

Sky Racket

Partly cloudy Wednesday. Widely scattered afternoon and evening thundershowers. High, 84 to 88. Gentle to moderate northeast winds. Miami Beach temperatures at 3 p.m. Tuesday: Air, 92; Water, 90.

• x x

Wednesday, June 12, 1957

The Miami Herald

No. 192

Florida's Most Complete Newspaper

47th Year

68 Pages

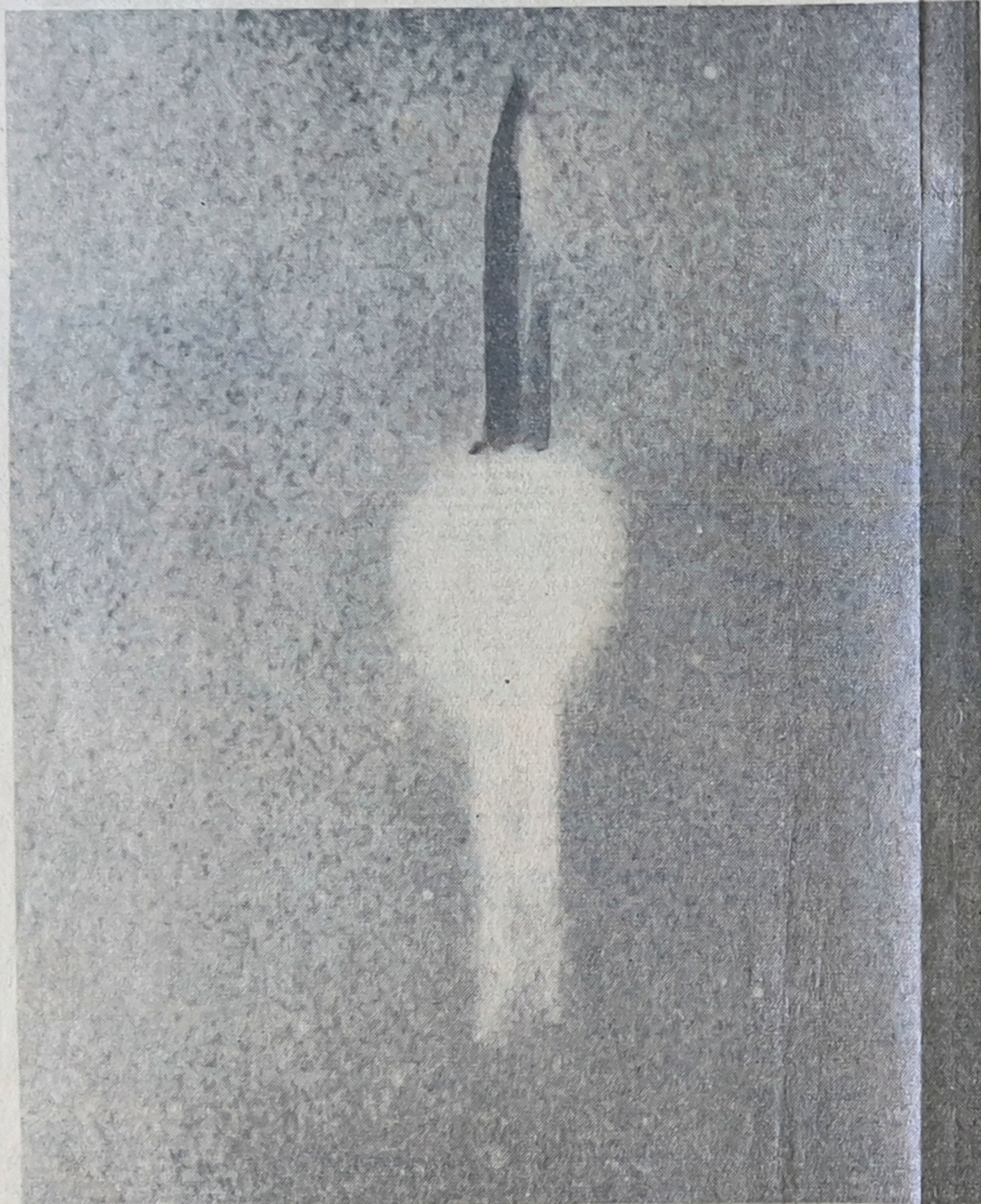
5 Cents

A Latin American Edition Is Published Daily

Nine Great Services

Associated Press United Press
International Photo Science Service
International News AP Wirephoto
Chicago Daily News Foreign Service
United Press Telephoto Dow Jones

Atlas Missile Explodes in Air



There She Goes Atlas Is Gaining Speed Down She Comes

These sequence photos were snapped by Charles Foley, Orlando Sentinel photographer. They were made from about three miles away from the firing pad

First of Its Kind Ever Fired Falls In Burst of Flame

By JOHN MORTON
Herald Staff Writer

COCOA BEACH — The Atlas, an intercontinental ballistic missile, the first ever fired, but much-discussed, exploded in a shower of flame and red-hot metal Tuesday shortly after it left the ground.

Launched from the Cape Canaveral testing area at 2:40 p.m., the ocean-spanning missile burst into fragments about a mile above the earth.

Air Force officials, who said there were no casualties, did not identify the missile as the Atlas. But observers were confident it was the Atlas, designed to deliver a nuclear warhead on a pinpoint target 5,000 miles away.

Tuesday's explosion was the sixth time in recent months that tests of ballistic missiles have gone awry.

Two of the Army's Jupiter intermediate range missiles burned themselves out in a few seconds.

One Air Force Thor intermediate missile rose only a few feet, another zoomed out of control and had to be destroyed in flight, and a third blew up while being fueled.

Early last December a seven-ton Snark guided missile snapped its controls somewhere over the South Atlantic and disappeared, presumably in the trackless jungles of eastern Brazil.

There were no reports of casualties in any of these mishaps.

The Air Force said in a brief statement late Tuesday that "a missile was fired from the Cape Canaveral testing area."

"Shortly after the launching the missile exploded," the statement said. "There were no casualties."

The deep roar of the missile's exhaust was muffled in noise of the surf, but its bright exhaust flames could be seen for miles.

The rocket left its pad slowly, but began picking up speed in seconds. At an altitude of several thousand feet, the missile appeared to be casting off a booster stage.

Then the entire device erupted in flames. Part of the missile fell flaming, but point of impact could not be seen from the shoreline south of Canaveral harbor.

Crash boats were sent out to salvage parts of the missile. Spectators at closest range said the missile began wobbling off course almost immediately after the takeoff. There was an explosion and something crashed into the sea.

Charles Gregory, a Titusville photographer, said he had a clear view of the missile from a vantage point 2½ miles from the launching ramp and believed that it was destroyed in the air.

Another spectator, Gene Plowden of the Associated Press, heard an aerial explosion shortly after the takeoff and said "a ball of fire spiraled off to the northeast and fell into the ocean."

This could have been a booster rocket dropping off from the missile.

The Air Force said it gained "valuable information" from the test.

Two earlier scheduled launchings of the Atlas were canceled, according to reliable sources. Newsmen and casual observers dotted the beach early Tuesday expecting the launching.

On the cape, a yellow ball hoisted to the top of a 90-foot signal tower was one clue that something was about to happen.

Atlas, a new missile, is the first device designed to operate between continents. Missiles in its class are called Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles and have an estimated range of 5,000 miles.