

# Sen. Frank Church defends votes on military funding

*San July 6 1980*

BY BEN J. PLASTINO  
Post-Register political editor

U.S. Sen. Frank Church, D-Idaho, while in Idaho Falls for the Fourth of July celebration, stoutly defended his votes on military appropriations.

Church, who was the target of incessant criticisms at the Idaho Republican Convention last weekend, said "I'm not voting for any knee-jerk defense appropriation that comes along. It has to be justified.

He pointed out that he has voted for one trillion seven hundred billion dollars in military appropriations as a senator, adding "I have always believed in a strong defense."

For example, he said, the latest military bill, which was passed with only three dissenting votes in the Senate, included a provision for reconditioning a 37-year-old battleship at a cost of \$200 million but that it could cost as much as a billion before it's over.

Church said he tried unsuccessfully to get this provision deleted, adding "we have got to think about the weapons of the future, not of the past."

Church voted for the appropriation bill in its final form.

Church pointed out the huge battleships and dreadnaughts are outmoded, that it's the fast frigates, submarines, modern missiles and up-to-date aircraft that are this nation's best weapons.

He also defended his vote against the B-1 Bomber, asserting it would be outmoded and could not penetrate Russian defenses. He said he solidly backed the cruise missile which can do the job.

Church also pointed out he had voted for a bill sponsored by Sen. John Culver, for the military to compile a report inaugurating a study that would use the latest technology to develop a Russian-penetrating defense aircraft by the end of the decade.

Church also said he role as chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee was to require the intelligence agencies to come within the law, not infringe on the rights of individual citizens by opening mail, using drugs and employing other nefarious practices. He pointed out the foreign intelligence operations were not affected.

In the press conference, he also said the River of No Return Wilderness Bill would permit mining of cobalt, that he is confident the fight for the breeder

reactor will be won and that the INEL will experience great expansion by many projects of the future.

Church also voiced his "strenuous objection" to inclusion in the proposed Democratic platform of a negative plank on nuclear energy. He said he had written Democratic Platform Committee Chairman Coleman Young to this effect, also saying a bitter fight is expected at the convention to turn down the plank.

"In any event I will reject this

plank if it is accepted," he said.

He rated the Carter-Reagan race a tossup. He acknowledged that Reagan likely will win by a wide margin in Idaho, "meaning I will have to swim upstream like a salmon but I've done that before."

He also noted Ayatollah Khomeini had admitted the American hostages have become an internal problem, indicating there could be a breakthrough on this by the Iranian Parliament.