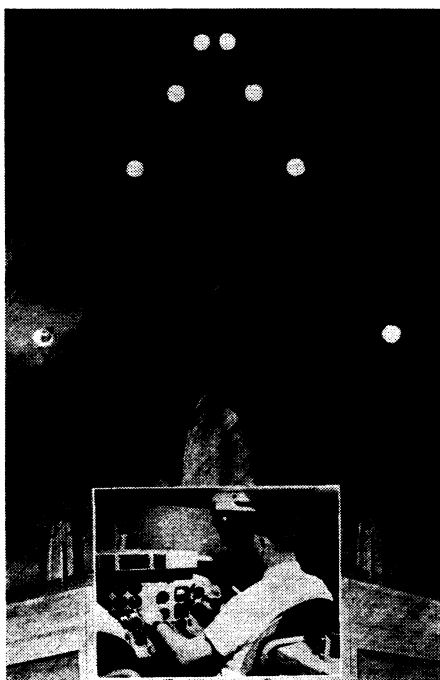


The ground transmitters housed along each side of the runway transmit pulses about one microsecond in length at a rate of about 400 every second. The actual microwave equipment itself is a conventional magnetron unit such as has been employed by radar for many years. The whole assembly is packaged in weather-proof housing about the size of the larger runway border lights.

The complex airborne receiver unit weighs only 20 pounds, and Bendix engineers are currently looking for ways to reduce the weight still further.

The receiver measures the angle between the longitudinal axes of the aircraft and the bearing to each ground transmitter. The data is plotted in rectangular coordinates as bright points on the screen of a cathode-ray tube similar to that in a TV set. Such a plot results in a picture in perspective of the array of transmitters as though they were a row of lights against a dark background at night.

For all this to do any good, it is necessary to collate this technical data and give it to the pilot in usable form. It is not sufficient to present the information to him on a small screen on the instrument panel, where it becomes just one more instrument which must



Bendix Corporation

MICROVISION RUNWAY—White dots on a screen in an aircraft's cockpit outline the runway so the pilot (insert) can see it through fog or clouds.

be interpreted. The information must be presented in such a way that, as far as possible, the pilot can actually see the runway.

To do this, a lens system was developed to form an image of the cathode-ray picture at great distance. Then a combining mirror, one which acts as a mirror for the Microvision picture and as a window for direct sight, was used to show the pilot the electronic image overlaid against the real scene in front of him.

He thus sees the reflected Microvision image superimposed on his normal view through the windscreen, the mirror acting as a window. By proper design and alignment of the system, the image is put in perspective, both in distance and angle.

Each Microvision ground transmitter will appear to the pilot as a runway light. Since the Microvision light dots represent actual points on the ground and not an interpretive instrument guide, they keep the pilot accurately oriented at all times. The border line between visual and instrument landings has been eliminated. With this system, the pilot sees all the time.

The airborne equipment is expected to cost about \$10,000 per plane.

If the anticipated FAA approval comes through for the new system, major airlines are reported ready to go ahead with the installation of Microvision. Then at last, after more than 60 years of battling nature's barriers to vision for the air, "blind flying" will have passed into aviation history.

• Science News, 89:222 April 2, 1966

TECHNOLOGY

Camouflage Detection

► **HIDING MISSILES**, tanks and other objects on the ground from observers in the air has been made even more difficult by a new system that takes black-and-white pictures and then shows them in color.

Four adjacent lenses on a single camera take identical photographs, but through different colored filters—blue, green, red and near-infrared. The resulting pictures appear side-by-side on a special film that is sensitive to light from the ultraviolet end of the spectrum all the way through the visible range to infrared.

Positive transparencies made from the film are shown on a special projector, also equipped with four filtered lenses, which can superimpose any combination of the images on a screen. The result is that all the shades of black, gray and white in a normal black-and-white photo are replaced with bright colors, making the contrasts between objects more apparent.

Inventors of the system are Edward Yost and S. Wenderoth of Fairchild Space and Defense Systems, Syosset, Long Island, N.Y. They reported it to the American Society of Photogrammetry meeting in Washington, D.C.

The system works best at detecting camouflage. Vegetation such as fresh-cut tree branches, often laced into overhead netting to conceal military equipment from air reconnaissance, does not show up on ordinary infrared photos as long as the foliage is green. But, Mr. Yost told *SCIENCE SERVICE*, the chlorophyll content of

just-cut foliage drops sharply about an hour after it is cut. The foliage then appears different to the multi-photo system.

Therefore, while a tank beneath the foliage would not be visible, the greenery used for camouflage would stand out sharply against the rest of the picture, perhaps as a bright blue area on a pink background.

Though started as a company project, the system has now aroused the interest of the U.S. Air Force. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration is also investigating the system for future use.

• Science News, 89:223 April 2, 1966

TECHNOLOGY

Computer Prints Braille Hundred Times Faster

► **BRILLE** material is now being "written" by an electronic computer that is reportedly 100 times faster than any such standard device now in use.

Made by Honeywell Electronic Data Processing in Wellesley Hills, Mass., the electronic printer takes the place of manually-operated devices which require as long as four or five months to copy a fourth-grade text.

The printer, which produces about 300 braille letters, or "cells," a second, is being used at the University of Southern California's computer sciences laboratory, Los Angeles.

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TECHNOLOGY

Allies Get 21-Station Portable Radio Network

► **A SYSTEM** of 21 truck-mounted radio stations that can move almost anywhere is being built for the Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Powers in Europe (SHAPE).

The half-watt microwave transmitters will be able to carry two dozen telephone and telegraph channels simultaneously, broadcasting from antennas that unfold to a height of almost 100 feet.

The network, to be delivered early next year, is being made by the Raytheon Company's Italian affiliate, Selena S.p.A.

No tubes will be used anywhere in the system due to possible damage from traveling over rough terrain. The entire electronic system will be solid state, or transistorized.

Seven of the stations will be simple "line repeaters," which relay a signal in one electronic ear and out the other without adding any transmissions of their own. Such relays are necessary because microwave radio will only operate over line-of-sight distances.

There will be practically no time required for erecting the stations, so SHAPE's network can be put to use as soon as the trucks reach their locations.

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