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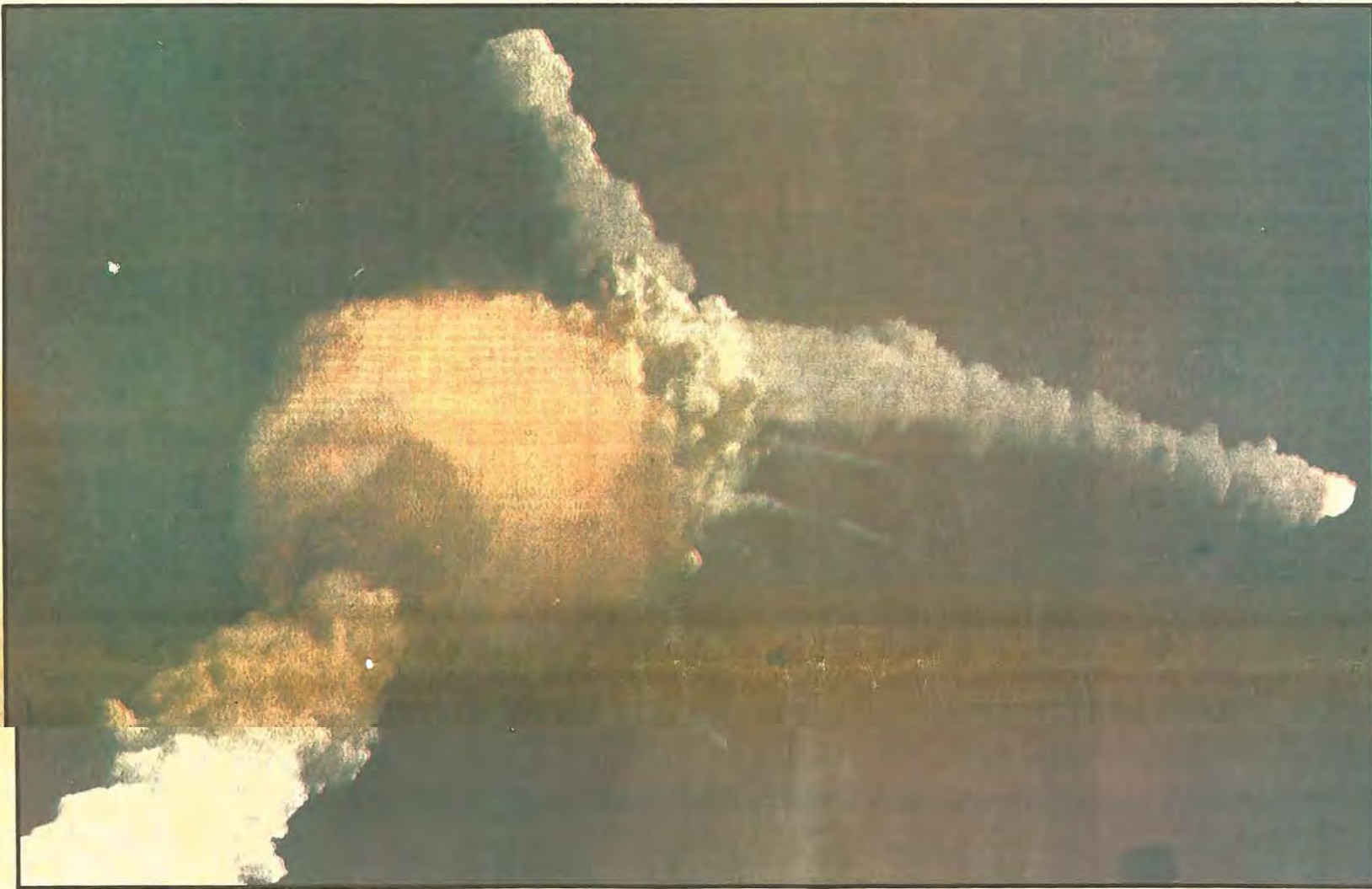
Five Sections — 60 Pages

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25 Cents

# Shuttle explodes

## Teacher, crew killed seconds into flight



Space shuttle Challenger explodes and disintegrates 75 seconds after liftoff at the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral.

AP photo

- More on the explosion of Challenger — 4A-9A
- How explosion affects shuttle companies — 6B

CAPE CANAVERAL (AP) — A catastrophic explosion blew apart the space shuttle Challenger 75 seconds after liftoff Tuesday, sending schoolteacher Christa McAuliffe and six NASA astronauts to a fiery death in the sky eight miles out from Kennedy Space Center.

