

Senate restores money to Star Wars program

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Democratic-controlled Senate, in a major reversal, restored \$600 million to President Bush's Star Wars program Thursday as part of the \$288 billion military spending bill. The Senate was responding to the pleas of several legislators including leading defense figures.

The senators were worried that continuing cuts in the space-based defense initiative would cause irreversible damage to the program. By a vote of 53-47, the Senate

adopted an amendment requiring that \$4.3 billion of the money appropriated for the Defense Department be spent on Star Wars.

The fiscal year in which the money must be spent begins Sunday. On Tuesday, the Senate had voted overwhelmingly, 66-34, to spend \$3.7 billion on Star Wars, officially known as the Strategic Defense Initiative.

The lawmakers indicated that the vote reflected an erosion in the support for the program.

But the ranking members of Senate Armed Services Committee — Democrat Sam Nunn of Georgia and John Warner of Virginia — argued Thursday that the Star Wars program had not been fully approved Tuesday had named their bargaining position negotiations with the House of defense authorization bill. The Senate, in adopting its authorization legislation last month, proved \$4.5 billion for Star Wars. The House's defense blueprint earmarked \$3.1 billion for the program.

Congress offers record aid to Hugo-hit areas

CHARLESTON, S.C. (AP) — The city's airport opened Thursday for the first time since Hurricane Hugo hit. Congress approved its largest disaster-relief measure ever and President Bush announced he would tour storm-damaged areas.

Hundreds of residents queued up to apply for federal disaster relief at five Federal Emergency Management Agency centers, a week after the storm smashed into South Carolina with 135 mph winds.

Bush planned to make a pre-dawn flight to Charleston on Friday but would have to complete his tour by mid-morning in order to leave for Annapolis, Md., the White House said.

"We need him to understand how deep the human suffering is in this," Gov. Carroll Campbell said. "I want him to know that it's a long haul for us, and it's not a quick fix."

The Rev. Jesse Jackson, in Charleston to visit shelters housing those displaced by the storm, urged that Bush "not just come and visit a house or two but to come with a plan and resources."

Jackson told reporters, "There is no sense of the massive federal presence that people deserve," but praised local residents "who have the good sense to turn to each other and not on each other."

Later Thursday, Congress unanimously approved \$1.1 billion in emergency aid for victims of Hugo, the largest relief package ever for a natural disaster. Hugo "may well be the most damaging one (hurricane) in history," FEMA spokesman Bill McCada said.

"I have never seen so much damage in my life," Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., told his colleagues before the vote. "It looked like there had been a war there."

Ferdinand Marcos dies of heart attack in Honolulu exile

HONOLULU (AP) — Ferdinand E. Marcos succumbed to cardiac arrest Thursday, but even in death he remained an unwanted exile, his remains barred from U.S. air lanes; his political legacy still stirring passions in his Philippine homeland.

Marcos, who ruled the Philippines for more than 20 years before being ousted in February 1986, died at 12:40 a.m. Thursday at St. Francis Medical Center. He was 72.

Doctors said kidney and lung failure and a widespread infection contributed to the cardiac arrest listed as the cause of death.

The canny, combative politician, who governed at times as a democrat, at times as a dictator, died without facing trial on U.S. criminal charges he plundered the Philippine treasury.

While Marcos spent nearly 10 months in the hospital, his family begged Philippine President Corason Aquino to let him come home to die, but she refused.

Aquino took office as a result of the popular revolt that drove Marcos into exile, and her government has survived six armed attempts to overthrow it. She said she refused again after his death to allow his burial in the Philippines for the sake of "the tranquility of the state and the order of society."

Philippine opposition leaders urged her to reconsider. "It is just so wrong. It is his birthright. He is a Filipino, the greatest Filipino," said Joe Lazo, president of the Honolulu group Friends of Marcos.

Later Thursday, the Federal Aviation Administration in Washington prohibited any aircraft from flying Marcos' remains out of the United States for the Philippines, saying it would "create danger to the safety of the aircraft and persons involved."

Lazo said family and friends would pay respects at Marcos' hilltop home overlooking downtown Honolulu and the Pacific Ocean.

He said no burial plans had been made and that Marcos would keep trying to bring his husband back to his homeland. "She knows that's what he wanted."

Tomas "Buddy" Gomez, Philippine consul general in Honolulu and an outspoken Marcos critic, said he would not attend the memorial service and urged Marcos not to "exploit her husband's death."

Marcos' death was confirmed at about 1:15 a.m., when his son Ferdinand Jr., emerged from the intensive care unit and said his father had been taken to "a higher place."

"Hopefully friends and detractors alike will look beyond the man to see what he stood for — his vision, his compassion and his total love of country," said the composed younger Marcos.

"Father's not here anymore. He's gone," Marcos' widow Imelda, told about two dozen supporters outside the hospital room, said family spokesman Roger Peyuan.

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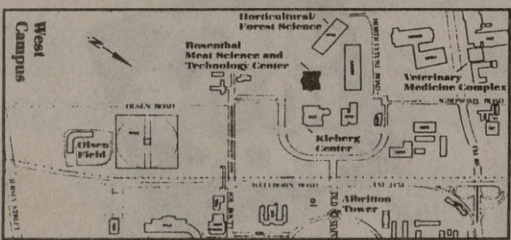
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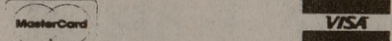
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Investigators study wreckage of shell explosion at Fort Sill

FORT SILL, Okla. (AP) — Artillery fire echoed in the distance Thursday as Army investigators rummaged through blood-spattered soldiers' clothing and inspected the crater where a stray round hit, killing three soldiers and injuring 24 at Fort Sill.

Col. William Gonzales, commander at Reynolds Army Hospital at Fort Sill, said some of the soldiers injured in Wednesday's accident were surprised it could have happened.

"Others were very, very happy they were not injured more than they were," he said.

"They heard a whistle of incoming, a yellow blast and then they were blown off their feet," Gonzales said the soldiers told him. "It's amazing what the power of a shell can do."

The soldiers, in the seventh week of an eight-week training course at the sprawling Field Artillery Center in southwest Oklahoma, were lined up to leave their ba-

sic training site when the artillery round hit about 7 p.m. Wednesday.

Two more soldiers were killed at Fort Stewart, Ga. on Thursday during firing exercises involving 4.2-inch mortars, the Army said. Details of the accident were immediately released.

A four-man team from Fort Rucker, Ala., began investigating the Fort Sill accident Thursday.

"We know it happened. Now we're going to find out why it happened," said Brig. Gen. Lou Henries, director of Army safety for the Army Safety Center at Fort Rucker.

"It could be material or it could be human," Henries said. "If it's human, it could be in standards, in training in leaders, in individuals or any combination thereof. Our purpose is to analyze these findings and come up with a preventive program."

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