

**2. POSSIBLE FIRST SOVIET TESTS OF EARTH
SATELLITE VEHICLE OR ICBM NOTED**

On 16 and 24 May, two launchings were noted at the Kapustin Yar guided missiles test range in which vertically fired missiles apparently released a second-stage vehicle. The vertically fired first-stage vehicle fell to earth approximately 50 nautical miles down range while the Soviet radars at both the mid-range (300 nautical miles) and far-range (650 nautical miles) stations were continuing to observe another moving object.

Comment

This would be the first two-stage missile known to have been fired at Kapustin Yar and appears to be a test of components for either the Soviet earth satellite vehicle or an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). Recent Soviet statements have claimed that the USSR is nearly ready to launch an earth satellite.

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