The accident defied quick explanation, although a slow-motion replay seemed to show an initial problem with one of two peel-away rocket boosters followed by the detonation of the shuttle's huge external tank. The tank-turned-fireball destroyed Challenger high above the Atlantic while families of the crew and NASA officials watched from Cape Canaveral.

Other observers noted that the boosters continued to fly crazily through the sky after the explosion, indicating that the fatal explosion might have originated in the giant tank itself.

"We will not speculate as to the specific cause of the explosion based on that (film) footage," said Jesse Moore, NASA's top shuttle administrator. National Aeronautics and Space Administration officials are organizing an investigating board, and Moore said it would take a "careful review" of all data "before we can reach any conclusions."

It was the first in-flight disaster in 56 manned space missions.

In January 1967, astronauts Virgil "Gus" Grissom, Edward White and Roger Chaffee burned to death on the launch pad while preparing for an Apollo flight when a fire destroyed their capsule during a training drill.

Tuesday's explosion followed an apparently flawless launch. The liftoff had been delayed two hours as officials analyzed the danger from icicles that formed in the frosty Florida morning along the shuttle's new launch pad.

"There were no signs of abnormalities on the screens" as flight controllers monitored Challenger's liftoff and ascent, a source said. The source, at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, said the blast occurred "with absolutely no warning."

"We have a report from the flight-dynamics officer that the vehicle has exploded. Flight director confirms that," said NASA's Steve Nesbitt. The cheers at McAuliffe's Concord, N.H., high school turned to sorrow.

Mission Control officials reported that there had been no indication of any problem with the three shuttle engines, its twin solid-fuel boosters or any other system. They said the shuttle just suddenly blew apart 10 miles high and eight miles downrange of Cape Canaveral. Ninety minutes after the accident, controllers were still at their consoles, solemnly examining flight data.

NASA delayed its announcement that there appeared to be no survivors until it had conducted search-and-rescue efforts. Even before Moore's statement, it seemed impossible anyone could have survived such a cataclysmic explosion.

At a mid-afternoon news conference, Moore said, "I regret that I have to report that, based on very preliminary searches of the ocean where the Challenger impacted this morning, these searches have not re-

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## Teacher felt like a pioneer

Christa McAuliffe wanted to share her space experiences with America's schoolchildren.

United Press International

Social studies teacher Christa McAuliffe compared herself to the pioneering women of the West. The shuttle Challenger was to be her horse-drawn conestoga wagon and outer space was her frontier.

She acknowledged her role as the first regular citizen into space as the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity it was but saw her task as more important — sharing her experiences with America's schoolchildren in history's largest classroom.

