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ROBERT E. FULTON, JR.

NEWTOWN, CONNECTICUT

REPORT NUMBER : B(I,II,III,IV), Nonr. 1126(00).

15 April, 1955.

SECTION I

REPORT

on

OPERATIONAL FEASIBILITY TESTS OF "SKYHOOK" TECHNIQUE FOR IN-FLIGHT PICK-UP OF MEN AND MA-TERIALS WITH HIGH PERFORMANCE AIRCRAFT

under

OFFICE OF NAVAL RESEARCH CONTRACT Nonr. 1126(00)

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THIS REPORT COMPILED BY

ROBERT E. FULTON, JR.

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REPORT No. B (I) Nonr. 1126(00). DATE 15 April, 1955. PAGE

REPORT TITLE HIGH-PERFORMANCE AIRCRAFT PICK-UP, SKYHOOK.

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SECTION I

Definition of SKYHOOK Technique	1
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^{* *} Section IV is a l6mm kodachrome motion picture film taken during conduct of Operational Feasibility Tests at NAAS, El Centro, Calif.

Assignment calls for development of a method by which IN-FLIGHT-FICK-UP of men and materials can be accomplished with high-performance aircraft.

One such method is the SKYHOOK TECHNIQUE which works as follows:

- 1. Balloon (or other lifting device) supports top end of a line approximately 500 feet above ground.
- 2. Load is attached to bottom of line.
- 3. Aircraft intercepts near top of line with "yoke" mounted on nose.
- 4. Load rises almost vertically, gradually alters to horizontal travel.
- 5. Load is winched into aircraft.

REPORT HO. B(I) NONR. 1126(00). DATE 5 APRIL, 1955 PAGE 2.

MINOR THE LIGH-PERFORMANCE AIRCRAFT PICK-UP

" SKYHOOK" TECHNIQUE.



AIRCRAFT IS EQUIPPED WITH YOKE ON NOSE.

BALLOON (OR OTHER LIFTING DEVICE)
SUPPORTS LINE WITH LOAD ATTACHED AT BOTTOM ..

TO HORIZONTAL TRAVEL .



LOAD IS WINCHED OTAI AIRCRAFT.

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REPORT No. B (I) Nonr.1126(00). DATE 15 April 1955 PAGE 3.

REPORT TITLE HIGH-PERFORMANCE AIRCRAFT PICK-UP, SKYHOOK.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This Report deals with tests conducted to prove feasibility of this technique.

Three separate test programs have been successfully conducted to date:

- 1. Initial tests with Contractor-owned and operated very small aircraft and light loads to prove basic theory.
- 2. "Safety tests" with somewhat larger Contractor-owned and operated aircraft, heavier loads and higher speeds to study motions of picked up load and top end of line to determine if any danger to aircraft might exist when conducting tests with large, higher speed operational equipment.
- 3. Preliminary large-scale feasibility tests conducted at NAAS El Centro, California, with full scale Navy owned and operated equipment and heavy loads.

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REPORT TITLE HIGH-PERFORMANCE AIRCRAFT PICK-UP, SKYHOOK,

RESULTS

All three of these programs have been successfully conducted, the final one achieving the following standard of results:

- # Aircraft: P2V
- # Intercept speed: 125 knots
- * Loads picked up: up to and including 300 pounds.
- * Average G's imposed on load: 7.54 (Minimum 5, maximum 10.2).
- * Duration of maximum G's: 1 second.
- * Minimum altitude of pick-up aircraft need never be below 400 feet.
- * Pick-up path of lead would clear 100 ft. high obstacle less than 100 feet away.
- * No problem encountered intercepting the lift-line with large, operational type aircraft.

In all more than 50 successful pick-ups were accomplished during all three phases of testing.

