Polarized Light Reveals Stress in Machined Laminated Plastics

The problem:

Improper drilling (drill speed, feed speed, and drill sharpness) causes locked-in stresses in laminated plastic components such as terminal and printed circuit boards. These stresses cannot be detected under normal light by the human eye until they are exposed to the elevated temperatures of soldering operations, at which time they become clearly visible as fractures and delaminations.

The solution:

The drilled components are exposed to polarized light which renders clear to the human eye the locked-in stresses that will result in fractures and delaminations when the soldering procedure takes place. The figure

(continued overleaf)
illustrates the difference between viewing the same holes under normal light and polarized light.

**Notes:**
1. This technique detects stresses early in the production cycle before appreciable man-hours are invested in an item destined for rejection.
2. Inquiries concerning this innovation may be directed to:
   - Technology Utilization Officer
   - Lewis Research Center
   - 21000 Brookpark Road
   - Cleveland, Ohio 44135
   - Reference: B67-10383

   or

   - New Technology Representative
   - General Dynamics/Convair Division
   - Mail Zone 103-19
   - 5001 Kearny Villa Road
   - San Diego, California 92112
   - Reference: B67-10359

**Patent status:**
No patent action is contemplated by NASA.

Source: J. Frankowski of General Dynamics/Convair Division under contract to Lewis Research Center (LEW-10018)