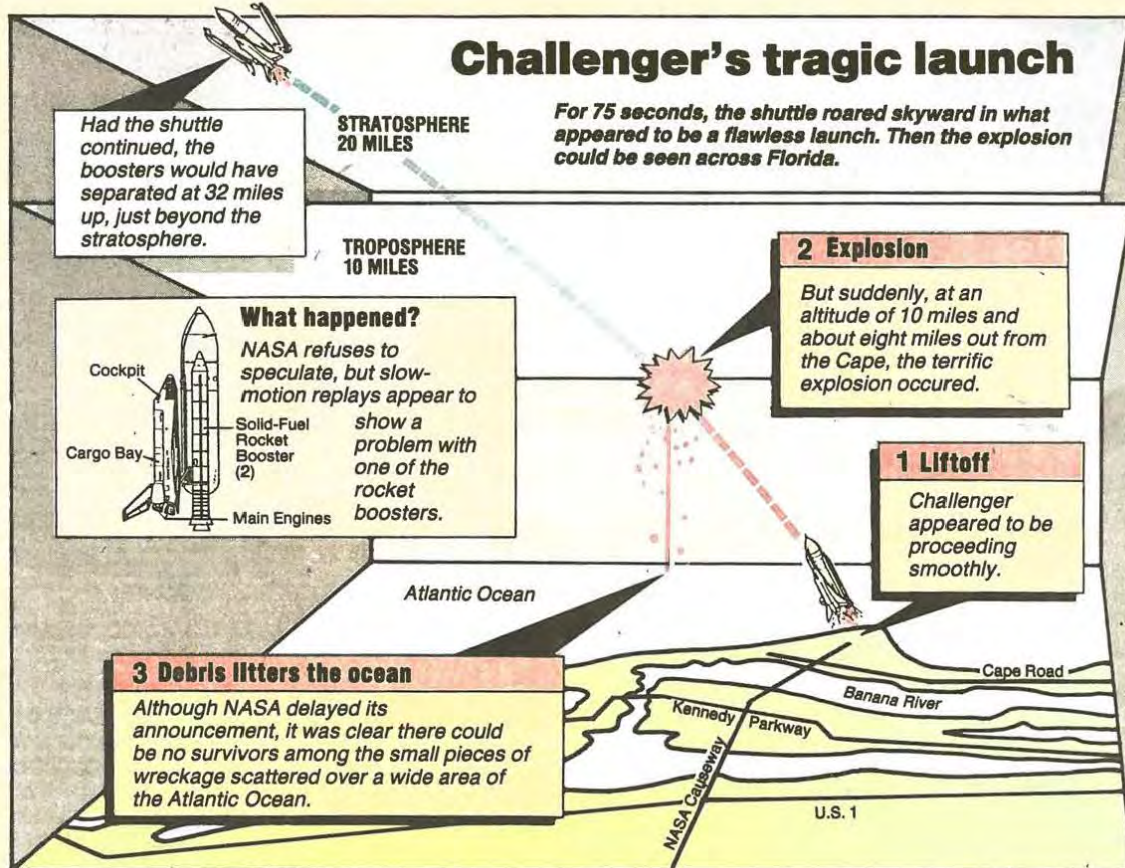
"I see this as an extraordinary opportunity and a wonderful year out of what I would normally have been doing, but I think it's just going to enhance the teaching that I do, get the students more excited about their future, which is important," she said before blastoff.

McAuliffe, 37, and six crewmates had endured delay after delay before the Challenger lifted off Tuesday morning on the 25th shuttle mission and exploded minutes after takeoff.

McAuliffe, a teacher at Concord High School in Concord, N.H., was selected from more than 11,000 applicants to fly on NASA's space shuttle.

When she and nine other finalists were announced in Washington last July, McAuliffe said she wanted to

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### Spy charges

An Air Force enlisted man has been arrested and charged with trying to pass intelligence information to the Soviet Union.

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### Freeze reprieve

The Tampa Bay area should be through with record-breaking temperatures and frost for a while as forecasters said a warming trend should start today.

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### Death reported

The Church of Scientology reported its founder, L. Ron Hubbard, died Friday in California and has been cremated.

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# Reagan lauds astronauts, delays speech

By MICHAEL PUTZEL  
AP White House Correspondent

WASHINGTON — President Reagan, stunned by America's first in-flight space disaster, abruptly postponed his State of the Union address Tuesday to praise the lost Challenger astronauts as heroes and vow the nation's manned space flight program will continue.

"The future doesn't belong to the fainthearted," the president said. "It belongs to the brave."

In a nationally broadcast address less than an hour after NASA officially gave up hope that teacher Christa McAuliffe and the Challenger's six other crew members survived the explosion that destroyed their spacecraft, Reagan pledged never to forget them and promised their mission would not be America's last.

"I'd planned to speak to you tonight to report on the state of the union," Reagan said in a five-minute tribute from the Oval Office.

But he explained he was putting off for a week what aides had described as an upbeat, forward-looking speech because "today is a day for mourning and remembering."

"I've always had great faith in and respect for our space program," Reagan said, "and what happened today does nothing to diminish it. We'll continue our quest in space."

"There will be more shuttle flights and more shuttle crews and yes, more volunteers, more civilians, more teachers in space."

The Challenger Seven, Reagan said, "were daring and brave, and they had that special grace, that special spirit that says, 'Give me a challenge, and I'll meet it with joy.'"

Calling the disaster "a truly national loss" and saying, "Nancy and I are pained to the core by the tragedy," Reagan extended his sympathy not just to the grieving families but to the thousands of employees of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration on the ground, paying tribute to their decades of dedication and professionalism.

"We know of your anguish," he said. "We share it."

To schoolchildren across the country who paid special attention to this flight because a teacher was aboard and planned to teach about the mission, the president said: "I know it's hard to understand, but sometimes painful things like this happen."

"It's all part of the process of exploration and discovery. It's all part of taking a chance and expanding man's horizons. The future doesn't belong to the fainthearted. It belongs to the brave."

"The Challenger crew was pulling us into the future," Reagan said, "and we'll continue to follow."