OPERATIONAL PHOTO SEQUENCE

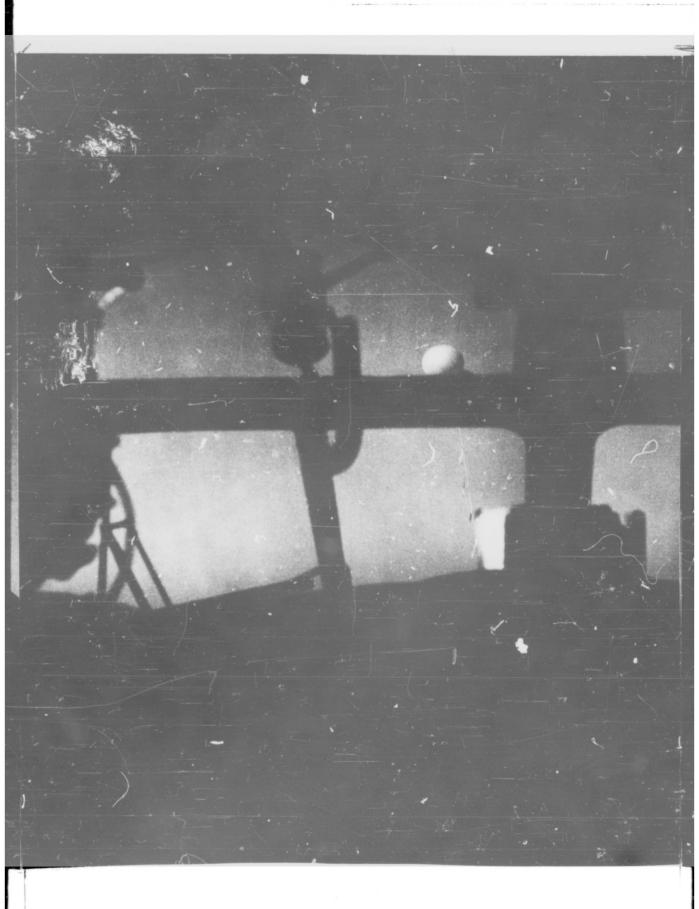
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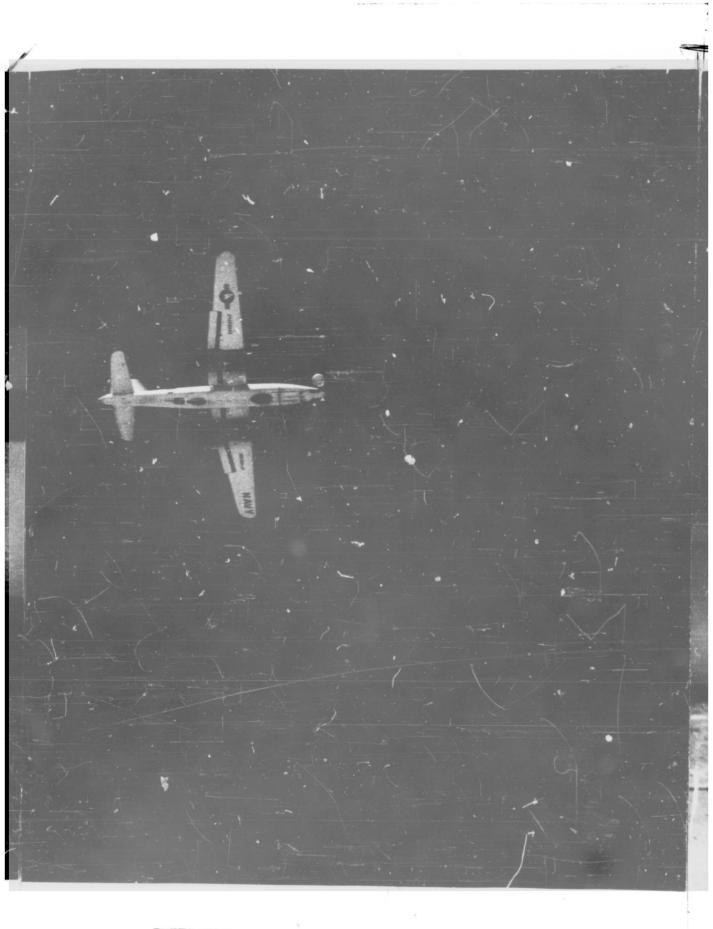
RENDEZVOUS

(P24)

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APPROACH
(500 foot altitude)



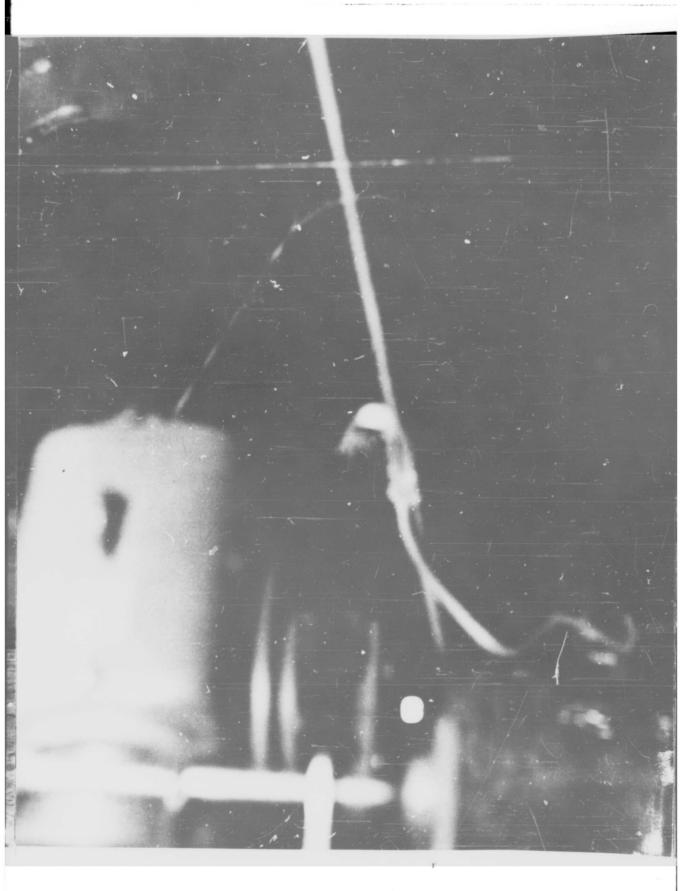
INTERCEPT

(125 knots)

