

Morning Musket

USS ORISKANY CVA 34

THE MORNING MUSKET

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BUDGET SQUEEZE FORCES 72,000-MAN CUTBACK

(UPI)--The Navy has announced it plans to reduce its strength by 72,000 men and deactivate two anti-submarine aircraft carriers in the Pentagon's new \$3 billion economy program. Secretary of the Navy, John Chafee, says the economy moves will reduce the Navy's readiness to respond to national emergencies, but did not say whether the reduction was to a "dangerous extent."

In addition, 50 U. S. combat ships, including the two carriers, a heavy cruiser and the battleship New Jersey are among 100 vessels the U. S. Navy plans to lay up to save money.

The 45,000-ton New Jersey, the world's only active battleship, carries 1,600 officers and men. The ship left Vietnam March 31, having expended 18,000 rounds of shells at a cost of \$6 million during a six-month stay. It cost \$1.5 million to recondition and \$1 million a month to operate.

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AMERICAN INVOLVED IN SPY SWAP?

(UPI)--An American may have played a role in a major spy swap that traded 11 westerners held by the Communists for a key Russian agent caught spying in South Africa, informed sources said yesterday.

The sources said Yuri Loginov, caught two years ago by South African Security officials and "singing like a canary" about the Communist intelligence contacts in 23 countries, had been handed over to the Russians last month.

The Russians surrendered 11 western "spies" for Loginov in the trade, which was believed to have been made in Berlin, the sources said.

The 11th was thought to have been an American, the sources said.

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KOPECHNES STILL FIGHTING EXHUMATION

(UPI)--Legal action on a Massachusetts request for an autopsy on the body of Mary Jo Kopechne, killed in an auto accident involving Senator Edward M. Kennedy, was postponed Thursday.

Luzerne County Judge Bernard C. Brominski said the hearing scheduled for tomorrow was "temporarily postponed" and that in its place he would hear a motion filed in behalf of Miss Kopechne's parents asking the court to throw out the exhumation request.

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BLACK KNIGHT WORKS WITH ROUND FIGURES

LCDR Mike Webber, maintenance officer of VA-23, didn't get a cake-cutting out of it, but achieved a personal milestone by flying his 200th combat mission and making his 500th arrested landing, yesterday.

VATICAN CLOSING DOORS TO MINISKIRTS

(UPI)--The Vatican is drawing the hemline on miniskirts of girls visiting St. Peter's Basilica.

Vatican sources said Pontifical Gendarmes have been ordered, starting today, to bar from the church girls whose miniskirts are too mini.

Like all churches in Italy, St. Peter's has signs posted warning visitors that they must be dressed decently. But miniskirts generally have been tolerated ever since they came into fashion.

As a rule, Italian girls do not go in for miniskirts, but the summer influx of tourists has brought shorter and shorter skirts, and Vatican sources said some Vatican officials were shocked.

"There is no order against miniskirts, but only those that are immodest," said one source.

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MISSISSIPPI DEATH REPORTS CONFLICT

(UPI)--Conflicting death reports were still being given by various sources Friday along the ravaged Gulf Coast.

Gov. John Bell Williams said that he was sticking to his "at least 200" figure. But, Gladys Gorenflo, the Harrison County coroner, said she has counted only 104.

"I have viewed every body and this big number is ridiculous," the coroner said. "Don't take any numbers from anybody. The Governor is wrong and I'll tell him so."

The confusion has not eased since hurricane Camille struck the Gulf Coast Sunday. If anything, it has increased with the arrival of hundreds of military and government personnel.

Death lists have abounded along the Harrison County coast, which suffered the most deaths. Governor Williams predicted at one point that the toll would easily reach 1,000.

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BLIND ERROR TAKES A LIFE

(UPI)--In Detroit, police reported that John Boggan, 69, who is totally blind, apparently mistook his wife for a burglar and shot her to death in their home.

Police said Boggan told them he heard strange noises which he thought were made by a prowler. He fired, unaware that his 73-year-old wife Mary had gone into that section of the home. Boggan said he heard his wife moan, then he realized he had shot her.

Boggan was not charged.

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RARE METAL RED TROJAN HORSE?

(S&S)--The Soviet Union has started selling large amounts of titanium - once called the wonder metal of the 1960s - to the United States. Materials experts say they are puzzled by the move.

Titanium is being used increasingly in American military as well as civilian aircraft.

A few weeks ago the first Soviet merchant ship to call on the United States this decade docked in Seattle, Washington, to deliver 900 tons of sponge titanium, as it is referred to in its intermediate form.

The Soviets sent only 421 tons of sponge titanium to this country in 1968.

Some officials suspect the Soviets may be trying to undercut the fledging U. S. titanium industry, possibly to disrupt its progress.