Although his spokesman said Reagan "stood in stunned silence" watching the television footage of the explosion just after launch, the president at first appeared determined to go ahead with his plan to appear before a joint session of Congress to deliver the constitutionally required address.

"Things like that have to go on," he told a group of television correspondents and anchors invited to the White House for a luncheon to discuss the speech and Reagan's goals.

But less than an hour later, presidential spokesman Larry Speakes confirmed what House Republican Leader Robert Michel of Illinois already had announced: The speech would be put off a week.



Tribune photo by MARK PHILLIPS

## Etched in air

Three people stop on Highway 50 in Hernando County to view the contrail of the space shuttle Challenger, which split after it exploded Tuesday.

## Shuttle

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vealed any evidence that the crew of Challenger survived."

The crew included McAuliffe and six NASA astronauts: commander Francis R. Scobee, 46, pilot Michael J. Smith, 40; Judith Resnik, 36; Ronald E. McNair, 35; Ellison S. Onizuka, 39; and Gregory B. Jarvis, 41.

Col. John Shults, director of Defense Department contingency operations, said a search armada of helicopters, ships and planes had spotted several pieces of debris floating in the Atlantic.

"We have seen several pieces, what looked to be about five or 10 feet long and a couple feet wide," he said. The debris will be recovered and brought to a hangar at nearby Patrick Air Force Base.

President Reagan watched video replays in "stunned silence" and sent Vice President George Bush to the Cape to convey his sympathies to the families of the crew.

New Hampshire schoolchildren, drawn to this launch because of the presence of McAuliffe, the first "common citizen" chosen to make a space flight, screamed and fought back tears. Americans everywhere watched in disbelief as television networks replayed the shuttle explosion.

Reagan, speaking on national television late Tuesday afternoon, directed some of his remarks about the tragedy to the nation's schoolchildren, who watched this flight more closely than others because a teacher was aboard and many special projects were planned for them.

"I know it's hard to understand, but sometimes painful things like this happen. It's all part of the process of exploration and discovery. It's all part of taking a chance and expanding man's horizons," Reagan said.

Earlier he had said: "You have to be out there on the frontier taking risks. Make it plain to them that life must go on."

McAuliffe was to have taught two 15-minute lessons on the fourth day of the mission. Public Broadcasting Service was to have carried the telecast live, and hundreds of schools planned to tune in.

Last along with the \$1.2 billion spacecraft were a \$100 million satellite that was to have become an important part of NASA's space-based shuttle communications network

and a smaller, \$10 million payload that was to have studied Halley's comet.

Ironically, launches had become so routine that the major TV networks did not show this one live, and had to break into regular programming once the dimension of the tragedy was clear. Cable News Network and many public television stations — including WEDU, Channel 3, locally — did broadcast live, and viewers saw the routine turn into disaster.

The final seconds went like this: "Go at throttle up," flight directors told Challenger's crew, noting the ship had achieved full engine power. "Roger, go at throttle up," said Mike Smith, the pilot.

Seconds later, there was an explosion, followed by the devastating Space Age fireball.

At Mission Control, there was silence.

Not a word was heard from the five men and two women aboard the ship.

Debris cut white swatches through the sky, falling into the Atlantic Ocean. One of the booster rockets was seen floating down on its parachute.

Spectators, including the parents of McAuliffe and family members of the six astronauts, watched in helpless horror in the frosty fields at Kennedy Space Center.

McAuliffe's parents, Ed and Grace Corrigan, of Framingham, Mass., stood silently during the launch, arm in arm. A NASA official climbed off the bleachers, walked to them and said: "The vehicle has exploded."

Corrigan looked back at him. "The vehicle has exploded?" she asked. He nodded silently, and the Corriganes were quickly led away.

"Obviously, a major malfunction," was the first word from NASA, following seconds of agonized silence.

Challenger fell in pieces about 18 miles from the launch pad. Debris was so heavy that for several minutes NASA directed rescue craft to stay out of the area.

The launch, scheduled for 9:38 a.m. EST, had been delayed two hours while officials analyzed the possibility that foot-long launch-pad icicles might cause problems. But after liftoff, at 11:38 a.m., the NASA commentator, Nesbitt, reported systems were normal.

