

Proxmire Says GAO Supports Charge

Post Sports

The General Accounting Office has reported to Sen. William Proxmire (D-Wis.) that an Air Force general spent \$670,000 in public funds to convert his aircraft into a plush executive jet.

Proxmire, who requested the report, earlier had accused Gen. Jack Catton of spending \$430,000 to refurbish the jet he uses as head of the Air Force Logistics Command.

"General Catton has played fast and loose with public funds and probably has vio-

lated Air Force regulations," said Proxmire. "He should be severely reprimanded as an example to other big spenders in the military."

Proxmire said the congressional agency's report confirmed his charges that Catton installed a specially designed galley with a range, freezer and trash compactor in the plane. Two divans that fold down into beds were added, he said.

"A sink and cabinet cost \$4,986 and three bathrooms

were installed for \$2,640," said the senator. "Carpeting and fabric in Air Force blue were added at a cost of \$3,000.

The plane is a four-engine converted C-135 jet tanker.

GAO said the money for the renovation came from two sources—aircraft modification funds and operation and maintenance allotments.

Proxmire said that the modification funds are justified before Congress as necessary to correct safety features. The other funds usually go for rou-

line servicing of aircraft, he said.

"The GAO concluded its investigation by stating that in view of fund shortages, the expenditures for this project were not the most prudent use of available funds," said Proxmire.

A Pentagon spokesman said the Air Force could not agree or disagree with the figures cited by GAO since the renovation is still under way at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio.

He said that the Air Force had conducted its own investigation and found nothing wrong with the way the funds were being spent.

"The modification of the aircraft is not out of line for aircraft used for VIPs, military and civilian," he said.

He also denied that the aircraft is for the personal use of Catton, who is stationed at Wright-Patterson. He said the jet was used by military and civilian logistics teams much of the time.