

James E. Webb resigned the post.

Reports and rumors indicate that a prospective appointment to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare's post of assistant secretary for health and scientific affairs was being held up by opposition from the American Medical Association. The supposed appointee is Dr. John H. Knowles, general director of the Massachusetts General Hospital. He is allegedly disliked by the AMA because he is too "hospital oriented" rather than "physician oriented." He has advocated a thorough overhaul of the way in which health care is delivered to patients.

Officials of HEW will neither confirm nor deny that the appointment of Dr. Knowles is under consideration, and a spokesman says, "I do not know of any appointment or any announcement being imminent."

A representative of Massachusetts

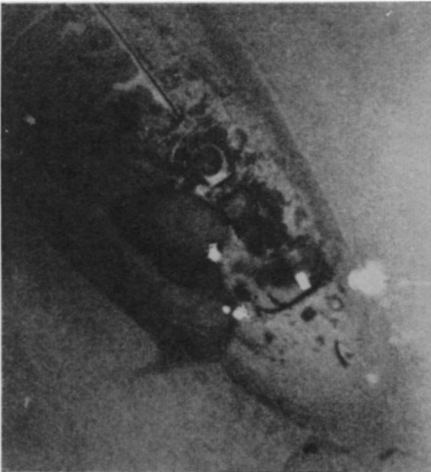
General says Dr. Knowles refuses to comment on whether or not the job has been offered.

Washington circles also say that National Science Foundation Director Leland J. Haworth intends to retire when his term expires in June, but there is no official confirmation that this is his intention nor any word on the name of a possible successor.

Posts President Nixon will not have to fill include those of Dr. Herbert L. Ley Jr., who is staying on as director of the Food and Drug Administration; Dr. John S. Foster, also staying on as director of defense research and engineering; Dr. Robert Q. Marston, who will continue to head the National Institutes of Health; Dr. Allen V. Astin, director of the National Bureau of Standards, and Dr. Lee A. DuBridge, already appointed director of the Office of Science and Technology.

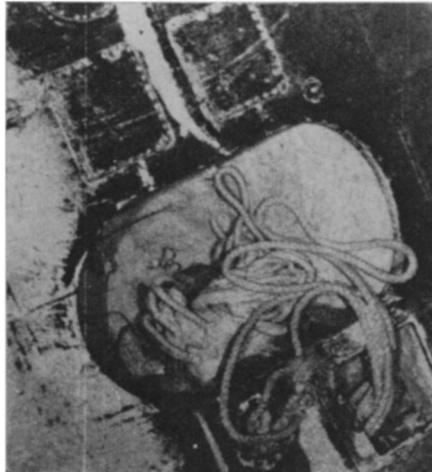
SCORPION

Fragments but no conclusion



U.S. Navy

Bow structure of downed Scorpion.



U.S. Navy

Messenger buoy hatch never opened.

The Navy court of inquiry that has been investigating the destruction of the submarine Scorpion (SN: 11/10, p. 432) since last summer has announced that it could not determine the cause of the submarine's loss from the evidence before it.

The court ended its inquiry inconclusively, and recommended further examination of the wreckage, which lies on the ocean bottom in more than 10,000 feet of water 400 miles southwest of the Azores. Sometime early this year the deep submersible Trieste II will go to the spot to see what more information it may be able to find.

The evidence before the court was enough, however, to rule out a few suggested causes of the accident. Scorpion did not hit a seamount since there are none in the area. Its nuclear power plant was ruled out as a cause of

disaster, and there was no evidence to suggest sabotage.

The court also concluded that "the loss of Scorpion is not attributable to the delayed completion of her full Subsafe (submarine safety) program." Allegations had been made that the submarine had not been sufficiently re-modeled to be safe for extradeep diving, but the court found that "Scorpion's overall material condition was excellent and none of the outstanding ship alterations . . . were required for safe operation to her restricted depth."

The court took 1,334 pages of testimony and examined 232 exhibits, including charts, graphs, radio messages, diagrams, letters and other documents, while reaching its non-conclusion. Navy officials are reluctant to speculate on possible causes that haven't been ruled out by the evidence. ◇

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