

World and Nation

Soviet spacecraft gets closest look at comet

Associated Press
MOSCOW — Jubilant scientists hailed a Soviet spacecraft's encounter with Halley's comet Thursday as a space triumph and said early data indicated smooth sailing for probes that will venture even nearer next week.

The crowded control room at Moscow's Institute for Space Research erupted in applause as images of the comet arrived nine minutes after Vega 1 passed 5,270 miles from it at 10:20 a.m. (2:20 a.m. EST).

The pictures provided the closest look at a comet and were believed to be the first view of a comet's icy core.

Television monitors showed color-enhanced images of a fiery red-brown center, believed to be the nucleus, surrounded by wide bands of yellow and blue. The core is be-

lieved to be about 2½ miles in diameter.

Vega 1 is the first of five probes scheduled to fly by the comet in the next eight days. Data from the missions will take months to analyze and are expected to provide an unprecedented glimpse into the origins of the universe.

Halley's comet, which is named after the English astronomer Edmund Halley, swings around the sun every 76 years and last was seen in 1910. On Thursday, it was about 105 million miles from Earth and 74 million miles from the sun, traveling about 104,000 mph.

Some of the most useful early data came from the only U.S. experiment aboard, a "dust counter" engineered by John Simpson, a physics professor at the University of Chicago.

Vega 2 is expected to pass within

4,986 miles of Halley's on Sunday.

The European Space Agency's Giotto probe is to pass within 310 miles of the comet Thursday. It has a television camera expected to provide the most vivid pictures of the comet's mysterious core.

One Japanese probe will pass the comet at a distance of about 93,960 miles Saturday, and a second one will swing within 6.9 million miles on Monday.

Most of the approximately 100 foreign scientists in Moscow to monitor the probe praised the Soviets for the sophistication of the Vega program and their willingness to share information.

Other countries taking part in the project include West Germany, France and Austria, as well Soviet bloc allies Poland, Bulgaria, East Germany and Czechoslovakia.

Satellite dishes

House attempts to resolve conflict on signal control

Associated Press
WASHINGTON — Urged on by thousands of letters from constituents, a House subcommittee on Thursday sought to balance the claims of people with backyard satellite dishes against TV programmers trying to keep control of the signals they beam down from orbit.

Major pay television services and the TV networks are beginning to scramble their satellite-delivered signals so those not authorized to see them can't watch.

Some 2 million Americans have purchased earth stations — satellite dishes — to pluck signals from the sky. They are worried that the money they spent — \$3,000 or more — will be wasted if all signals are scrambled.

Even if all of the companies that say they are going to scramble actu-

ally do, there still would be some 70 unscrambled channels available to dish owners, including C-SPAN, which delivers the House of Representatives debates.

So far, all of the cable networks with announced scrambling plans are using the same scrambling technology and those who wish to buy a \$400 decoder and pay a fee to watch the shows can do so. The cable industry and dish owners disagree over whether the decoders are readily available.

One bill would delay scrambling for two years to make sure decoders are available and systems are in place to allow for subscribing to the program services.

Cable operators say they must scramble to prevent bars, motels and

some foreign countries from receiving the signals and making a profit without having to pay any copyright or other fees.

Broadcasters want to scramble because programs leaving the networks do not contain locally inserted commercials, which are the lifeblood of local stations.

Members of the House telecommunications subcommittee expressed concern that the few Americans who live too far from TV transmitters to receive any programming would be shut out of network and popular cable news and entertainment programming if scrambling continues.

Rep. Al Swift, D-Wash., said it is not true that "any solution that suits urban America is adequate for the rest of America."

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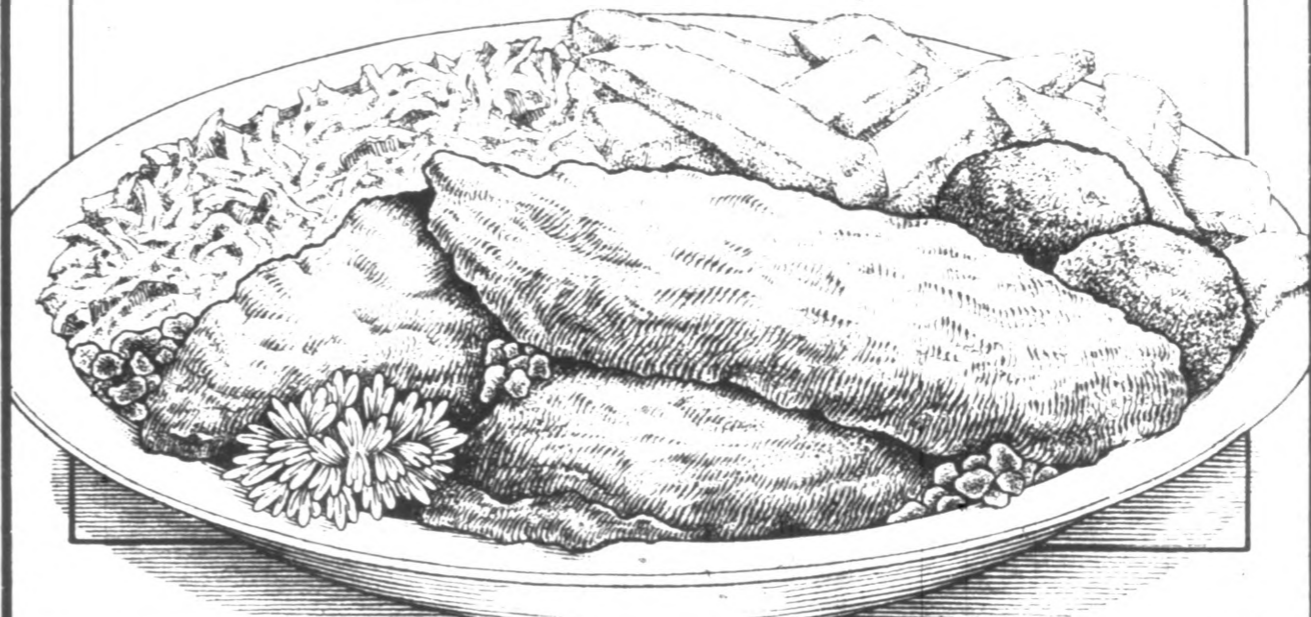
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