

NOV 16 1959

# Gilbert Train To Be Powered By Signal From Outer Space

For the first time anywhere, signals beamed from outer space tonight will be used to activate a New Haven-made American Flyer electric train display in the observation tower atop the 86th floor of the Empire State Building.

Engineers of the A. C. Gilbert Company, world's largest producers of science sets and electric trains, will pick up the distinctive bagpipe-type signal of Explorer VII and convert it into power to run a three-train layout of pioneer and modern trains, to officially launch the exhibit which will remain on display throughout the holiday season.

## 5-Minute Phase

The American satellite, technically known as 1959 IOTA, was rocketed into orbit Oct. 13. It is scheduled to zoom into the New York area at 11:17 p.m., broadcasting on 19.99185 megacycles, and will remain within receiving range for five minutes, traveling in a northeasterly direction at latitude 40 degrees north.

Utilizing a highly sensitive and stable Collins 51J4 communications receiver and a specially designed antenna, Gilbert engineers will attempt to transform the signal into electrical impulses clearly visible on an oscilloscope, to a relay which will trigger the switch to start the trains rolling.

Commenting on the attempt, Alfred C. Gilbert Jr., president of the local firm, pointed out that the exhibit includes the company's golden anniversary "Frontiersman" train, symbolic of the pioneering spirit of the Old West, as well as a modern, glittering Union Pacific passenger train and a New Haven electric freight train. "Thus the past and present sources of transportation and power are being merged with the future," he said.

## Railroad History

The layout, one of the largest installed in the New York area, is built up into two levels. The lower level, against a modern background, displays the two modern trains. The upper tier exhibits the "Frontiersman" against an authentic western "Badland" backdrop. The accessories on each level are in keeping with the periods they represent in American railroad history.

"This attempt to harness Ex-

plorer VII's signal, no matter what the outcome may be," concluded Gilbert, himself an engineering graduate of Yale, "should point up the intense interest in such projects. The kids have been ahead of us for five or ten years, and to date playtools are the only means they've been offered of getting to know what is going on in this scientific world they live in.

"If our country wants to get youth interested in careers in science and engineering, schools could start teaching the subjects earlier. And parents who want to, can incline the twig by carefully selected scientific and engineering 'playtools,'" Gilbert said.