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ORIGEN DE FOTOS AS SEEN FROM THE PIONEER SPACECRAFT ORBITING VENUS

This image shows the crescent of Venus illuminated by sunlight during the early morning of the Venus day. It is the first picture taken by the Cloud Photopolarimeter on the Pioneer Venus Orbiter, constructed from measurements completed at 07:11:17 on December 5. The planet's surface is entirely blocked from view by a thick veil of haze of remarkably uniform brightness.

As the spacecraft continues to orbit the planet, making one revolution every 24 hours, the configuration for viewing the illuminated hemisphere of Venus will continually improve until late February when the full planet will be observed in 'high noon' condition. It is expected by the scientists responsible for the imaging experiment that at that time it will be possible to peer through the upper veil of bright haze and see more sharply defined cloud structure at greater depths in the Venus atmosphere.

The first image was taken in ultraviolet light during the spacecraft's second orbit at a distance of about 60,000 kilometers from Venus. It was obtained point-by-point by the Cloud Photopolarimeter, a small (1 1/2 inch diameter) telescope, as the spacecraft spun at 5 revolutions per minute and moved along its orbital path.

