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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

SPECIAL STAFF NOTE

April 15, 1959

From Defense:

DISCOVERER II. -- Analysis of radio beacon and telemetry signals from DISCOVERER II, received since 7:00 p.m. EST yesterday, indicates that the capsule did eject from the satellite on the 17th pass as programmed. The telemetry reports of ejection timing coincide within two minutes of a visual sighting of the capsule descending under parachute northwest of the city of Longyear on Norwegian Spitzbergen.

Appropriate contacts have been made with the Department of State and the Norwegian Government to arrange for a Norwegian land search of the probable landing area, supported by observation from USAF aircraft. The probable landing area is covered by several feet of snow and probability of capsule recovery through sighting of the orange parachute or through radar contact with the parachute's aluminum undercoating is low. In any case several days will be required to complete an adequate search of the relatively inaccessible area.

No publicity will be given to this search by the Department of Defense in accordance with the wishes of the Norwegian Government.

(The satellite was launched from Vandenberg AFB at 1318 PST on April 13. Its perigee was estimated at 152 statute miles, apogee 220 statute miles, period 90.5 minutes, and inclination angle 90.02 degrees. This successful test achieved: complex lift-off, and first and second stage functions; polar orbit within orbital parameter objectives for a vehicle with burnout weight of 1631 lbs.; vehicle stabilization; and proof of system tracking and computation capability.)



*Briefed to
JDE
17 Apr 59
JSD E*

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