

DECLASSIFIED IN PART

PER E.O. 12958

JGP, 8/5/99
Case No. 98-0099-F/3
THE WHITE HOUSE

~~TOP SECRET~~

WASHINGTON

LIMITED ACCESS

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: One-on-One Meeting with Prime Minister Shamir of Israel (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir
Ambassador Zalman Shoval

DATE, TIME AND PLACE: December 11, 1990; 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.
Oval Office

The President: I'm pleased that you are here, and we welcome your new Ambassador. Sorry we have not yet completed the paperwork (for Ambassador Shoval's credentials presentation). (U)

We understand the fears in Israel based on the current situation. I'm glad we have these private moments because I have some sensitive comments to make. (S)

If Saddam Hussein does not get out, we will take him out -- with overwhelming force. He may not realize it yet. Cheney can give you the details. I will use overwhelming force if required to force compliance with the U.N. resolutions. In the talks with the Iraqis, we are not going to negotiate -- we will just be informing them. I must ask for complete privacy for these comments. (TS)

First, we will respond. The Congress may be ambivalent but I am not; I am still thinking about how to handle them. (TS)

Second, there is no tradeoff against Israel. Nothing will be done at Israel's expense. No one has suggested such, but there won't be one at all. (S)

Third, I do understand the threat you face from Iraq. I thank you for your low profile posture. I know it isn't easy and that he threatens you all the time. If he attacks you, or if an attack becomes apparent, we have the capability to obliterate his military structure. We have a beautifully planned operation, calculated to demoralize him forever. If it must be followed by a ground campaign, we are ready. I don't want to lose a single soldier, but I am determined. (TS)

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Per E.O. 12958, Section 3.1 (g)
by National Archives

