

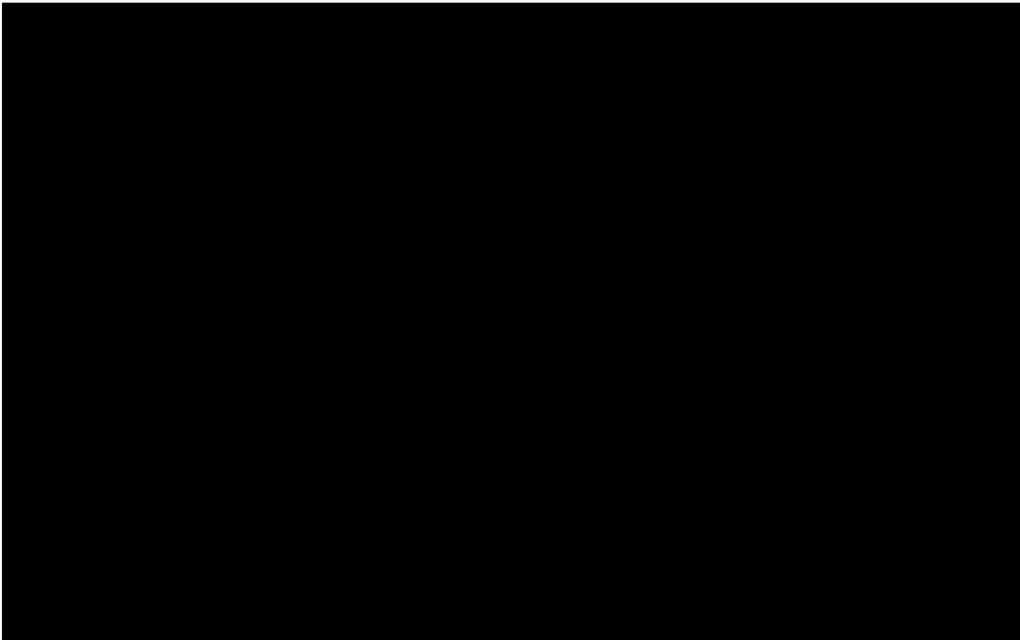
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11 January 1963



CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY REVIEW



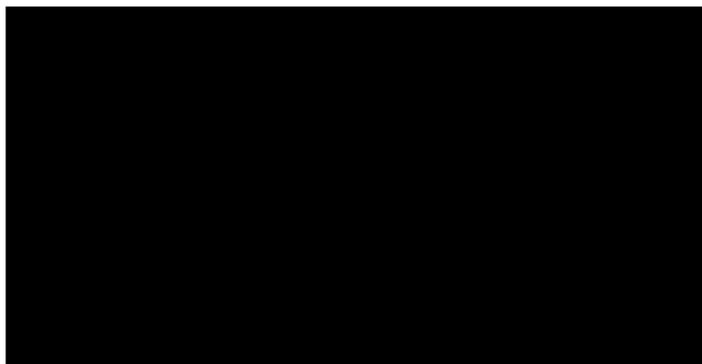
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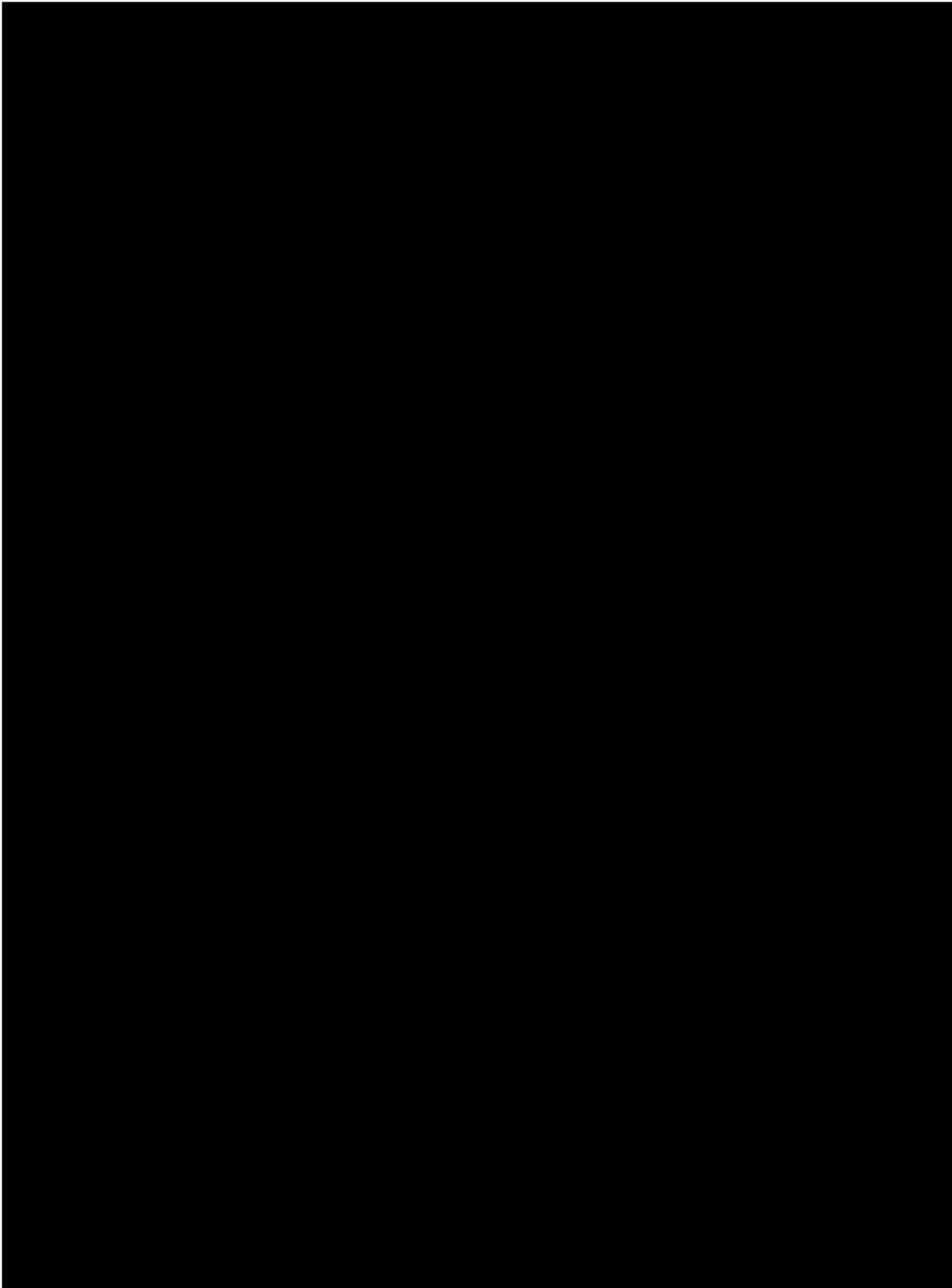
