

World and Nation

Official: Shultz will settle differences with Soviets

Study says negligence caused crash

WASHINGTON (AP) — The failure of two Northwest Airlines pilots to follow required check-list procedures before takeoff led to the crash last August at Detroit's airport that killed 156 people, a federal report concluded Tuesday.

A 4-year-old passenger, Cecilia Cichan, was the only survivor. Northwest Flight 255 crashed after it failed to gain proper lift because the plane's flaps had not been properly set, the National Transportation Safety Board found.

It blamed poor cockpit discipline that included skipping critical parts of pre-flight check lists for the accident.

The "overwhelming evidence" was that the two pilots — Capt. John R. Maus, 57, of Las Vegas, Nev.; and first officer David J. Dodds, 35, of Galena, Ill. — forgot to set the flaps and slats while taxiing before takeoff, the NTSB said.

The Air Line Pilots Association, which represents 40,000 commercial pilots including those at Northwest, immediately attacked the report and accused the NTSB of not going far enough to definitely rule out a possible mechanical problem with the flap system.

The union also said the board gave too little consideration to the failure of the McDonnell Douglas MD-80s aural warning system that should have told the flight crew that flaps and slats were not properly extended to give the plane sufficient lift for takeoff.

WASHINGTON (AP) — A senior Reagan administration official voiced confidence Tuesday that Secretary of State George P. Shultz would be able to clear up differences over a missile-ban treaty with the Soviet Union in a new round of talks with Foreign Minister Eduard A. Shevardnadze.

The differences over policing the accord against cheating prompted Senate leaders on Monday to indefinitely postpone ratification.

"These are very, very technical issues, and we've had the problem of pursuing them at long distance through diplomatic exchange, informal translations, things of that sort," the official told reporters before Shultz boarded an Air Force jet for two days of talks with Shevardnadze in Geneva. The official spoke on condition of anonymity.

However, Shevardnadze said on his arrival in Geneva Tuesday that he was "not quite clear what the problems" were. He said the Soviets had answered questions raised by the United States about monitoring the agreement to scrap all U.S. and Soviet missiles with a range of 315 to 3,125 miles.

"Basically the verification problems regarding the INF treaty have been resolved, I think," Shevardnadze said.

The Soviet answers were delivered to the State Department Sunday night by Ambassador Yuri V. Dubinin and presented Monday to the Senate Intelligence Committee, where they received a chilly reception.

Subsequently, Senate Democratic and Republican leaders decided to postpone debate over ratification,

which had been scheduled to begin Wednesday.

Sen. Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia, the Democratic leader, said the treaty would remain "on the back burner" until the differences were resolved.

"We don't want to give the Soviets loopholes to cheat," he said. "This obviously needs fixing and the time to fix it is before the Senate takes up the treaty."

Byrd appealed to the Kremlin to take steps to end the dispute holding up the treaty. "The Soviets hold the key," he told the Senate.

There are nine technical issues in dispute. The two most significant involve Soviet attempts to restrict U.S. inspection of missile containers and the range of access for U.S. monitoring personnel within designated areas.

Even if Shultz and Shevardnadze resolve the differences in Geneva, where they reached final agreement on the treaty last November, it was not clear whether the Senate would be able — or willing — to ratify the accord before President Reagan's visit to Moscow starting May 29.

Another dispute erupted, meanwhile, as the Soviets asserted a right to inspect West German Pershing 1-A missiles that are stored in the United States. The rockets have a range of 465 miles, within the span of the treaty, and the nuclear warheads are owned by the United States.

State Department spokesman Charles E. Redman called the Soviet

demand "something we find astonishing, that they should choose to raise that issue."

Meanwhile, White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater said the Senate decision to postpone debate on the treaty "is a prudent and reasonable course of action."

Reagan had hoped in his fourth and probably final meeting with General Secretary Mikhail S. Gorbachev to sign a far more significant treaty to reduce U.S. and Soviet long-range nuclear weapons by 50 percent.

The senior U.S. official who briefed reporters at the State Department acknowledged that hope for such a pact had about run out. The official said Reagan and Gorbachev would issue a joint statement "identifying in some way where we are" on arms control and other issues.

The idea would be for the president who succeeds Reagan in January to pick up from there.

After an all-night flight, Shultz planned to hold two meetings with Shevardnadze on Wednesday and two more on Thursday before flying to Brussels on Friday to brief the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

U.S. and Soviet arms control experts will meet separately in Geneva, under the supervision of Shultz and Shevardnadze.

Of the non-nuclear issues on Shultz's agenda, the two likely to get the most attention were human rights and southern Africa.

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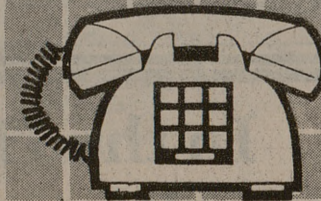
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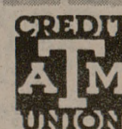
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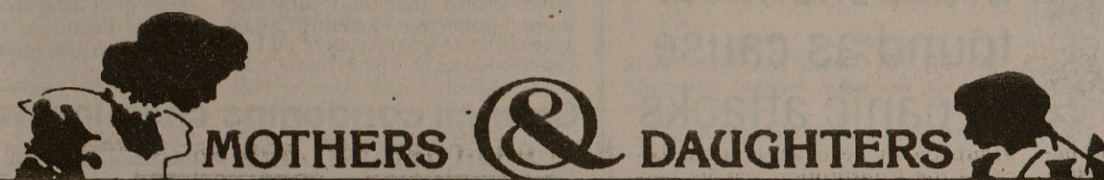
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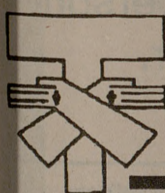
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