"Three engines running normally," he noted. "Three good fuel cells. Three good APUs (auxiliary power units). Velocity 22,057 feet per sec-



AP photo  
Christa McAuliffe posed in July with her husband, Steven, daughter, Caroline, and son, Scott.

ond (1,400 miles per hour), altitude 4.3 nautical miles (4.9 statute miles), downrange distance 3 nautical miles (3.4 statute miles).

"Engines throttling up, three engines now 104 percent (normal)." Then the final exchange with pilot Smith. Then the explosion.

NASA cameras were trained on the spacecraft. While slow-speed replays did not pinpoint the source of the explosion, from one angle it seemed it might have come at one of the boosters, the two rockets that provide the ship its initial boost to space before peeling away to Earth.

Stressing that he was only speculating, Sen. John Glenn, D-Ohio, the first American to orbit Earth, said, "What I thought I saw was the first flame coming out of the solid (rocket booster)."

After that initial blast, the slow motion showed an explosion of the huge external fuel tank, which carried half-a-million gallons of super-cold, super-volatile liquid oxygen and hydrogen. Challenger, dwarfed by the fuel tank, burst into pieces.

## Shuttle Briefs

### First lady saw explosion

WASHINGTON — Nancy Reagan, watching Tuesday's launch of the space shuttle on television at the White House, exclaimed "Oh, my God, no!" when the Challenger exploded across the screen.

The first lady was alone in the private quarters of the executive mansion when she viewed the tragedy, according to her press secretary Elaine Crispin.

Nancy Reagan spoke with President Reagan by telephone after the explosion, Crispin said.

### McAuliffe had life insurance

NEW YORK — Christa McAuliffe, the New Hampshire schoolteacher who was aboard the orbiter Challenger when it exploded Tuesday, received a gift of a \$1 million personal accident insurance policy from an international satellite and space insurance firm.

The policy, donated last week by Corroon & Black Inspace Inc., included all McAuliffe's activities while she was a passenger aboard the shuttle, the company said.

Corroon & Black Inspace Inc. of Washington said its trading partner, Crawley Warren & Co. Ltd., arranged the insurance on the Lloyd's of London insurance market.

### Voyager briefing delayed

PASADENA, Calif. — Scientists and NASA officials, who watched closed-circuit monitors in disbelief as the space shuttle Challenger exploded after launch, canceled Tuesday's briefings on the Voyager 2's exploration of Uranus.

Deputy Voyager project scientist Ellis Miner said the mood among scientists was "about as gloomy as you can expect. We've been dealing in the unmanned space program for a long time, and we're always upset by anything that goes wrong. But something of this nature is a major disaster, and it's hard to express how you feel."

### Newspaper puts out free extra

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — The Commercial Appeal of Memphis, a morning newspaper, said Tuesday it was publishing an extra edition on the explosion of the space shuttle Challenger.

The edition is the paper's first extra since the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in November 1963.

Managing Editor Colleen Conant said the eight-page edition would consist entirely of news, culled from wire reports and local reaction, and would be distributed free throughout the city.

### Citizen-in-space doubts raised

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Officials said Tuesday there is no way to determine immediately what effect the explosion of Challenger will have on efforts to send the next private citizen, a journalist, into space.

Next fall, the first reporter is scheduled to blast into space aboard a shuttle mission following a lengthy selection process that started this month.

"At this point, we're ferrying all calls to NASA," said a statement released by the directors of the Journalist-In-Space project.

### Ford cancels ad featuring shuttle

DETROIT — Ford Motor Co. announced Tuesday it will cancel its national advertising campaign tying its newly introduced Aerostar minivan to the space



Nancy Reagan exclaimed "Oh, my God, no!" when she was watching television Tuesday and saw the space shuttle explode.

shuttle because of Challenger's explosion. "We have made an immediate decision to pull all national television advertisements featuring the Aerostar and the space shuttle," Ford spokesman Mike Moran said.

Moran said print deadlines on some magazines would prevent the No. 2 carmaker from canceling all ads immediately.

### Mood at NASA one of disbelief

WASHINGTON — Orlando Gutierrez shook his head in disbelief.

"See all these faces?" he asked pointing to a group of space agency employees. "Those are not the faces of sadness. They are expressionless, stunned. It is one of those feelings that it really did not happen."

The word spread quickly through the federal building that the space shuttle exploded in a ball of flames 72 seconds after blastoff and hurtled into the Atlantic Ocean.

The NASA auditorium was filled with television cameras and reporters waiting for official reports on what caused the disaster. But in this case, at least in this town, it was the officials who were being briefed through television and wire service reports.

