

*Low temperatures not a problem*

## NASA officials testify before panel

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — NASA told a presidential panel Thursday that an errant flame near Challenger's right rocket booster first appeared 59.8 seconds after liftoff and "moved quite a bit" in the final instants before an explosion destroyed the space shuttle and killed its crew.

But space agency officials said NASA has no reason to believe that sub-freezing launch-day temperatures had affected the boosters or in any other way contributed to the tragedy.

No matter what the cause, one official said NASA has no "practical" emergency procedure that could have saved the five-man, two-woman crew so long as the boosters were burning.

Testifying at the first meeting of the commission examining last Tuesday's accident, NASA's Jesse Moore said NASA had not yet located the source of the flame nor

were they sure it was responsible for the tragedy.

"I can't show you exactly where it is," Moore said when asked to pinpoint the origin of the plume on the booster rocket, "because we don't know exactly where it is."

He was not asked about data, apparently not available to flight controllers, that later revealed a 4 percent loss in thrust from the right booster.

Neither were the NASA officials asked to discuss whether any of the astronauts' remains have been located.

Moore, NASA's deputy administrator in charge of shuttle operations, said experts are "enhancing all of our photography... and we're concentrating a lot of that photography on the right-hand solid rocket booster."

The investigating panel, appointed by President Reagan and meeting Thursday for the first time

in public, swore in NASA officials and questioned them on many items — especially involving freezing temperatures and ice formation at the launch pad — that seemed to make the Challenger launch different from 24 successful launches that preceded it.

Moore displayed enlarged photographs "that would indicate a plume on the right-hand solid rocket booster" 58.9 seconds into the flight.

In the next 12 seconds, he said, the plume "moved quite a bit," growing and merging with the orbiter's huge fuel tank "just milliseconds before the tragedy," he testified. The explosion occurred just after the Jan. 28 flight was 73 seconds old.

Questioned closely by several members of the panel, NASA's Arnold D. Aldrich said he had "no concern" about the impact of the temperatures on the shuttle.

Temperatures on the morning of

the launch were "well within the specification design" for the shuttle, its main fuel tank and the two smaller solid rocket boosters, said Aldrich, head of shuttle operations at the Johnson Space Center in Houston.

Asked by commission chairman William Rogers whether he could recall a warning from Morton-Thiokol, manufacturer of the solid rockets, on the effects of such temperatures, Aldrich replied, "I do not recall any such warning at this time."

Moore said there was concern about ice buildup on the launch tower but not about the impact of low temperatures on the rocket boosters. A technical team was sent out before the launch and checked the tower. "Their assessment came back that the system is OK," he told the panel.

## Navy not improving health care: senator

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Navy had failed to correct health care problems when a high-ranking officer was assuring Congress the system was improving, Sen. Pete Wilson asserted Thursday.

Wilson, R-Calif., released an internal military document, which he said contradicted an assessment of Navy health care given to a Senate subcommittee during a public hearing. In the document, the Navy inspector general concluded last October that "very little progress has been made to correct the deficiencies" identified in a 1984 review.

"I am disturbed and angered by this discrepancy," Wilson told a news conference.

Wilson said he was demanding an explanation from Navy Secretary John Lehman but said he

had not yet received an answer.

A Navy spokesman, Lt. Cmdr. Bill Harlow, said the service did not have an immediate response to Wilson's statements.

Wilson's criticism comes at a time of increasing scrutiny of the Pentagon's medical system. Last year the House passed a bill that would allow military doctors to be sued for malpractice.

In addition, Navy Cmdr. Donal Billig is on trial for five counts of involuntary manslaughter in the cases of five patients who died during or after heart surgery he performed or supervised at Bethesda Naval Hospital in 1983 and 1984.

And in what amounted to a revolutionary change in military medicine, the Pentagon moved last week to systematically subject the performance of military doctors to a review by civilians.

## Report says government, industry not dealing with unemployment

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Government and industry are failing to deal with a massive unemployment problem caused by rapid and irreversible changes in technology and international trade, a congressional agency said Thursday.

The Office of Technology Assessment said adult education and job

training programs "have not kept up" with the needs of 11.5 million "dislocated" workers — people who lost their jobs between 1979 and 1984 because of automation, plant shutdowns and rising imports.

"Given the incentives leading U.S. firms to invest overseas and take advantage of cheap labor, or to use less labor at home, displacement is bound to continue," said the agency.

Hit hardest by the decline in domestic manufacturing and other changes are blacks and up to 4 million "displaced homemakers" forced into the job market because of divorce, widowhood or the loss of welfare assistance, said the 436-page report, which concluded a two-year study.

"Structural unemployment is not only reversing the trend toward

greater equality of opportunity, it is threatening the industrial base of this country and the future of all Americans, black and white," Mitchell said.

Structural employment is the joblessness that results from changes in technology, international trade and factors other than pure fluctuations in the business cycle.

Although manufacturing now ac-

counts for only 20 percent of the nation's jobs, nearly half the layoffs between 1979 and 1984 occurred there, particularly among unskilled and semi-skilled blue-collar workers, the report said.

"These jobs are not only the easiest to automate, they are also the easiest to move overseas to low-wage countries," the agency said.

Although Congress passed the

Job Training Partnership Act in 1982 to help displaced workers, the agency estimated it is reaching only 5 percent of the people eligible.

The report said one of the most effective ways to help displaced workers find and train for new jobs is through early warnings of large layoffs. Such a program has worked successfully in Canada for 20 years, it said.

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