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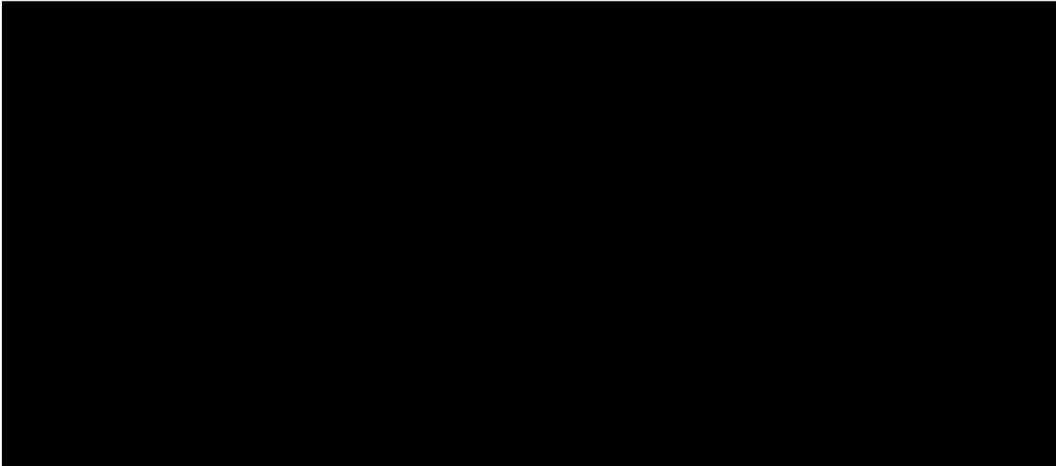
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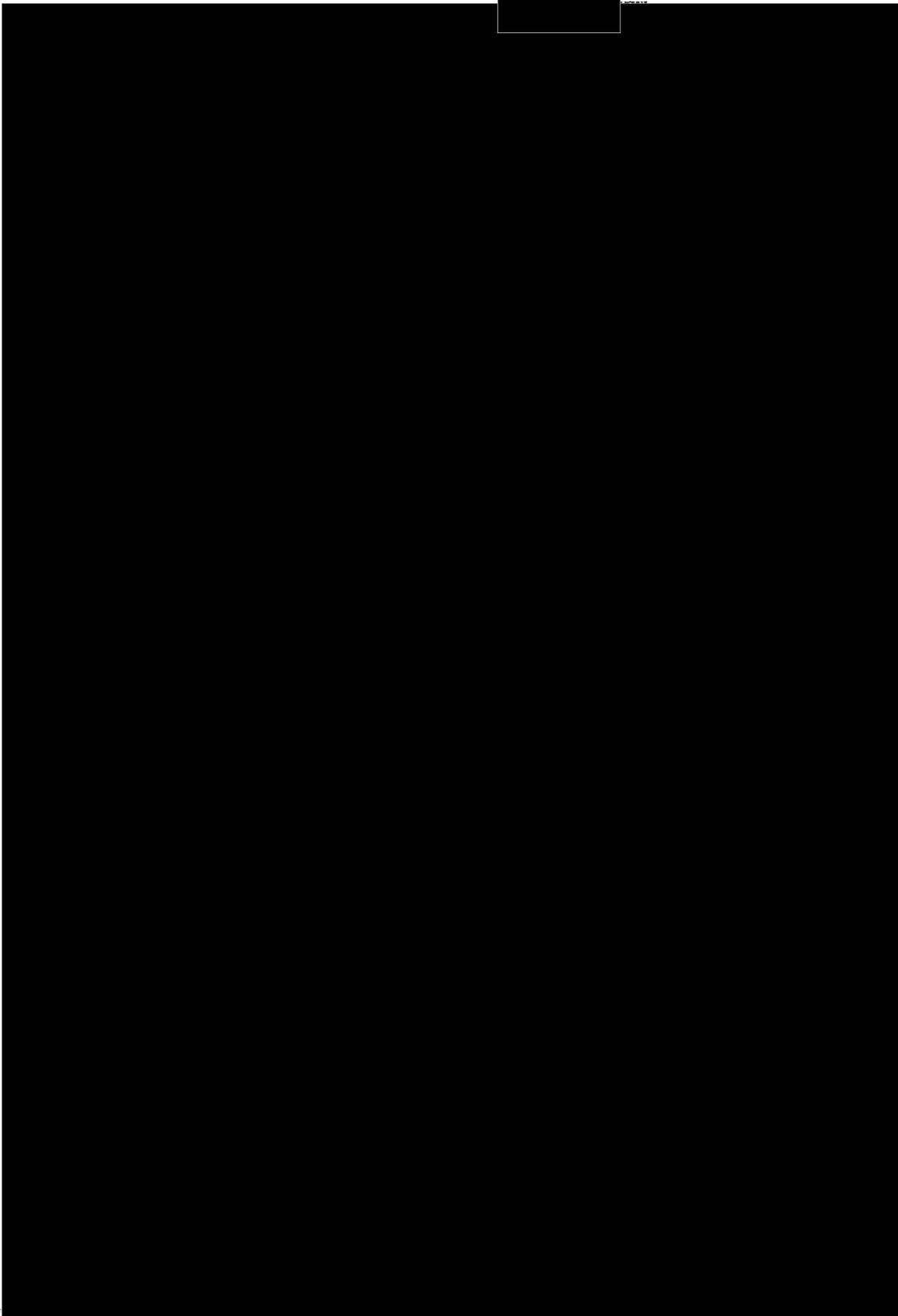