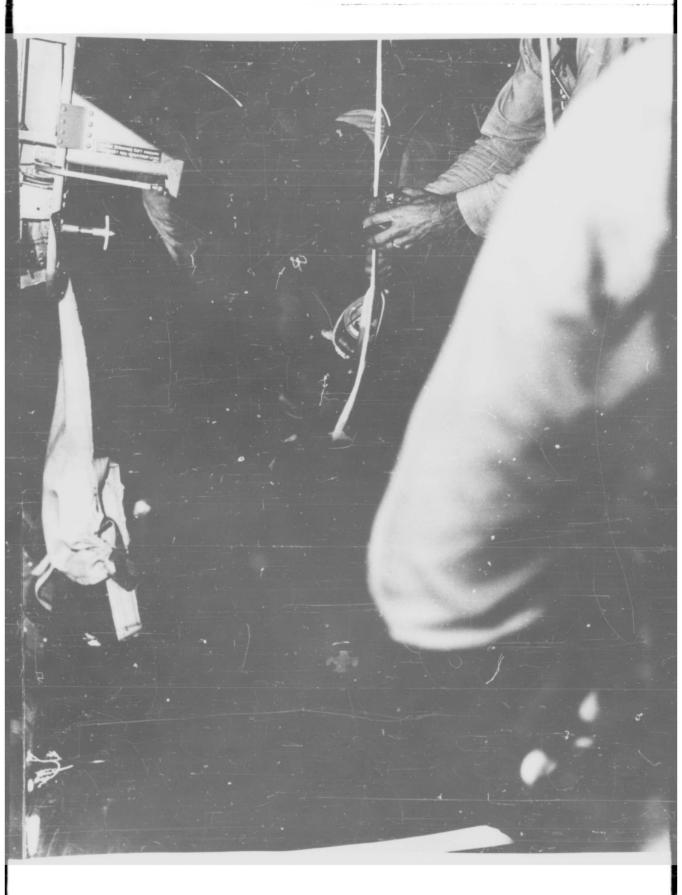


"LOAD AWAY"

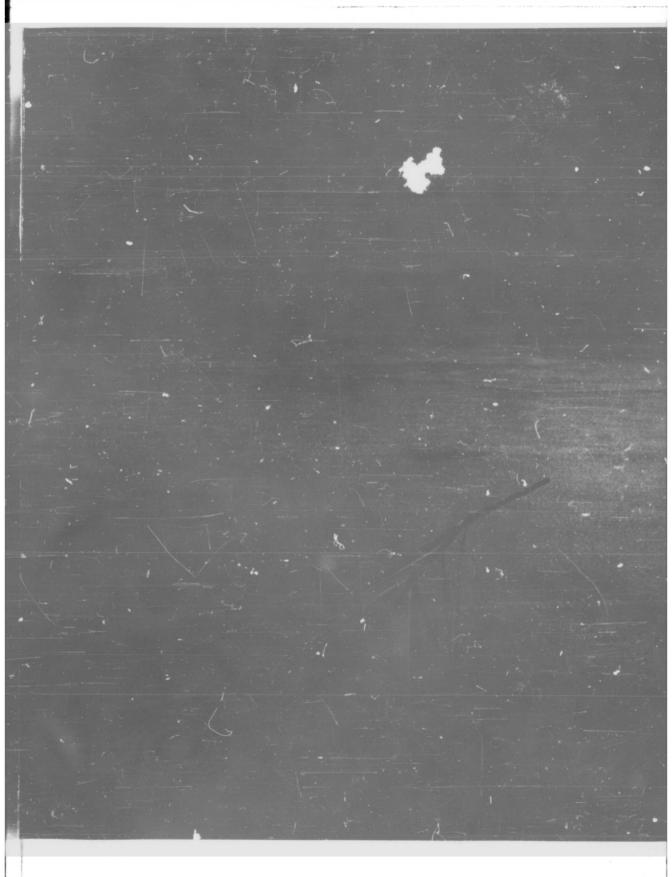
(300 pounds)



HAUL IN (1 minutes)



