

NEWSMIR.073 15 FEBRUARY 1989

MORE INFO ABOUT CHANGED PLANS:

During radiotraffic on 15 Febr. 1989 (orb. 17214, 1001-1011UTC), Volkov answered questions of a correspondent. The most relevant was the answer on a question about the postponement for technical reasons, of the launch a huge module for MIR in March '89. The cosmonauts felt very sad about this. Originally the launch had been planned for November 1988, so to be received and redocked by Titov and Manarov. If this plan had been executed Serebrov instead of Krikalyov would have been member of the crew launched on Nov. 26th. For Serebrov is the cosmonaut to work with the "space bicycle". At the moment Serebrov is still waiting for the same operation and the postponement of the launch of that module makes the participation of Serebrov in the next crew unsure. This fact has been confirmed by the Donbasy: they also are not sure that the next crew will be one with Serebrov. Meanwhile Volkov stated that the postponed has not been caused by technical problems aboard MIR. He stated not to know the real cause, but spoke about "possible imperfect technology and production and a bad planning". He added that he and his crewmates were busy enough with experiments and work, but they had been very pleased to do the interesting work with that module. In his opinion this work would be very important in the scientific field and also for the economic system of the S.U. From Volkov's words could be derived that the plans for the launch of 2 of such modules have been borne 3 years ago.

DLATION FLIGHT POLYAKOV STILL UNSURE:

Officially has been announced that Volkov and Krikalyov will return to earth on April 29th. 1989. It has not yet been decided whether Polyakov will remain aboard MIR after that date or not.

TRACKING SHIPS:

Kosmonavt Yuriy Gagarin (K. Yu. G. pronounced somewhat like "kjook") took over from Akademik Sergey Korolyov (Aa. Es Kaa.), possible not far from the Azores. Kosmonavt Vladimir Komarov (Kaa Vie Kaa) continued her duty.