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Reuter Report

U.S. scientists attack Reagan's Star Wars

WASHINGTON -- A prominent group of U.S. scientists asked Congress Monday to sharply cut President Reagan's 1986 budget request of \$3.7 billion in research on his Star Wars missile defense program.

The American Federation of Scientists, a private group of 5,000 scientists, issued a report stating that a space-based defense of lasers and other undeveloped weapons would not work and could cost over \$70 billion in research over the next 10 years.

"This initial \$70 billion will buy us no anti-missile weapons - only, hopefully, an understanding of how next to proceed," AFS spokesman John Pike said.

Agent Orange death rate disputed

WASHINGTON - A new study of airmen exposed to the herbicide Agent Orange during the Vietnam war showed they did not suffer a higher

death rate than people not in combat. The study is part of a 20-year survey the Air Force is making on the possible health effects of Agent Orange on the airmen who used the defoliant, which contained deadly dioxin. About 12 million gallons were sprayed over Vietnam to kill underbrush and flush out enemy troops and guerrillas fighting the U.S.-backed South Vietnamese government.

A statement Monday said the new study of airmon exposed to Agent Orange and a control group not exposed "did not reveal any statistically significant differences in the deaths recorded."

Veterans exposed to the chemical have argued it caused a variety of illnesses, including birth defects in children. Firms which made the defoliant, without admitting responsibility, agreed in May 1984 to a \$180 million out-of-court settlement of veterans' claims. Some 100,000 veterans have filed for shares of the court settlement.

Media group plans CBS takeover

WASHINGTON - A media watchdog group, Fairness in Media, tied to conservative Republican Senator Jesse Helms said Monday it wants to take over the CBS broadcasting company in a bid to stop alleged "liberal bias" by CBS news.

Fairness in Media, of Raleigh, N.C., said it will ask CBS stockholders to vote out the company's present board of directors at their annual meeting. on April 17. In a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission, the group said it also may ask stockholders to approve one or more resolutions aimed at influencing CBS management and operations. Fairness in Media said it would not seek to buy CBS outright.

A CBS spokeswoman said the company was studying the SEC filing and would have no comment at this time.



Fairness in Media has accused CBS of being the most "anti-Reagan" of the three major television networks.

U.N. praises anti-nuclear stand

WELLINGTON, New Zealand - U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar said Monday that New Zealand's stand against nuclear weapons was consistent with U.N. philosophy.

New Zealand's refusal last week to allow nuclear-armed or powered warships into its ports caused cancellation of a visit by an American warship and a crisis with its partners in the ANZUS defense treaty, Australia and the United States.

"Your nuclear policy is very much along the lines of what is the philosophy of the United Nations and that's why I don't need to pass any judgment, just to compare your position and what is the position of the United Nations as a world organization," he said.

Khomeini denounces White House

TEHRAN, Iran - Iran celebrated Monday the sixth anniversary of its Islamic revolution with a demonstration by tens of thousands, a military parade and a speech by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini denouncing the White House as "a palace of terrorism."

Meanwhile, about 300 Moslem fundamentalist "Hezbolahis" stormed the offices of the Freedom Movement of Mehdi Bazargan, premier of the first provisional government in 1979, and best up some of the 400 celebrants, including Bazargan, witnesses said.

The activities were the climax of 10 days of celebrations marking Khomeini's return from exile in Paris and the fall of the late Shah in 1979.

New computer makes cat meow

NEW YORK — If you love a purring cat, but hate cat food and litter boxes, Nolan Bushnell has something for you — a robot that purrs when petted, cries when spoken to and never needs feeding.

Axion Inc., which introduced the mechanical cat at Monduy's opening of the 82nd American International Toy Fair in New York, believes the toy will be a big hit in citics, where living space is at a premlum. Bushnell, head of Axlon and the former Silicon Valley whis kid who founded Atari Inc., said the toy is an answer to the changing needs of society. He said that as society becomes urban, people increasingly need pets but have more trouble taking care of them.

Azlon's cat toy, which is controlled by a microchip and can be programmed by its owner, cries in response to voice commands, purrs when petted, and rolls in various directions at the owner's hand clap.