

\$50 billion killer satellites proposed

WASHINGTON (AP) — The concept is staggering: stationing 432 killer satellites in orbit, each with 40-50 rockets ready to knock out attacking Soviet missiles before they can reach their American targets. The cost: \$50 billion.

The plan, labeled High Frontier, was introduced to the public in March. Its chief architect says it has received considerable attention on Capitol Hill and some response in the White House — but little notice from the State Department and a cold shoulder from the Pentagon.

"We have several hurdles to get over, but we feel confident," said retired Army Lt. Gen. Daniel Graham, former head of the Pentagon's Defense Intelligence Agency and a military advisor to Pres. Ronald Reagan during the 1980 presidential campaign. "We hope within a month or so to have either an amendment in Congress or instructions for the administration to consider."

High Frontier resulted from a seven-month study commissioned by The Heritage Foundation, a conservative, Washington-based public policy research institute. It was drawn up by a team of 31 scientists, space engineers, economists and military strategists directed by Graham.

Other proposals in the plan are a defense system around U.S. ballistic missile silos, an advanced manned space shuttle to open up industrialization of space and development of solar power satellites to beam energy to Earth.

The killer satellite network is the centerpiece of the plan and has drawn the most attention and created the most controversy.

Graham said that perhaps the biggest obstacle to the satellites is the large political community that advocates the Mutual Assured Destruction doctrine, under which nuclear war becomes "unthinkable" as long as each side retains enough nuclear bombs for a second strike.

With 432 killer satellites in orbit, Graham said, at least one-fourth of them would be in position at any time to repulse a Russian missile attack. They would be in two layers — the first to intercept rockets as they rise

into the atmosphere, the second to knock out those along the path to their target in case they get by the initial defense line.

Here's how the system would work:

- A Soviet missile bursts out of its silo aimed at a target in the United States or Western Europe.

- An American early warning satellite tracks the missile using infrared sensors and radar and computes its course, selecting a high-probability point in the atmosphere through which the missile will pass.

- A designated killer satellite launches one of its rocket-propelled canisters containing a conventional explosive at the interception point. As the canister nears the missile it explodes, somewhat like a grenade, into several hundred small explosives, some of which hit and destroy the missile.

- Any missile which penetrates both layers of the satellite defense is cleaned up by a ground-based anti-missile net protecting U.S. silos.

Graham said that even though he had been a Reagan military adviser just two years ago, he had "some initial trouble getting through the palace guard" in attempts to present the plan to the White House.

But in recent weeks, he said, he has talked with White House science officials, and "we believe the presidential science advisor, Dr. George Keyworth, is moving from a rather negative view to a view that we should have a spaceborne defense system against missiles." However, Graham said, Keyworth's concepts might not necessarily agree with those of High Frontier.

On Pentagon reaction, Graham said: "This is one source of difficulty, and understandably so, because we're recommending a major shift in strategy that knocks over a lot of programmatic apple carts."

Some defense officials, he said, might fear a loss of authority in the High Frontier recommendation that development of the killer satellite force be given independent status so it can be implemented quickly.

Graham said, however, he was encouraged when Defense Secretary Casper Weinberger recently spoke of the need for a space-based defense system against missiles.

Graham said major High Frontier supporters in

Congress, all Republican, are Sens. Jesse Helms of North Carolina, William V. Roth of Delaware, William L. Armstrong of Colorado and Malcolm Wallop of Wyoming and Reps. G. William Whitehurst of Virginia, Newt Gingrich of Georgia and Kenneth B. Kramer of Colorado.

He said he plans to meet soon with Sen. Gary Hart of Colorado, a liberal Democrat who has expressed an interest in the plan.

Graham said there are conservative supporters who worry that High Frontier might be pushed by liberals as an alternative, rather than a supplement, to a build-up in conventional and strategic forces. More than one program has survived development stages only to be dropped when ready for building, he noted.

That, Graham said, is why the system must have guaranteed funding over several years and be constructed quickly. He reported the estimated cost at \$50 billion over 10 years. Of this, \$35 million would be Defense Department money, the rest from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

KOIN-TV compromises in transcript subpoena

PORTLAND, (AP) — A compromise has been reached between a Portland television station and attorneys on the number of news materials the station will provide in response to a defense subpoena in a federal bank robbery case.

The news logs and broadcast transcripts were being sought from KOIN-TV, along with material from other area news organizations, in connection with a motion for a change of venue. The defense attorneys contend that pretrial publicity has made it impossible for their clients to receive a fair trial in Portland.

Officials at KOIN-TV originally were directed in a subpoena to turn over all news logs and transcripts dealing with the defendants since Feb. 5.

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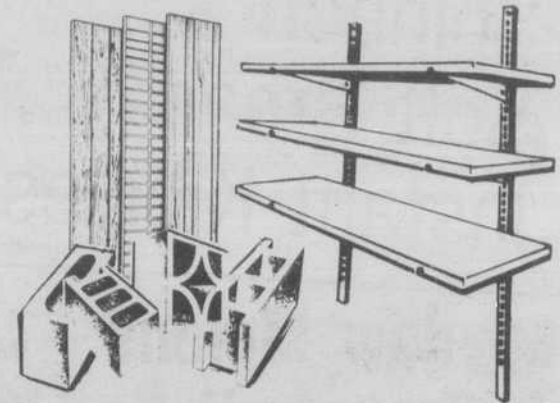
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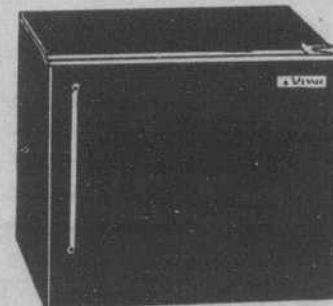


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