ABOARD

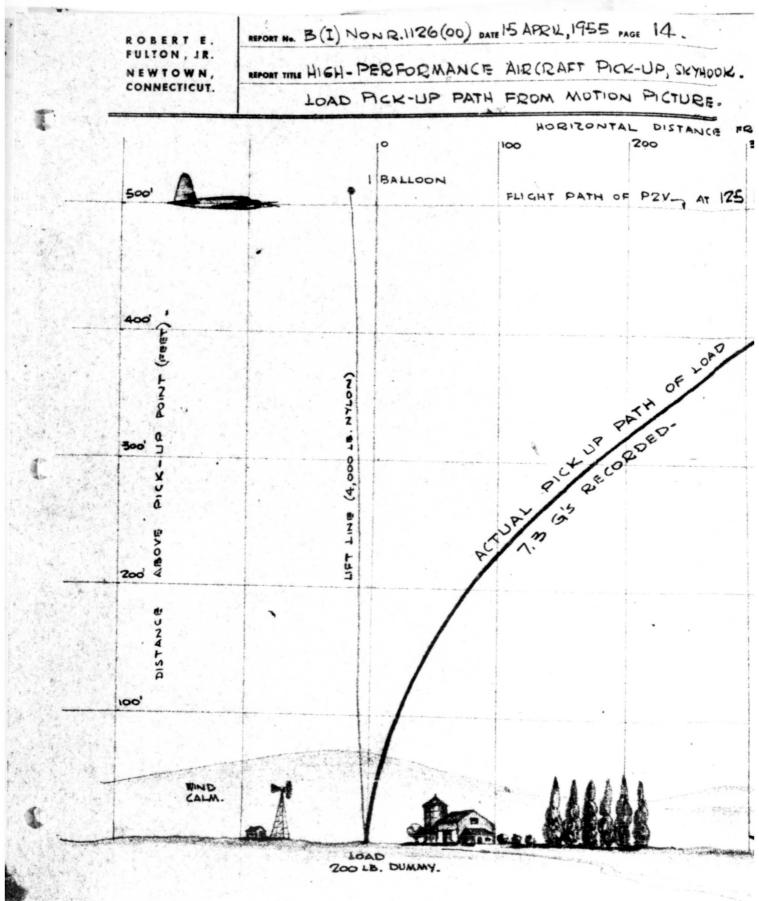


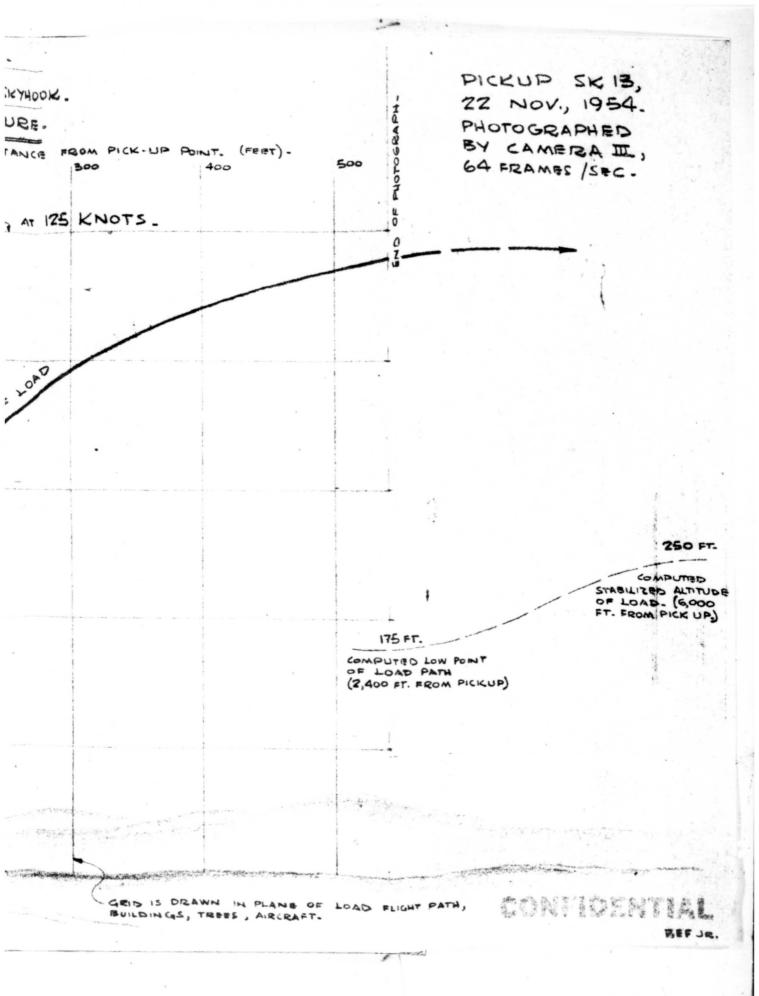
RETURNING TO BASE
(Up to 2,000 miles)

COMPIDENTIA

TYPICAL PICK-UP PATH OF LOAD

Accompanying typical curve is taken directly from motion picture film recording path of 200 pound load picked up with 500 foot lift-line at aircraft speed of 125 kncts