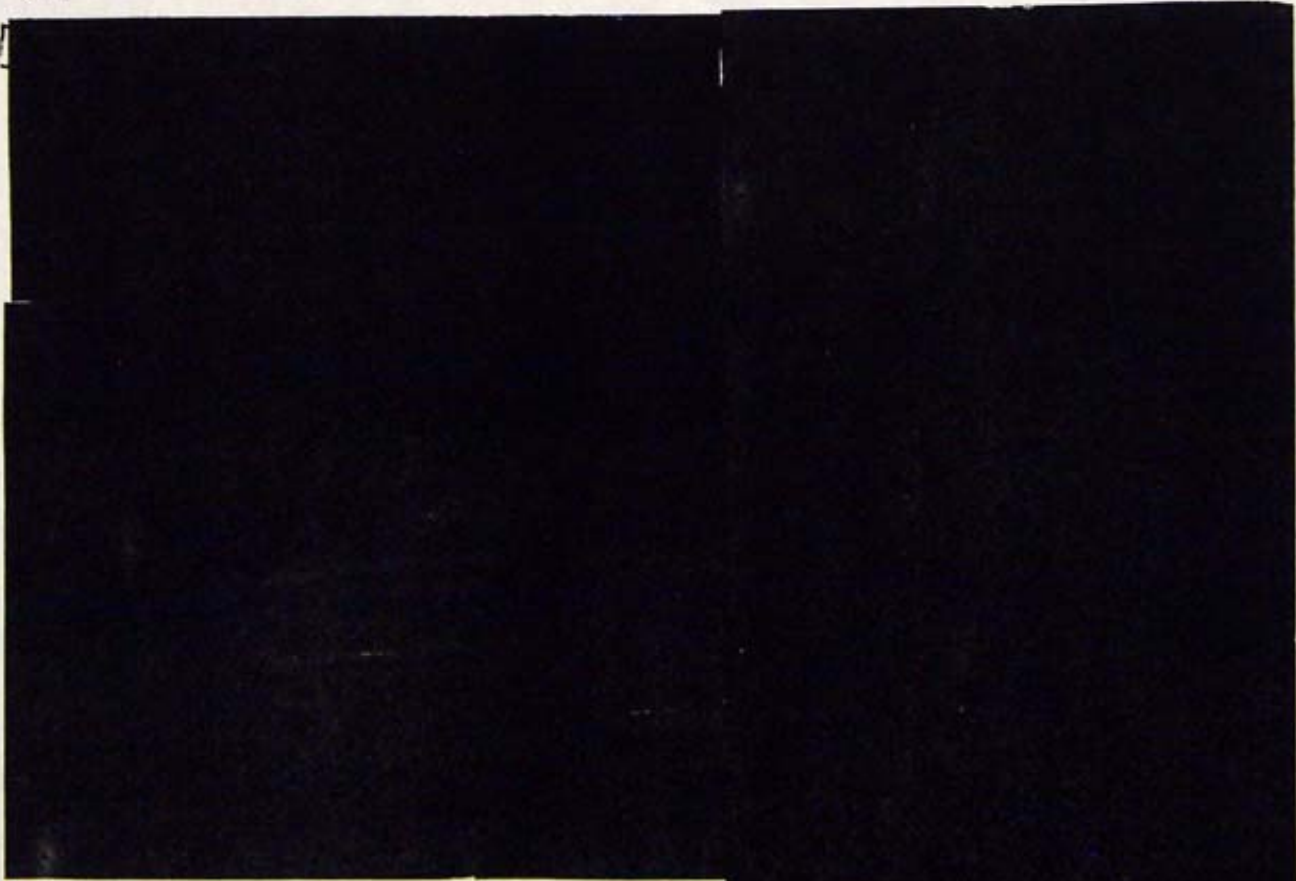
DP

A preemptive strike by Israel would be very bad. I know your position about responding to an attack and I respect it. But if we could consult first, our preference would be for Israel not to respond until you have seen our reply. We have common objectives and I would like to fulfill them. If there was an attack on Israel, I am concerned that the coalition would stay together for a massive response. (TS)

