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Lasers online by the 1990s

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States could have within 10 to 12 years a space-based system of laser weapons that would afford the entire country a "foolproof" defense against missile attack, according to the research director of a foundation which has explored the concept since 1977.

A more limited ground-based laser system that could defend key targets such as command centers and important military bases, could be achieved in about seven years, said Dr. Uwe Parpart, a physicist who heads research for the Fusion Energy Foundation in New York City.

Parpart said he could not estimate the cost of such a defense, but he suggested it ultimately might require the United States to spend about \$10 billion a year. The entire defense budget now exceeds \$200 billion per year.

His projection for reaching an operational space-based laser defense against missile attack from the Soviet Union is considerably more optimistic than Pres. Ronald Reagan's. Last week, Reagan expressed hope for such a defense by the turn of the century. He did so in giving this program a high priority.

Parpart said the foundation became interested in what are called Directed Energy Weapons in 1977 as an offshoot from its principal concern, to promote fusion energy.

"A ballistic missile defense using lasers

would begin to shift the entire strategic equation and get us away from mutually assured destruction as a deterrent policy," said Parpart in a recent telephone interview.

He stressed that his group is not suggesting nuclear weapons in space, but that it focused attention on lasers — concentrated light beams — and charged beams of radiant energy because they represent methods of igniting the fusion process in generating nuclear energy on earth.

"If we want a full, foolproof area defense of the United States, that clearly is at least a decade in the future, possibly 10 to 12 years," Parpart said.

"On the other hand, a more limited system that could defend key targets, but wouldn't cover the United States, could be accomplished in five to seven years, probably seven."

Parpart said the first phase of such a defense could be built around a ground-based laser device which would shoot laser beams into space to be relayed off orbiting mirrors to strike Soviet missiles as they rose upward in their ballistic trajectory enroute to the United States.

In a second phase, Parpart said, the United States could put in operation a space-based system using X-ray lasers.

With such X-ray beams, Parpart said, "You would only have to point and shoot."

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SALEM (AP) — In its first major budget squabble this session, the House narrowly passed appropriations bills Monday for a major state agency and to keep the Legislature running for another three months.

A Senate-passed bill providing \$4 million to finance the

Legislature through June 30 was approved after opponents failed on a 29-28 vote to send the measure back to committee.

The controversy involves a \$57,000 item in the budget that would finance increased daily expense allowances for lawmakers if they pass separate legislation raising their payments.

Rep. Wayne Fawbush, D-Hood River, said the money was put into the budget only to accommodate Senate President Ed Fadeley, D-Eugene. Fadeley earlier had proposed raising lawmakers' expense payments during the session from \$44 to \$51 a day, but now says he hasn't decided whether to pursue the idea.

House Republican Leader

Larry Campbell of Eugene led the losing effort to return the budget to the Joint Ways & Means Committee. He said the money set aside for a possible expense increase should be stripped from the budget to settle the issue.

Although the expense money remains in the budget, allowances can't be increased unless separate legislation is passed.

House Speaker Grattan Kerans, D-Eugene, and other lawmakers oppose the expense increase, saying it's wrong to give more money to legislators when the state is in a fiscal pinch.

The overall budget for the legislative session that began Jan. 10, including money already spent, is \$5.6 million.

House passes bill to pay bills

Drug traffickers sentenced

EUGENE (AP) — Twelve participants in a Northwest drug trafficking ring were sentenced to prison terms and given fines Monday in U.S. District Court.

William Jobson, Woodacre, Calif., received the harshest penalty — five years imprisonment, five years probation and a \$25,000 fine for his alleged role as the primary wholesale source for marijuana and LSD marketed by the others.

Donald Sears, one of the alleged ringleaders in Lane County, received five years probation. Joseph Mann, also of Eugene and considered another ringleader, was sentenced to three years in prison and a \$15,000 fine.

The dozen were among 15 people arrested Sept. 21. A federal grand jury indicted them on a variety of drug charges.

In affidavits filed in the case, the drug trafficking ring was described by federal agents as a sophisticated operation involving shipping, storage, sales and distribution of hundreds of pounds of marijuana and thousands of units of LSD in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, California, Hawaii and Canada.

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