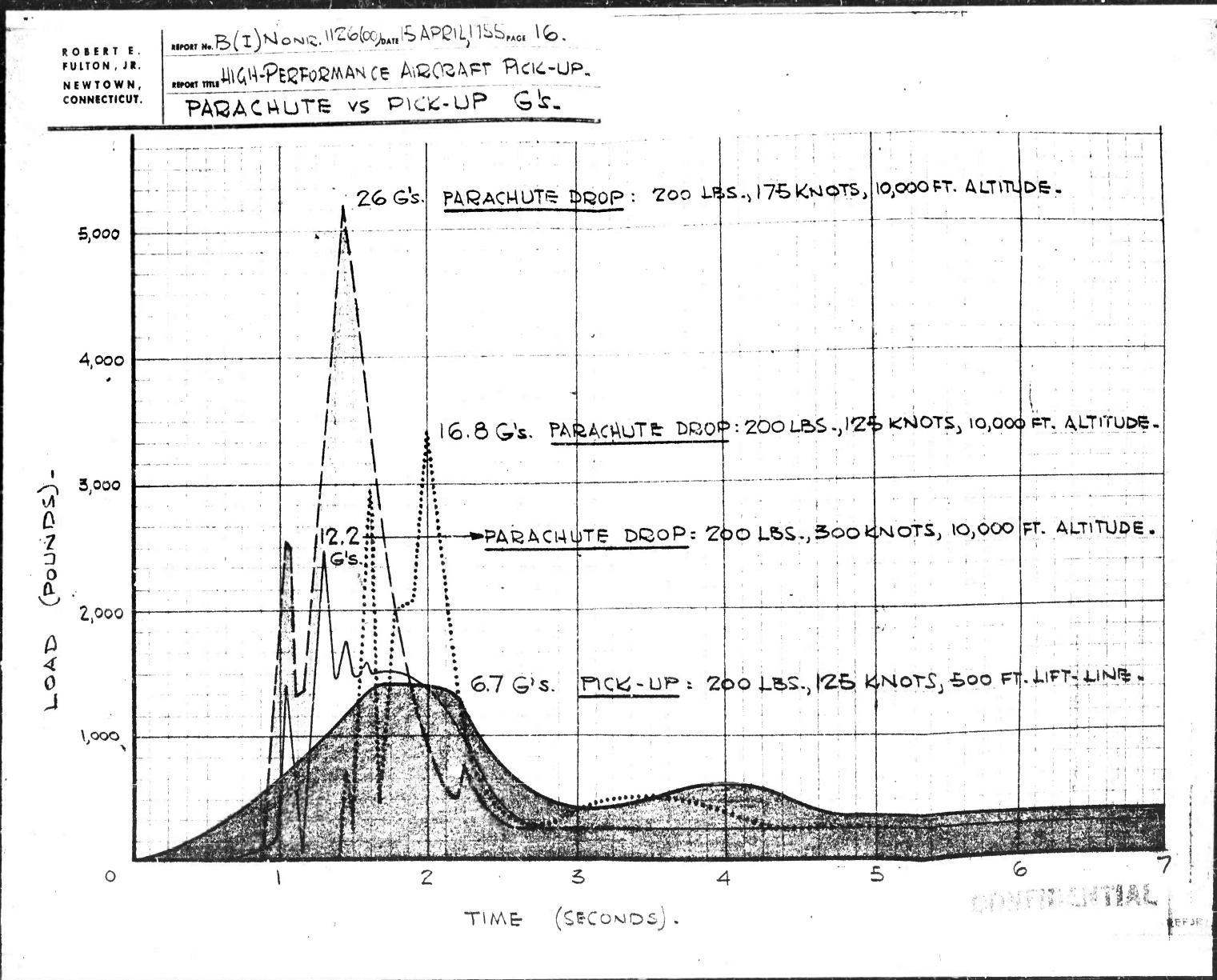


COMPARATIVE "O" LOADS, PICK-UP VS PARACHUTE

Full scale pick-ups produced "G" leads ranging from 5.0 to 10.2 G's (most of them were approximately 7.5) with maximum duration of less than \(\frac{1}{2} \) second.

These are well within the physical loads which a human can withstand.

This is graphically demonstrated by accompanying direct comparison of SKYHOOK pick-up load curve and those of several typical parachute jumps



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REPORT WILL HIGH-PERFORMANCE AIRCRAFT PICK-UP, SKYHOOK.

CONCLUSION

The SKYHOOK technique has proven that it can be used for full-scale pick-up work with operational type aircraft.

This technique has demonstrated the important advantages that it can:

- 1. Perform reliably
- 2. Be carried out swiftly
- 3. Be accomplished with only one aircraft (large or small)
- 4. Does not require much equipment or training.

RECOMMENDATION

For operational service, pick-up equipment should be in KIT FORM so that where desirable operation can be controlled from the rescue aircraft. (Party being picked up would have only to proceed to bottom of lift-line and get into harness or bag.)

