

Reagan blasts 'stealth' unveiling

NEW ORLEANS — Ronald Reagan invaded Jimmy Carter's southern political base Thursday and charged the president with playing a "dangerous game" with the national security for political benefit.

Reagan charged Carter has jeopardized national security and aided the Russian KGB by revealing development of the "stealth" aircraft system that cannot be detected by radar. Saying Carter gave away the biggest military secret since the atom bomb, the Republican nominee said, "Mr. Carter must take full responsibility for playing a dangerous game with our national security policy."

Reagan stopped in Jacksonville, Fla., and New Orleans on his first Southern campaign swing. New Orleans rain forced his riverfront rally into a large riverboat and demonstrators chanting "E-R-A" interrupted his speech briefly before being drowned out by supporters' chants of "Reagan."

All day Reagan hammered away at the Carter administration for letting the world know the Defense Department was developing the aircraft invisible to enemy radar.

"The law provides severe penalty for anyone violating military weapons secrets of this magnitude," Reagan said.

"In this case, because the breach of security was blessed and sanctioned by the Carter administration — clearly for the sole

political purpose of aiding Mr. Carter's troubled campaign — there will be no such penalty," he said.

But when asked if he thought Defense Secretary Harold Brown should be prosecuted for giving away military secrets, Reagan said: "I don't see how he could be — the secretary of defense has the power to declassify classified material."

The Reagan campaign hopes to break Carter's lock on the South, and the 17 electoral votes in Florida and 10 in Louisiana are key targets.

Reagan got an enthusiastic reception in Jacksonville, a city with a heavy Democratic enrollment. Businessmen greeted him at lunch with cheers and rebel yells and a later outdoor rally crowd of about 2,000 frequently interrupted his speech with applause.

He attacked the administration sharply for last week's announcement by Secretary of Defense Harold Brown that he was revealing "stealth" because of leaks to the news media.

The motivation behind the release, Reagan said, was an attempt by Carter to counter his charges the administration has allowed Russia to achieve military superiority over the United States.

"Since the stealth aircraft would not have been ready for use until the 1990s, the Carter administration's action has now given the Kremlin a 10-year headstart on developing ways to counter this type of ultra-sophisticated weapons system," Reagan said.

"The KGB no doubt gleefully celebrated this unearned triumph," he said.

Reagan called Carter's political use of the Defense Department "a cynical misuse of power and a clear abuse of the public trust," and he claimed Carter was willing "to actually compromise our long-term national security for a two-day headline."

"Military officials who have served this nation in the very highest capacities tell me they cannot recall such a serious breach of national security secrets," Reagan said. Reagan aides would not say what military officials he was quoting.

Reagan also criticized Edmund Muskie for being a "political" secretary of state, "not at all reluctant to do the Carter campaign's bidding."

"Under the Carter administration, America's foreign and defense policies have been politicized as never before," he said.

'Star Wars' around the corner

Soviet space boom worries U.S.

MOSCOW — Just what are the Russians doing in space these days? Everyone agrees they're launching a lot of rockets.

The question is whether they're just catching up with technology the United States has had for 15 years, or perfecting a weapon that could vaporize other nations' spaceships and usher in what one scientist calls a "Battlestar Galactica" era of space warfare.

In terms of manned flights, the Soviets dominate the skies right now. In the last six months they have sent eight men in four separate missions into space. Two of them are almost certain to set a new space endurance record.

The 1980 space scoreboard shows the United States with a goose-egg. Still, Western space watchers in Moscow are less than impressed with the concrete results produced by the flights of Soyuz-35, 36, the T-2 and, last month, Soyuz-37.

"They repeat the same functions over and over again," said one expert. "They go up, dock, transfer supplies and come back. Big deal." The flights have all centered around the Salyut-6 space lab, a 20-ton docking bay that will celebrate its third birthday in space Sept. 29.

The Salyuts appear to be the way the Soviets plan to travel to other planets. The United States has decided on a space shuttle. The first flight of the first shuttle, the Columbia, probably will come early next year.

By all accounts, the U.S. program is less expensive, more flexible in its potential uses and of greater commercial value.

"The Soviets would love to have a space shuttle like ours, but they don't have the technology," says an American who has compared the programs. "The Soviets have proposed a joint Soyuz-Shuttle project. But we'd get nothing out of that."

But the Soviets are clearly ahead in one area that makes most analysts shudder — the development of missile-to-missile and Earth-to-missile "directed energy weapons."

"Call them whatever you want: death rays, vaporizers. They're weapons intended to destroy space vehicles," says one wary watcher.

The idea was born with the so-called hunter-killer satellites: pairs of unmanned spunkies. One chased the other, locked onto its course, and then destroyed it.

The Soviets claim that their research only brings them even with existing American capabilities for destruction in orbit.

"They say the shuttle has the ability to capture a smaller satellite and disarm it mechanically," says the analyst. "Technically it's true, but I

know of no intention to use the shuttle in that way."

The latest refinement in the Soviet space arsenal, however, puts them in a league of their own.

DEW — directed energy weapons — send concentrated beams of energy at the speed of light. Like lasers, they destroy anything in their path by breaking down its molecular structure.

"It's 'Battlestar Galactica,' no less. It's terrifying," says the scientist, who is not given to hyperbole. He believes the Soviets are developing such weapons to be used either from orbiting spaceships or from Earth.

A member of the House Armed Services Committee seems to take the threat seriously, too.

"We may be a lot closer to 'Buck Rogers' or 'Star Wars' than most folks realize," said Rep. William Dickerson.

Shooting down another nation's space satellites would not break any laws, as long as they are out of the Earth's atmosphere. The SALT 1 treaty protects satellites only until they reach "outer space."

"There's a need for some kind of international legislation to prevent a shoot-em-out in space," says the Western analyst. But so far the Russians aren't interested in talking, despite informal overtures from the United States.

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Woman pays faulty bills for 33 years

DALLAS — It took Lula Swimm 33 years to confirm her suspicions her sewage and garbage bills were a bit steep.

"But then it isn't every day you go around comparing your garbage bill with your neighbors," she said.

The over-billing began in 1946 when she took possession of a duplex in the exclusive University Park area and promptly converted it into a single family residence.

"We had someone from the city come and inspect the building when we took out one of the kitchens," she said Wednesday.

But the change somehow never got on city records, so Swimm has been paying duplex rates — nearly double the single family home rates — since.

She figured she has been over-charged about \$2,000 during the 33-year mistake.

Tuesday the University Park City Council — citing a statute of limitation rule protecting the city against negligence — offered Swimm a settlement covering two years of over-payments.

She decided to accept the council's \$216 offer.

"Two years is better than none," she said. "I probably wouldn't make enough to pay off a lawyer" fighting for more money.

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