I also want to give you warning of a decision to use force. You may need to batten down the hatches because if he sees an attack coming and may take preemptive action. Well, I'm glad you're here and I want to get things on a better track. We have Palestinian problems but I haven't changed my mind on Israel. (S)

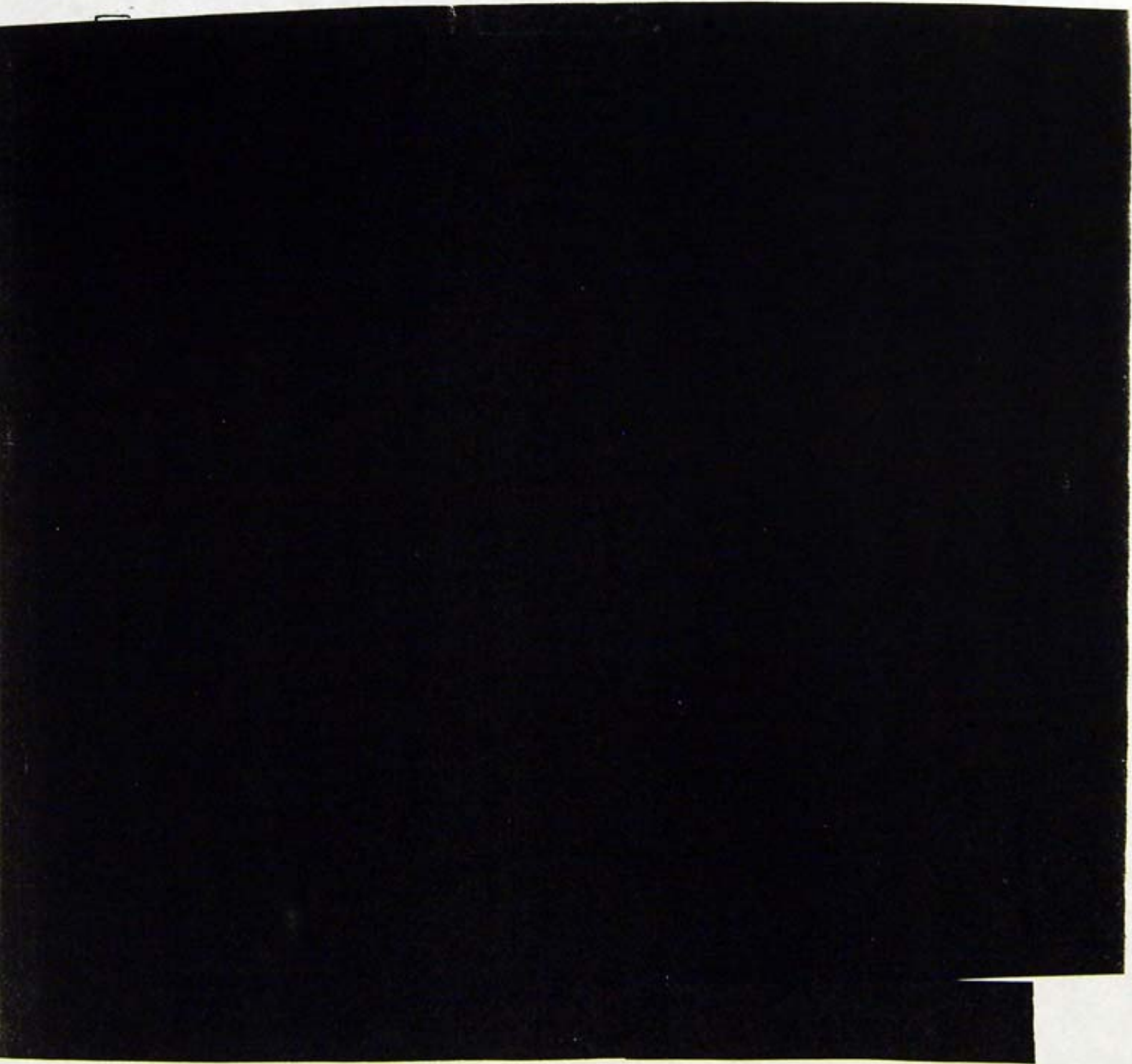
Prime Minister Shamir: Thank you. You have our full support for your stand. We know the difficulties of a democratic community to decide questions of war and peace. We would be happy if we could contribute something because we really want to help. (S)