### Shuttle built to survive sea landing

CAPE CANAVERAL — Space shuttles are built to survive emergency landings in water, but only if the gliding descent is made with the ship in full control and the touchdown is relatively smooth.

"We've never ditched anything quite that fast but we've got a lot of capability there," commander Robert Overmyer, a veteran of two shuttle missions, said in an interview before the shuttle Challenger disaster Tuesday.

But the landing would have to be smooth with the spaceship intact and under control. Challenger was carrying the heaviest payload yet flown in the shuttle program and weighed 268,471 pounds at liftoff, not counting the external fuel tank and solid rocket boosters.

### No emergency system on board

WASHINGTON — The space shuttle is the first manned spaceship to fly without an emergency escape system.

The shuttle Columbia had two ejection seats for its first four test flights, when it was flown by two pilots, but the ejection mechanism was deactivated for later flights.

The shuttles Challenger, Discovery and Atlantis were not equipped with escape systems.

The original American manned spacecraft, the Mercury capsule, had a rocket tower to pull it away from an exploding rocket. The two-man Gemini capsules had ejection seats and the three-seat Apollo moon ship used an escape rocket system.

## Teacher

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"bring back the wonder of it all" and convey that sense of wonder to her students.

"We hear about military and political and economic history, we don't find out what the ordinary person was doing," she said then. "So like a woman on the conestoga wagons pioneering the West, I too would be able to bring back my thoughts in my journal to make that a part of our history."

During Challenger's flight, which NASA took great pains to publicize, McAuliffe had planned to film various demonstrations and conduct two 15-minute "lessons" from orbit for broadcast by the Public Broadcasting System to school rooms around the nation.

"I think it's going to be very exciting for kids to be able to turn on the TV and see the teacher teaching from space," she said at a crew news conference.

"I'm hoping that this is going to elevate the teaching profession in the eyes of the public and of those potential teachers out there and hopefully one of the maybe secondary objectives of this is students are going to be looking at me and perhaps thinking of going into teaching as professions."

Born in Boston, McAuliffe held a master's degree in education from Bowie State College in Bowie, Md. She held a variety of teaching assignments, all in junior high and high school, and was a member of the National Council of Social Stud-

ies and other education organizations.

Married and the mother of two children, McAuliffe began training for the mission in September at the Johnson Space Center in Houston. Despite constant interruptions for interviews and personal appearances, she kept her lively sense of humor and gung-ho enthusiasm for the chance to fly in space.

"I haven't had an awful lot of (free) time," she said in an interview. "The only thing I can truly say I have not missed this year is averaging grades, which I hate to do."

McAuliffe experienced brief moments of weightlessness in a NASA cargo plane and danced through the sky in a sleek T-38 jet trainer to give her experience in high performance aircraft.

She worked through a stack of training manuals and learned the intricacies of life in orbit from cooking her dinner to using the shuttle's high-tech million-dollar toilet.

"They didn't expect you to be a technician. They certainly didn't expect you to fix anything or throw any switches," she said. "They just wanted to make sure you felt comfortable and that you were self sufficient aboard the flight."

As for free time, McAuliffe had little, if any, during her training. One of her few trips back to Concord in the fall was interrupted by a quick flight to Washington and dinner with President Reagan.

While she walked into the "teacher in space" program with her eyes open, she said being away from her family was difficult and that she missed hugging her kids at night.

### Defense program gets top priority

Newhouse News Service

WASHINGTON — The space shuttle's biggest single customer, the Defense Department, could be affected the least by any delay in this year's launch schedule resulting from Tuesday's fiery disaster.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration is required to give the Defense Department first rights to a launch in the event of a conflict or schedule crunch.

"National security has priority," NASA spokesman Ken Atchison said.

Three shuttle missions this year are to be devoted to defense payloads, and a fourth is set for Jan. 1, 1987.

Defense Department spokesman Maj. Fred Lash said Tuesday that

Challenger, the orbiter destroyed earlier in the day, was to have been used for only one of this year's military missions.

The other 1986 missions, scheduled for July and September, are "on track" unless the shuttle fleet remains grounded that long, Lash said.

The orbiter Discovery is to be used in the July 15 mission, and Columbia for the Sept. 4 launch.

Military activities are to account for about a third of the shuttle program's business through 1994, based on an eventual launch rate of 24 per year, according to a NASA-Air Force agreement. Although many of the activities are classified, they are to include satellite deployment and tests for President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative.