

MONKEY

CAPE CANAVERAL, FLA., (AP)--THE ARMY FIRED A MONKEY INTO SPACE EARLY TODAY IN THE NOSE CONE OF A MISSILE. BUT THE CHANCES OF RECOVERING THE TINY RIDER ALIVE APPEARED SLIM.

THREE HOURS AFTER THE SPECTACULAR LAUNCHING OF THE JUPITER INTERMEDIATE RANGE BALLISTIC MISSILE AT 4 A.M. EST THERE STILL WAS NO ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE FATE OF THE LITTLE SQUIRREL MONKEY, NICKNAMED VARIOUSLY GORDO AND "LITTLE OLD RELIABLE."

"WE HAVEN'T GIVEN UP, WE'RE STILL TRYING, BUT THE CHANCES DON'T LOOK GOOD," ONE SOURCE CLOSE TO THE PROJECT SAID, REFERRING TO ATTEMPTS TO RECOVER THE MONKEY ALIVE FROM THE SOUTH ATLANTIC.

THIS WAS THE FIRST ATTEMPT BY AMERICAN SCIENTISTS, AS FAR AS IS KNOWN, TO FIRE A PRIMATE ON A BRIEF JOURNEY INTO SPACE AND BRING HIM BACK ALIVE.

IF SUCCESSFUL, IT WOULD BE THE FIRST TIME THAT ANYTHING ALIVE WAS RECOVERED FROM SPACE.

SCIENTISTS ALREADY KNOW FROM THE FLIGHT OF ABOUT 15 MINUTES THAT THE MONKEY FARED WELL AS HE SOARED SOME 600 MILES HIGH INTO SPACE.

THE MISSILE WARHEAD HIT THE PREDETERMINED TARGET AREA MORE THAN 1,500 MILES FROM THE LAUNCHING SITE. HOWEVER, INDICATIONS WERE THAT THE NAVY RECOVERY TEAM THAT AWAITED THE NOSE CONE'S RE-ENTRY INTO THE EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE APPARENTLY RAN INTO TROUBLE.

IF ALL HAD GONE WELL THE SUBMERGED CONE AND ITS PRECIOUS CARGO SHOULD HAVE BEEN RETRIEVED FROM THE ATLANTIC IN THE SPACE OF ABOUT TWO HOURS AT THE MOST.

AT 7 A.M. EST THERE STILL WAS NO OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT ON THE STATUS OF THE RECOVERY OPERATION.

JA836A 12/13