My responsibility is only the security of my people. I am glad to hear your strong statement. I will say something in public. (S)

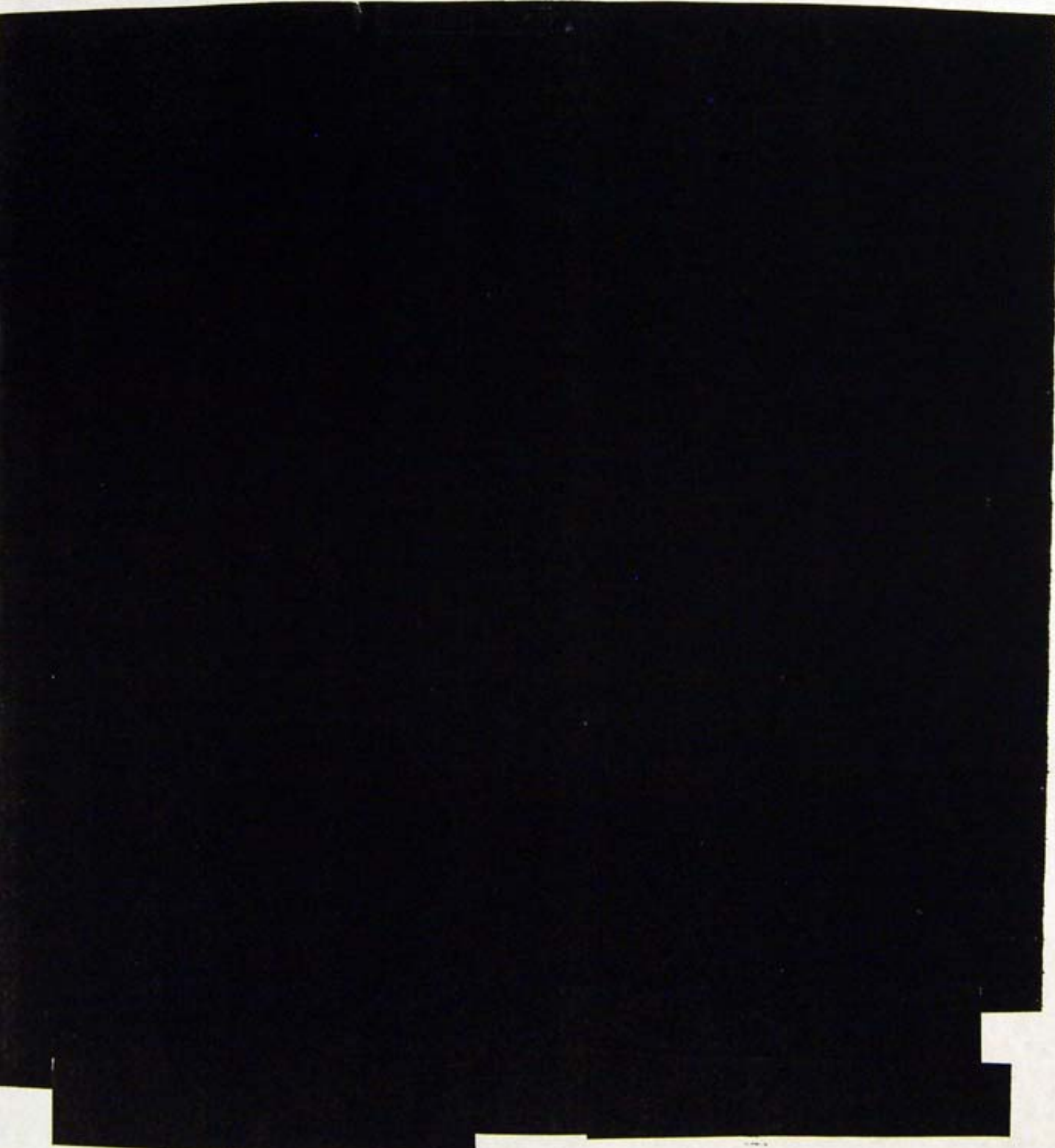


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