

World and Nation

Missile

Legislator: Midgetman could draw support from both parties

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The chairman of the House Armed Services Committee released a report Sunday supporting large new expenditures on the Midgetman nuclear missile, the first blow in what is expected to be a new Capitol Hill fight over administration budget increases for atomic weapons.

Rep. Les Aspin, D-Wis., said his analysis of the single-warhead missile showed Midgetman is "that rare kind of weapon that should garner support from liberals and conservatives alike."

Midgetman is the nickname given the missile intended as a successor to the MX nuclear weapon.

Although Congress has limited the total MX deployment to 50, half of what Reagan originally asked, the Pentagon wants \$1.8 billion next year for 21 more MX weapons for test purposes.

Also sought is \$3.1 billion for the eighth Trident missile-firing sub, \$1.4 billion for the first production of a new generation of more powerful warheads for the Trident missiles, and a classified amount for the radar-evading "stealth" bomber.

Spending on the Midgetman would double, from \$700 million this year to \$1.4 billion, under the Reagan budget. The money would go for research, and a decision on whether to go ahead with full-scale development is likely to be made later this year.

Aspin's analysis said conservatives should like Midgetman because it "provides real deterrence" since it would take a large number of Soviet warheads to knock it out.

"For liberals, the Midgetman is important because it cannot be a first-strike weapon; it can only be a retaliatory or second-strike weapon," Aspin said.

Midgetman's chief support came from a 1983 presidential commission appointed by Reagan to come

up with a basing plan for the 10-warhead MX.

While the commission said the MX should be deployed in stationary silos, it called for development of a mobile, single-warhead missile in the future.

The commission argued that in a crisis, the Midgetman would be a less tempting target for a Soviet first strike because it would take numerous attacking warheads to destroy a mobile missile and even then the attackers would only knock out one missile. That contrasts with the stationary MX and its 10 warheads.

The Air Force has pushed ahead with development of Midgetman and tentatively plans to begin developing it as early as 1992.

The leading deployment plan apparently is to put the weapon aboard armored, wheeled launchers that could be driven around large military bases in the western United States, making them hard for the Soviets to target.

Aspin estimated that Midgetman would cost \$44.5 billion during its 20-year life span. In that same period, the United States will spend \$480 billion on other long-range nuclear weapons, meaning that Midgetman would take up about 5 percent of the strategic budget, he said.

Klinghoffer's widow dies of cancer

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Marilyn Klinghoffer, the widow of Leon Klinghoffer who was killed by terrorists on the cruise ship Achille Lauro, died Sunday of cancer. She was 58.

Klinghoffer died about 5 a.m. at Lenox Hill Hospital, family spokeswoman Letty Simon said. She had been in the hospital for about two weeks.

The Klinghoffers were aboard the Italian ship when it was hijacked by Palestinian terrorists Oct. 7. Mr. Klinghoffer, who had suffered a stroke and was confined to a wheelchair, was shot and his body tossed into the Mediterranean Sea.

Klinghoffer announced shortly after her release that she would establish a foundation to reward and educate people who oppose terrorism.

"Mrs. Klinghoffer was a courageous woman who stood for her principles in speaking out eloquently against terrorism," White House spokesman Michael Guest said in a statement. "The president will be sending his condolences to the family."

Just last week, Simon announced that Klinghoffer would sell the story of her husband's death to a production company that will make a television "docudrama" about the cruise.

Simon said Klinghoffer and her family decided to sell the rights in the hope that the television production would encourage opposition to terrorism.

Klinghoffer is survived by her daughters Ilsa and Lisa; a son-in-law, Jerry Arbitier; and her mother, Rose Windwehr.

Search continues for shuttle rocket booster

Associated Press

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — Navy divers Sunday intensified their offshore search for wreckage of the space shuttle Challenger, but failed to locate an explosive satellite booster rocket spotted underwater by sonar.

The 32,000-pound booster, composed of two solid-fuel rocket motors, was believed to be in an area 18 miles northeast of the launch site, where parts of the shuttle's crew compartment, one of its two solid fuel rocket boosters and other debris have been reported.

"There is plenty of material out there, but they have found nothing identifiable" in 100 to 120 foot dives late Saturday and all day Sunday, Navy spokesman Cmdr. Arthur E. Norton said.

Norton said the 22 divers aboard the Navy salvage ship USS Preserver concentrated their efforts Sunday in a zone where "good sonar images" showed the 10-by-17 foot "inertial upper stage" rocket was resting on the ocean bottom.

The IUS was to have boosted a \$100 million NASA communications

relay satellite into higher orbit after it was carried into space aboard Challenger, which exploded after liftoff Jan. 28.

The Navy focused on the satellite boosters rather than on searching for the shuttle crew compartment or the boosters that propel the spaceship, Norton said.

The IUS, powered by 27,400 pounds of solid fuel, will be have to be declared safe by Navy explosive experts before it is brought to the surface.

"Our divers are identifying and mapping a small area of the ocean floor, taking photographs and eyeballing," Norton said Sunday. "We can leave this (the IUS) and go anywhere that may be considered more important at any time."

Navy and NASA officials would not say if there had been any progress in recovering Challenger's crew cabin, rocket boosters or remains from any of the seven astronauts.

Space agency officials would only say that three NASA ships were at sea conducting sonar sweeps and photographing underwater objects with robot subs.

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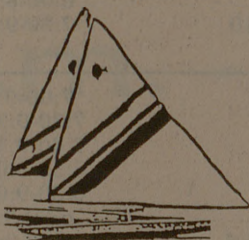
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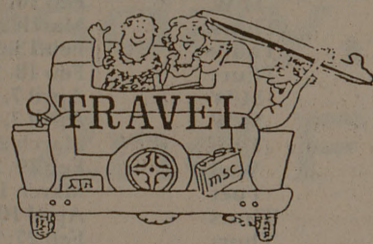
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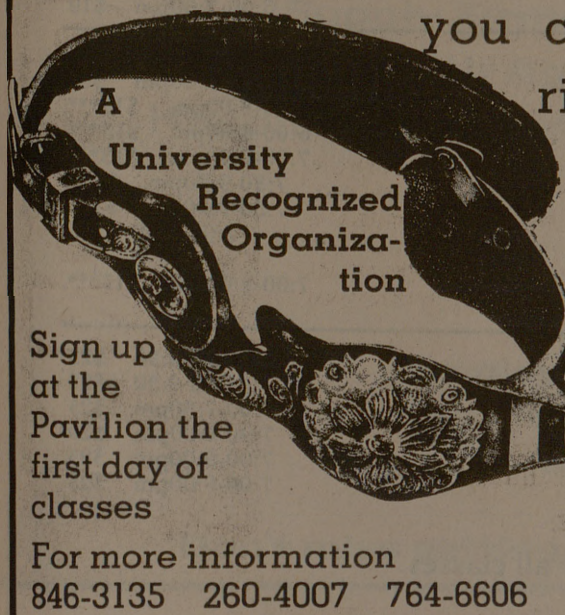
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