There would also be cases, however, where control of the equipment from below would be preferable (such as on shipboard).

Accompanying sketches indicate form in which such KITS are conceived and can be operated under various types of conditions

RECOMMENDATION continued on Page 23.

CHT BERTH

REPORT No. B(I) NONR 1176 (00) DATE IS APRIL 1955 PAGE 19. ROBERT E. TYPE-A KIT-FULTO'N , JR. REPORT TITLE HIGH PERFORMANCE AIR(RAFT FICK-UP, SKYHOOK. NEWTOWN, CONNECTICUT. TOTALLY AIR-OPERATED KIT FOR USE WHERE QUICKEST FORM OF PICKUP IS ESSENTIAL. PRELIMINARY EXPERIMENTS IN RELEASE OF FULLY-INFLATED BALLOONS FROM IN-FLIGHT AIRCRAFT (125 KNOTS) HAVE BEEN REPRATEDLY SUCCESSFUL, THEREBY PROVING THE FEASIBILITY OF THIS PROPOSAL. BECAUSE IT'S MASS IS SO SMALL, BALLOON STANDS STILL IN AIR VIRTUALLY INSTANTANEOUSLY UPON RELEASE, THUS AVOIDING SUBJECTION TO STRONG AIR FORCES. INERTIA OF LIFT-LINE IS ALSO NEGLIGIBLE EXCEPT AT BOTTOM WHERE HARNESS (OR BAG) IS ATTACHED. THIS IS ELIMINATED BY USE OF SMALL PILOT-PARACHUTE WHICH SWINGS INTO ACTION IS SOON AS BALLOON IS RELEASED FROM AIRCRAFT. STREAMING LIFT-LINE. LOADING KIT(S). STREAMING BALLOON IN CON-(ESTIMATED WEIGHT! SO LES.) TAINER -RELEASING BALLOON FROM (5) SMALL PARACHUTE ABSORBS 6 LIFT-LINE DESCENDING. CONTAINER . (SEE ABOVE NOTE.) PROCEEDING TO FULLY RIGGED MERTIA OF HARNESS. (CONTAINER PULLED INTO AIRCRAFT) -LIFT-LIME (BASY TO FIND).

(B) GETTING INTO BAG(OR HARNESS) (O) PICKING-UP.

(6) HALLING IN.

O RETURNING TO BASE (WITH L'LL EQUIPMENT)

ASPORT NO. 3 (I) NONE. 1126(00) - DATE 15 APRIL 1955 PAGE 20.

METORY TIME HIGH-PERFORMANCE AIR (RAFT PICK-UP, SKYHOOK

TYPE-B KIT.

AIR SUPPLIED KIT FOR USE WHERE TIME PERMITS OR KIT MAY BE STORED FOR LATER USE

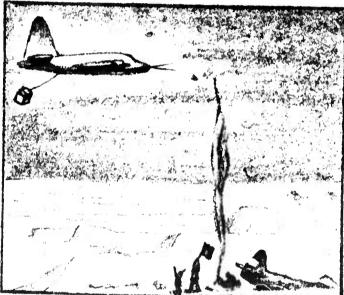
EQUIPMENT FOR THIS KIT IS ESSENTIALLY BEFINARENT OF UNITS USED DURING THE OPERATIONAL FEASIBILITY TESTS .

COMPLETE KIT WILL CONTAIN BALLOONS, HELIUM CYLINDERS, CONTROL VALVE AND MANIFOLD, LIFT-LINE COMPLETE WITH "KNOTS", BUFFERS, HARNESS (OR BAG) AND ASSOCIATED HARDWARE.

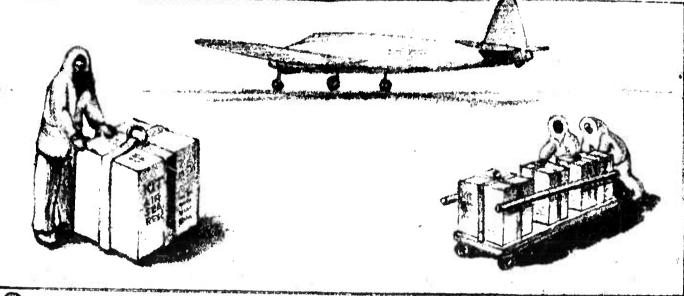
DROP-CHUTE WILL CLIP ON OUTSIDE OF

KITE-KITS SHOULD ALSO BE MADE UP FOR USE IN STRONG WINDS.