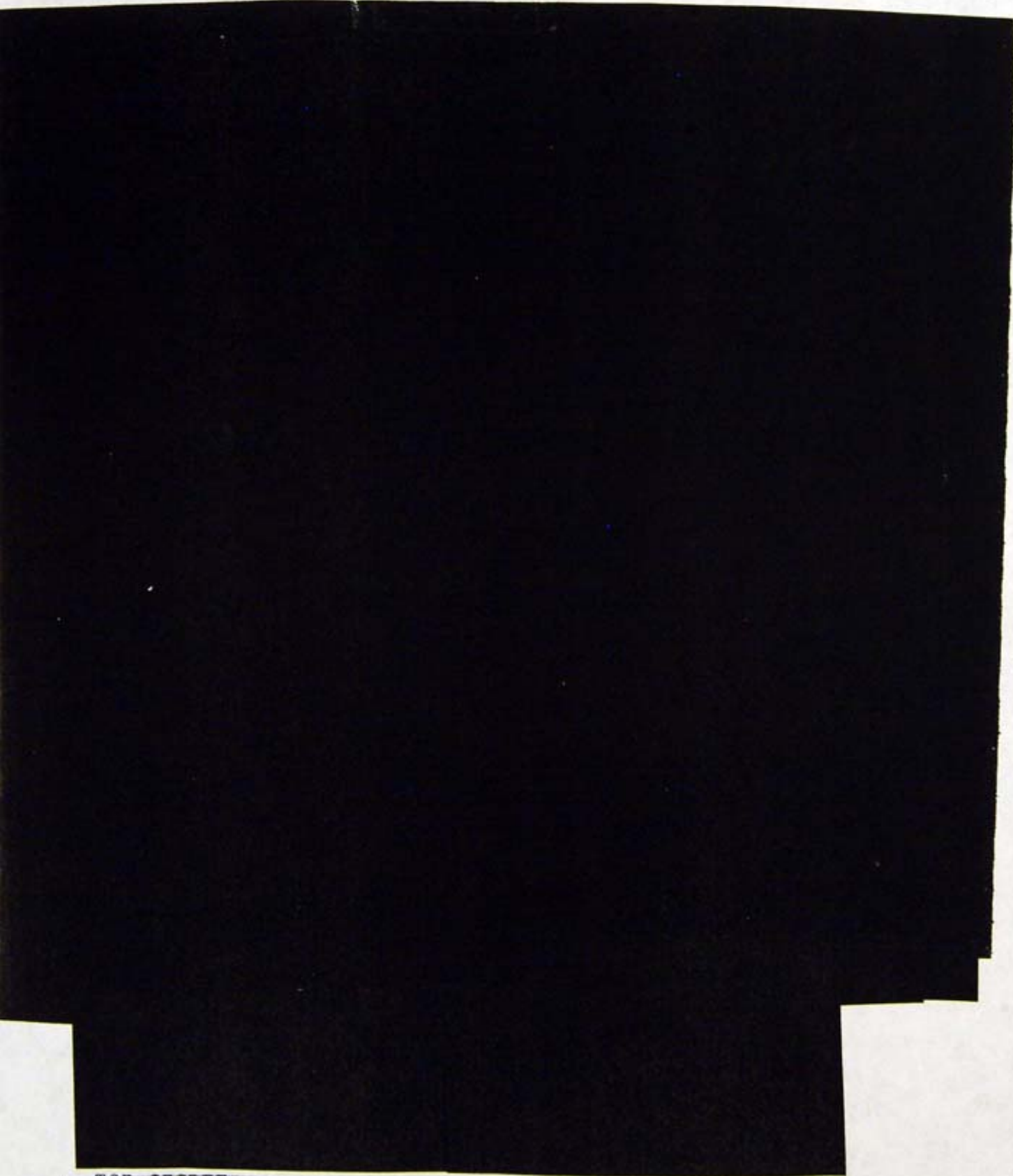
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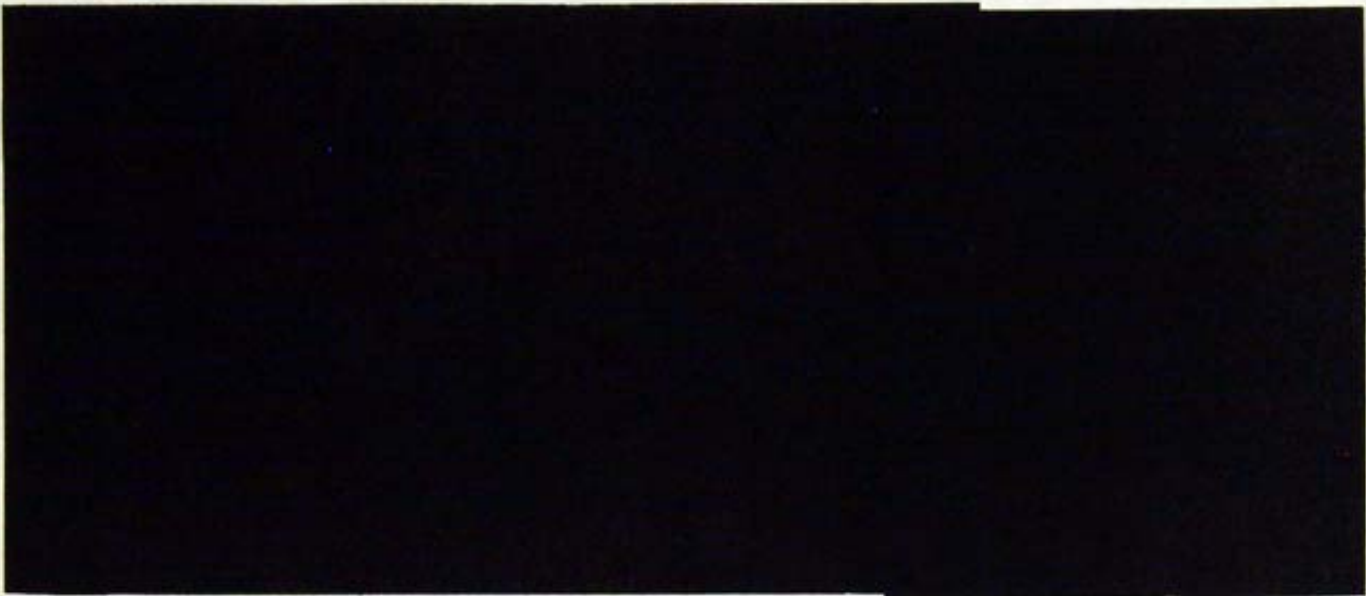
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