

AMERICA LAUNCHES "EXPLORER"

At Cape Canaveral, Florida, the U.S. Army prepares the Jupiter C. rocket which is to send America's first artificial satellite on its orbit round the earth. The U.S. Navy have already tried to launch a satellite, and failed - though they are reported to be ready for a second attempt; and until an American satellite is safely in orbit, America feels her prestige is at stake. To track the rocket's flight, radar-controlled long-range cameras are ready for action; they will yield precious data, for Explorer is the first of perhaps a dozen satellites to be launched this year. Here it is, with its spinning stabiliser, on the nose of Jupiter C. - ready for the moment of firing.

She's away, and behaving perfectly - powered by a new fuel called "Hydne", about which everything is secret but the name. These are slow-motion pictures, for in fact Jupiter C. is out of sight in a few seconds - building up towards the speed of 18,000 miles an hour needed to put Explorer into free orbit. And it succeeds splendidly; Explorer is soon ringing the earth on an ellipse varying from 200 to 1,700 miles up. America's satellite is a fraction the weight of Russia's Sputniks - but it flies half as high again, and is more tightly packed with instruments. America's confidence soars again now that she, too, has broken through into Outer Space.