviet Union and the United States." He said the 50-year sentence was a monstrous crime in itself. "But why has Judge Lacey passed such a fantastic sentence?" Borovik asked. "The point at issue is that Lacey is going to run in the elections for the governor of the state. And he was promised the necessary support as a fee for the anti-Soviet trial." Judge Lacey, confronted while on the bench in Newark, N.J., refused to comment. However, in the spring of 1977, he issued a terse three-line statement to squash rumors that he was planning to leave the bench and seek the Republican nomination for governor. In addition, Lacey is considered a maverick and has not been supported by the state Republican Party. While U.S. attorney for New Jersey, he aggressively prosecuted both Democrat and Republican politicians. In the official protest reported by the Tass news agency, the Soviet Union said "the U.S. government must be aware of what responsibility it assumes by condoning the arbitrariness of U.S. special services and those forces in the United States that are doing everything to frustrate the process of detente, in relations between the two countries." The State Department said the Soviet note "represents a complete misrepresentation of our judicial system." "Moreover, it is strange logic to accuse us of damaging U.S.-Soviet relations," the State Department said. "In fact, it is the activities of the two Soviet citizens who sought to undermine the security of our country that affects our relations with the Soviet Union."

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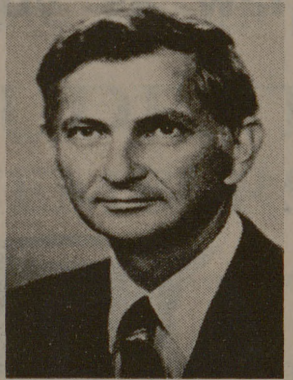
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