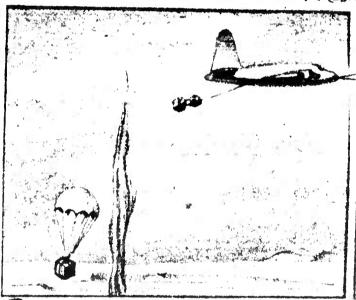
CONFIDENTIAL



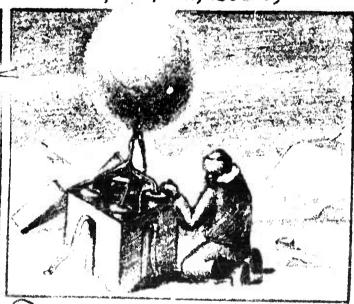
EJECTING KIT-



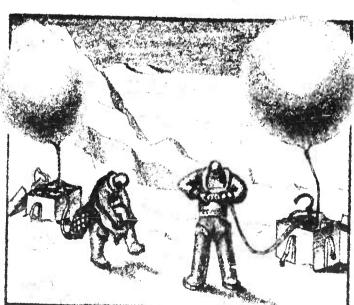
KIT DIMENSIONED TO FIT THRU HATCH OF ANY AIRCRAFT THAT MAY BE ASSIGNED TO OPERATIONAL PICK-UP WORK (ESTIMATED 20"W, 30"L, 30"H, 150 LES.)



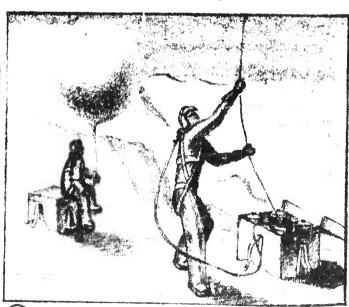
3 PARACHUTE DESCENT.

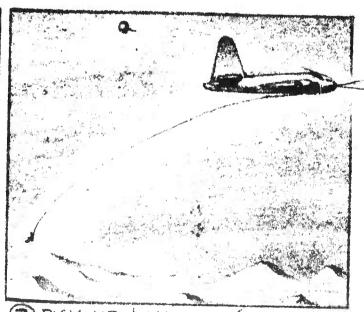


SINGLE - OPERATION INFLATION.



3 INTO HARNESS (OR BAG), BALLOON 6 PAYING OUT LIFT-LINE. & LIFT-LINE ALREADY ATTACHED.





PICK-UP & HAUL IN (MAXIMUM) TOTAL OF & MINUTES PER MAND.

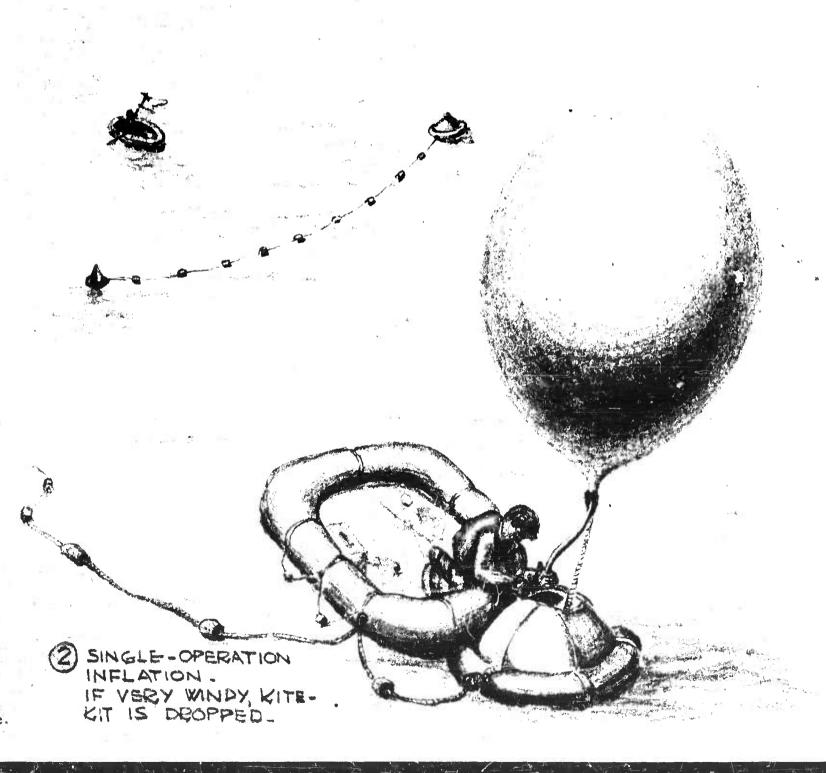
REPORT No. B (I) NONE 1126 (00) DATE 15 APRIL, 1955 PAGE 21_

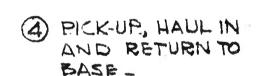
TYPE A OR B KIT FOR AIR-SEA RESCUE OPERATIONS.

() AIRCRAFT FLIES TO LEBWARD OF RAFT, DROPS CORK-FLOATED NYLON LINE WITH BUOY AND FLOATING KIT ON OPPOSITE ENDS.

