

Bi-partisan House denys MX funds



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WASHINGTON (AP) — The House late Tuesday rejected by 245-176 a down payment of nearly \$1 billion for the MX missile system. "The Peacekeeper" that Pres. Ronald Reagan deems vital for convincing the Soviet Union to get serious about nuclear arms reductions.

The House vote deletes from a \$231.6 billion defense spending bill all \$988 million earmarked for the first five of a planned 100 of the nuclear-tipped, intercontinental missiles.

The vote marked a personal defeat for Reagan, who had led an intensive administration lobbying campaign to keep the production money intact.

Fifty of Reagan's fellow Republicans joined 195 Democrats to give the MX opponents their majority. The minority, consisted of 138 Republicans and 38 Democrats.

Joining against Reagan on the MX issue were advocates of

a U.S.-Soviet nuclear freeze and members who contended that the MX was a good place to make budget economies since Congress has not yet decided whether its proposed basing system will work.

Opponents were also seeking to cut other defense expenditures. Work on the entire appropriations bill was expected to be completed on Wednesday and sent to the Senate, which has a \$233 billion version from its Appropriations Committee awaiting floor action.

Calling the outcome "a grave mistake," Reagan said congressmen who voted against the MX were "sleepwalking into the future." He said there was still time to reverse the House decision, and he pledged to take his case to the people to rally support for the missile.

In a written statement handed out at the White House, Reagan said of the vote: "Unless reversed in coming days, it will seriously set back our efforts to

protect the nation's security and could handcuff our negotiators at the arms table."

"I had hoped that most of the members in the House had awakened to the threat facing the United States," Reagan added. "That hope was apparently unfounded. A majority chose to go sleepwalking into the future."

The Defense Department withheld any official comment.

However, a Pentagon legislative strategist said, "We don't feel the battle is over."

The analyst, who asked not to be identified, added, "We intend to continue to work the problem on the Senate side." This was a clear indication the Reagan administration was banking its hopes for winning approval in the Republican-controlled Senate and then in a subsequent House-Senate conference.

State drops its appeal of race intimidation law

EUGENE (AP) — Oregon has dropped its appeal of a case in which the state's new racial intimidation law was declared unconstitutional.

Assistant Attorney General Thomas Denney said that he and assistant county district attorneys working on the case decided not to pursue the ap-

peal. Denney said Monday he believed the appeals court is almost certain to agree with the Lane County district court judge that the complaint charging Richard Staley of Eugene with harassing a black Eugene police officer should be dismissed.

However, state attorneys believe the appeals court would agree to dismiss the charges because of a technical error in the complaint, and would not consider the constitutionality of the law.

The racial-harassment statute was approved by the 1981 Legislature at the urging of Gov. Vic Atiyeh. The statute extended the existing harassment law, a Class B misdemeanor, by making racial harassment a Class A misdemeanor.

Staley was accused of making insulting racial comments to Eugene police officer Ronald Harrison, who went to Staley's home in February to investigate a reported domestic dispute.

Irked at Reagan, man just dams it

LAS VEGAS, Nev. (AP) — A man who said he was disgruntled over Pres. Ronald Reagan's promise of financial aid to Brazil perched on cables 800 feet above the Colorado River at Hoover Dam Tuesday.

The man, who identified himself as Steve McPeak of Las Vegas, climbed onto the cables Monday night. He said he would not come down until he talked to Reagan.

A spokesman at Hoover Dam, who asked not to be identified, said the man had set up a hammock on a series of six closely spaced cables that stretch across the gorge just below the dam. He said the six cables, each 3½ inches in diameter, form a sort of sidewalk and are not hard to move on for someone who is not afraid of heights.

McPeak told a reporter Monday night he was upset because Reagan was spending money on foreign aid instead of "Americans who are starving."

McPeak said the only way he could draw attention was to get on top of some federal project. He said he wanted American money spent on projects such as Hoover Dam, which benefit America.

McPeak has been arrested twice on charges of trespassing on government property after pulling similar feats at the dam.

McPeak reportedly had a two-way radio that could be used for a telephone hookup if he were able to talk to Reagan.

Wednesday, December 8, 1982



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