FAILURE OF SOVIET LUNAR ATTEMPT Page 13

The USSR's unsuccessful lunar mission on 4 January--the first since April 1960--was apparently designed to soft-land an instrumented package on the moon. Information on the characteristics of the surface of the moon is important in the early design of a manned lunar landing mission. If the USSR intends to land a man on the moon ahead of the US, exploratory missions similar to the 4 January attempt are overdue.



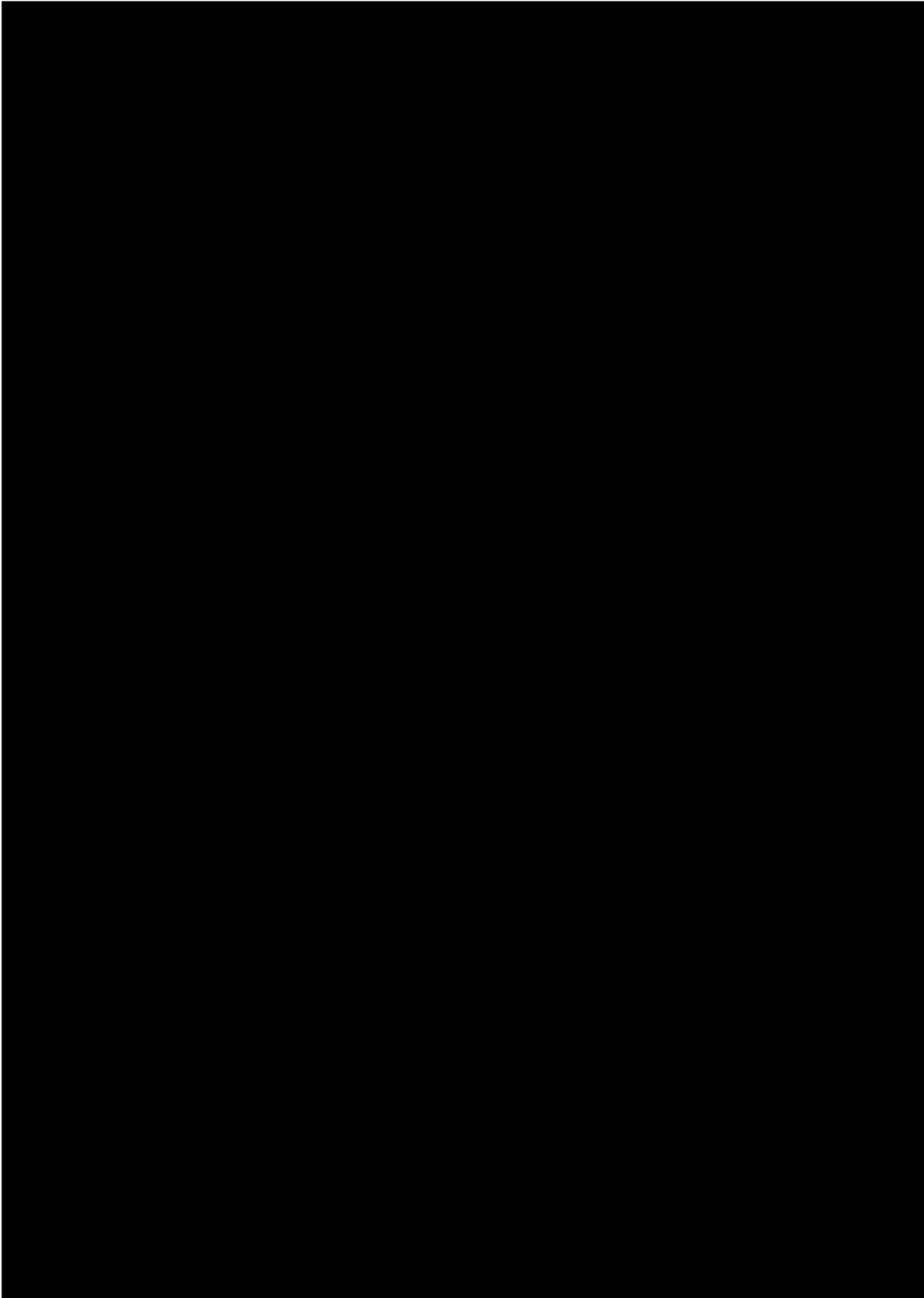
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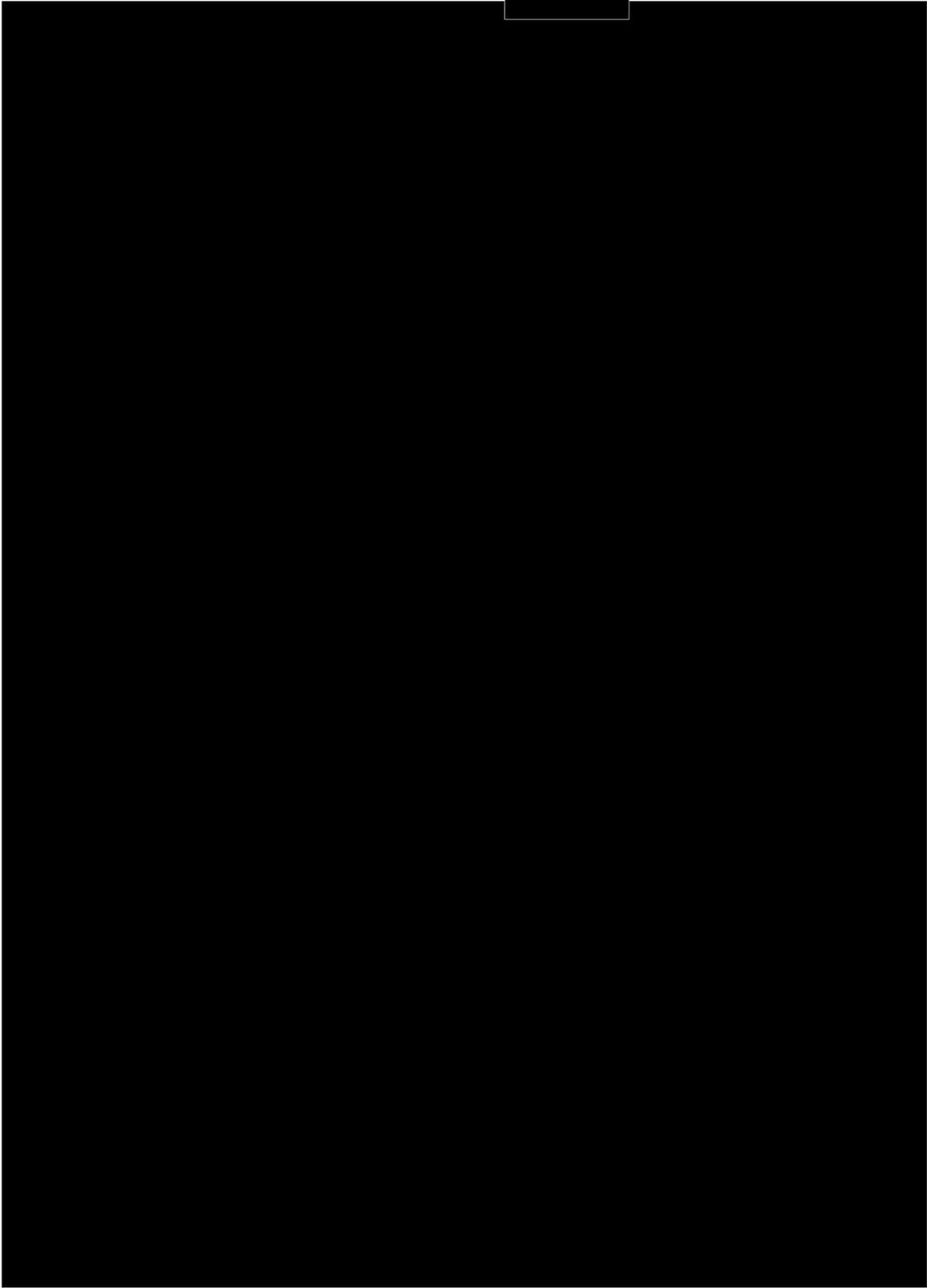
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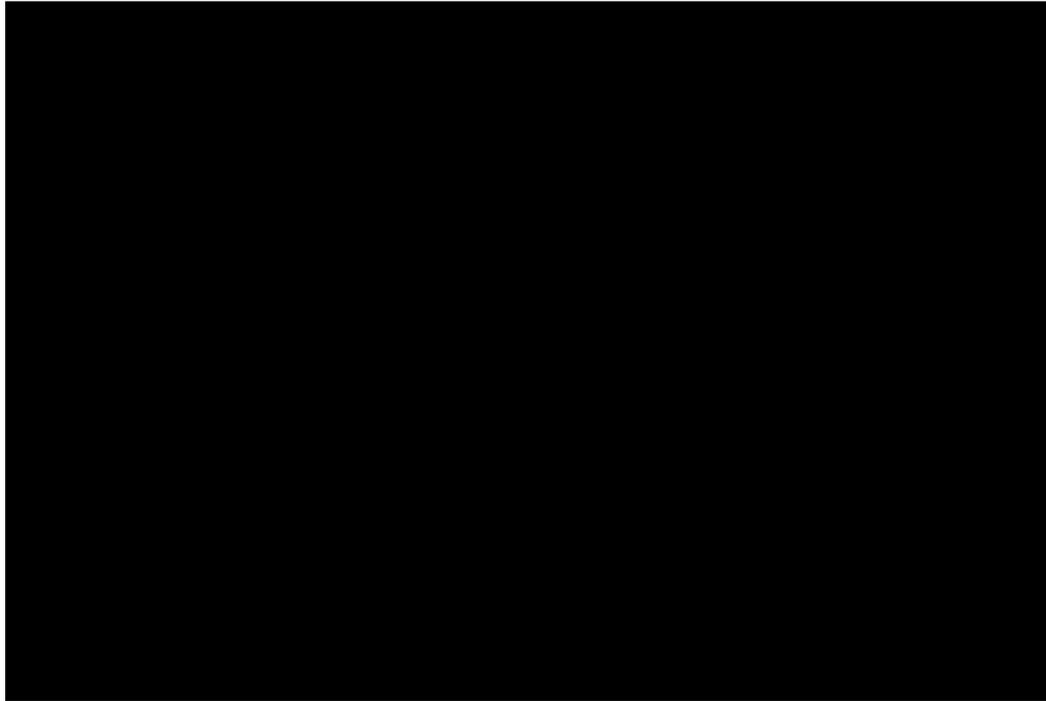
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CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY REVIEW

