

Soviets Skip Noise in Taking Sputnik Chunk

Manitowoc Will Get Replica of Space Fragment

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Russians, who made a big public show of rejecting a space fragment that probably belongs to them, have quietly taken possession of the chunk of metal found in Manitowoc, Wis.

The State Department said Monday the transfer took place last Saturday. Informants said a low-ranking member of the Soviet embassy staff called at the State Department, picked up the fragment which was packed in a box, tucked the box under his arm and walked out without further ado.

Use Slow Boat

Alexandri Zinchuk, a press officer at the Soviet embassy, said Monday night, "They insisted we take it, and we did. We have no way of telling your American tests are right. We will send it to Moscow to test. It's too heavy to air mail. We will send it by slow boat."

The fragment was still warm when found by police officers on a Manitowoc street Sept. 5. American experts said it was part of the Russian satellite Sputnik IV launched into earth orbit May 15. After breaking up in space it reentered the earth's atmosphere in a fiery display over northern Wisconsin.

The fragment was offered to Soviets last Sept. 14 by the United States during the course of a meeting of the United Nations Committee on Peaceful Use of Outer Space. The Russian representative rejected the offer, saying it was a "circus."

The U.S. offer was renewed in a quieter manner on Oct. 19 in an informal approach by the State Department to the Soviet embassy here.

14-Pound Piece

C. Edward Dillery of the State Department office of international scientific affairs, said, "No announcement was made because we were fearful the Russians might not accept the fragment if there were too much publicity."

The Russians received a 14-pound section of the fragment. The United States kept the remaining six pounds for further testing of its own.

Replicas of the oval-shaped and apparently fire blackened fragment will be presented to both Manitowoc and Milwaukee, a spokesman for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration said Monday night.

Marvin Robinson, of NASA's office of international programs, said, "We are making the replicas. They'll have to be properly mounted with a suitable inscription—a factual inscription, then we'll discuss plans for the transmittal."

"We've appreciated the co-operation we've received and this is one way to show it," Robinson said.