RAFT DRIFTS INTO LINE -





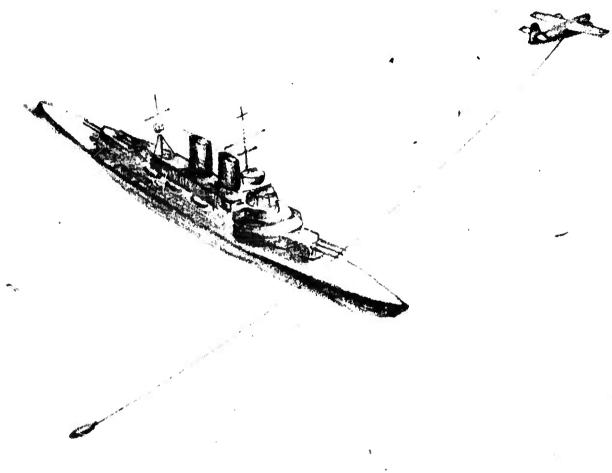


3 INTO HARNESS -

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TYPE B KIT FOR SURFACE VESSEL OPERATIONS.



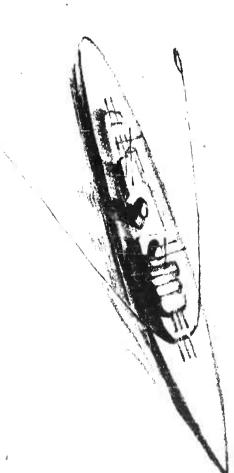
(ABOVE)

FOR DELIVERY OF MESSAGES, NYLON LINE IS FLOWN LOW OVER BOW OF SURFACE VESSEL.

(RIGHT)

BOTH ENDS OF LINE ARE.
ATTACHED TO IDENTICAL
FLOATS, ONE CONTAINING
PAPERS.

WHEN DROPPEDS LINE STREAMS AFT FROM BOTH SIDES OF VESSEL, CONTAINERS ARE READILY HAULED ABOARD



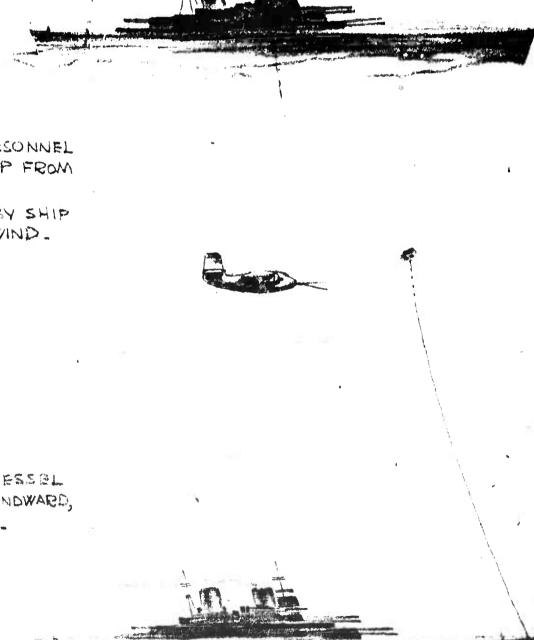


MESSAGES OR PERSONNEL CAN BE PICKED UP FROM VESSEL .

BALLOON IS USED BY SHIP TRAVELLING WITH WIND.

(RIGHT)

WHEN SURFACE VESSEL IS TRAVELLING TO WINDWARD, KITE MAY BE USED.



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REPORT TITLE HIGH-PERFORMANCE AIRCRAFT PICK-UP, SKYHOOK.

RECOMMENDATION continued.

Development of operational equipment in final form is largely a matter of refining the test units which have proven their ability to work but can now be brought into better relative proportion as a result of the test experience gained.

The form of the above-outlined KITS, along with standardized hardware (yoke, winch, etc.) for use in the aircraft, should be established and tested.

Tests should include large number of dummy pick-ups and simulation of all possible operational situations before personnel pick-ups are accomplished.

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SECTION III

(Comments and drawings regarding design of test and operational equipment)

DATE 15 April, 1955. PAGE

ROBERT E. FULTON, JR. NEWTOWN, CONNECTICUT.

REPORT TITLE HIGH-PERFORMANCE AIRCRAFT PICK-UP, SKYHOOK.

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SECTION IV

Tris Section consists of a 16mm Kadaohrome motion picture film taken during Operational Feasibility Tests at NAAS El Centro, California.

Running time is approximately 30 minutes.

Material illustrated includes the following:

- I. A typical SKYHOOK pick-up operation.
- 2. Yoke installation on P2V.
- 3. Winch, crook, snatch-block, clamp-knot, auxiliary winch.
- 4. Loads and fittings (Sand bags, dummies, Ex-line tensiometer, Brinnel blocks).
- 5. Lines, markers, knots (Tower testing, buffers vs windshield).
- 6. Balloons and gas
- 7. Pilotage (Yoke camera, visibility, vertical and horizontal latitude of intercept).
- 8. Photographic equipment
- 9. Paths of picked-up loads