FAILURE OF SOVIET LUNAR ATTEMPT

The USSR's unsuccessful lunar mission on 4 January-- the first since April 1960-- was apparently designed to soft-land an instrumented package on the moon. Information of the characteristics of the surface of the moon is important in the early design of a manned lunar landing mission. If the USSR intends to land a man on the moon ahead of the US, exploratory missions similar to the 4 January attempt are overdue.

The lunar mission, designated Sputnik XXXIII, was launched from Tyuratam and placed in parking orbit around the earth, where it has remained because of the failure of the fourth stage to inject the payload into a trajectory toward the moon. This final stage has been involved in six failures out of eight attempts to launch interplanetary probes. The USSR did not announce the launching or the subsequent failure of the mission.

The identification of this operation as a lunar rather than a planetary mission is based on the launch time, the

circularity of the orbit and its low altitude, and the fact that no planets were favorably located at the time. If the mission had been successful, the spacecraft flight time would have been about 80 hours, allowing for arrival in the vicinity of the moon one day after the optimum conditions for observation from the earth. The landing would have occurred at a point near the lunar equator, about 60 degrees to the left of the earth-moon line, somewhere in the Ocean of Storms. Thus, it appears almost certain that the Soviets attempted to soft-land an instrumented package on the moon, although a lunar orbiting mission cannot be completely ruled out.

Neither photography of the far side of the moon nor an unmanned circumlunar mission would have been feasible with this launch time.

The next opportunity to repeat the 4 January mission will be in early February, when the position of the moon will provide similar illumination conditions.

