HOFFMAN ELECTRONICS
Los Angeles, California
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Electrical power for the instrumentation in the Explorer VI satellite is provided by means of solar energy converters manufactured by Hoffman Electronics Corporation.

Hoffman Laboratories Division, Los Angeles, provided Space Technology Laboratories, Inc., with 210 modules consisting of 100 silicon solar cells each, for the payload power supply. The modules were constructed with 50 cells on each side, which would produce approximately 3/4 watt of electricity under direct sunlight.

Solar cells are tiny wafers of specially treated silicon, which when exposed to light, convert approximately 10 per cent of the energy of the light into electrical energy. The Hoffman Semiconductor Division, Evanston, Illinois, is the principal manufacturer of these cells, which were developed initially by Bell Telephone Laboratories in 1953.

The cells used in the Explorer VI are similar to those used in the Vanguard I satellite, which was launched a year and a half ago and is still transmitting a signal via its solar-powered radio.

Success of the solar cells in the Vanguard has made them a major power source for equipment in satellites and space vehicles. They are presently being used or are under study for several space projects being undertaken by both NASA and the military services.

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