

News Digest

By the Associated Press

Von Bulow offer rejected

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — Claus von Bulow said Thursday he agreed to divorce his comatose wife provided his stepchildren dropped their civil suit against him and split their inheritance with his daughter, but the offer was rejected.

The Danish-born socialite, acquitted last year of twice trying to kill his heiress wife, Martha "Sunny" von Bulow, also said the offer included his renouncing of any claims on his estimated \$14 million share of her \$75 million gas and utilities fortune, her Newport mansion and their luxurious New York apartment.

"I agreed to any formula that would take me out of the picture and give Cosima her fair share, including divorce," von Bulow said in a telephone interview with The Associated Press from the Fifth Avenue apartment. "It was turned down categorically. This is

confidential information. I can't discuss it more."

Alexander von Auersberg and his sister, Annie-Laurie "Ala" von Auersberg Kneissl, Mrs. von Bulow's children by a previous marriage have fought von Bulow's efforts to reinstate Cosima von Bulow's claim to her share of the \$40 million estate left by Mrs. von Bulow's mother, the late Annie Laurie Crawford Aitken.

They have also sought to void von Bulow's interest in his wife's estate and force him to repay any money and return any property he has received from her estate since her first coma in 1979.

Before Mrs. Aitken's death — and before the 1985 retrial of von Bulow that ended in his acquittal — she disinherited Miss von Bulow because her granddaughter stood by her father during his four-year ordeal.

The stepchildren also have prevented their half-sister from using Clarendon Court, the palatial Newport mansion where Mrs. von Bulow twice became comatose during Christmas holiday visits.

Von Bulow said Thursday he made the settlement offer about four months ago, and received the rejection two weeks ago.

Michael Armstrong, the New York lawyer who represents the stepchildren, told WJAR-TV of Providence that the offer was turned down because of loopholes he said would have allowed Miss von Bulow to funnel money to her father.

The stepchildren filed the \$56 million civil suit in U.S. District Court in Manhattan last year following von Bulow's acquittal by a Rhode Island Superior Court jury after a widely publicized nine-week trial.

Romanian immigrants seek asylum

WASHINGTON — A Romanian family sent Capitol officials scrambling Thursday when they approached guards and asked for political asylum. It turned out they apparently have been living legally in California for four years.

The episode took an even more bizarre twist when an official disclosed the family complained of being bombarded in their home by some sort of radiation.

The family of nine turned themselves over to U.S. Capitol police, complete with 20 to 25 pieces of luggage, and officials initially treated the matter as a defection, contacting the State Department and immigration officials.

The situation became confused quickly when immigration authorities determined the family already had U.S. visas good until 1988 and that some had already been granted permanent residence status.

Eventually, Senate Sergeant At Arms Ernest Garcia disclosed that one family member had handed a policeman a letter containing "statements with respect to bombardment . . . of a house they were staying in in California that was affecting their health and well being. It was radiation of some kind."

Several hours after the incident started unfolding, the family was still at Capitol police headquarters and it was unclear what was to become of them.

He said the family, which had arrived in Washington only recently, told officials they also had sought asylum in Sweden, but had been turned down by Swedish authorities. Immigration officials had no confirmation of that statement, he said.

Seven members of the family approached officers on the northern edge of the Capitol grounds at mid-morning,

Garcia said. The group included four boys ages 12 to 18, a man who appeared to be their father and an elderly couple who apparently were grandparents of the teen-agers.

Two hours later, a boy about 7 years old and a young man also presented themselves to police, and Garcia said it was believed they were members of the same family.

He said some family members mentioned during questioning that they were victims of political and religious prosecution.

"What they are asking for is totally unclear," said Verne Jervis of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, who said at least some members of the family had been granted permanent resident status years ago, based on a fear of retaliation if they returned to their homeland.

Detained journalist opposes swap

NEW YORK — Nicholas S. Daniloff, the U.S. News & World Report correspondent jailed in Moscow, doesn't want to be traded for a Soviet spy suspect, his editor said Thursday after returning from the Soviet Union.

A State Department official in Washington said the Soviet government has not responded to the U.S. proposal to exchange Daniloff, accused by the Soviets of spying, for an understanding that a Soviet physicist accused of spying in the United States would be sent home after his trial.

Mortimer Zuckerman, the owner and editor-in-chief of U.S. News & World Report, said Daniloff was buoyed by public support, but "didn't feel it was appropriate for him to be swapped for someone clearly involved in espionage."

"He is no more a spy than John Wayne, no more involved in espionage than Gidget or any of us and it's outrageous he's kept in prison," Zuckerman said as he arrived home from Moscow.

State Department spokesman Charles E. Redman said the United States is "taking every appropriate measure, using every appropriate diplomatic contact and channel" in an effort to secure Daniloff's release.

Redman said the Soviet's "failure to resolve this satisfactorily cannot help but have a negative effect on U.S.-Soviet relations."

Another U.S. official, who demanded anonymity, said the correspondent was, in effect, "a hostage" and that the Soviets appeared unable to decide how to respond to the U.S. proposal.

Daniloff, who has not been formally charged, was arrested in a Moscow park after a Soviet acquaintance who had accepted several Stephen King novels from Daniloff more than a year ago handed him a packet that the correspondent "didn't ask for or anticipate," Zuckerman said. He called the arrest "obviously a KGB setup."

He said the packet handed to Daniloff contained Soviet newspaper articles indicating how Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev was being received in the provinces, poor quality photographs that the magazine had rejected when they were previously offered and two 35-millimeter negatives containing two maps which the KGB said were top secret.

Zuckerman said he himself favors the proposal to get Daniloff back in exchange for temporarily releasing Zakharov. Zakharov was arrested on a New York City subway platform as he allegedly gave \$1,000 to an employee of an American defense contractor for three secret documents.

U.S. set for arms talks; weights fresh proposal

WASHINGTON — The Reagan administration, set to open another round of nuclear weapons talks with a high-level Soviet delegation, may ease its proposal for a 50 percent reduction in strategic bombers, missiles and submarines, a U.S. official said Friday.

The revised approach would be an attempt to strike a compromise with the Soviets, whose latest negotiating position calls for more modest cutbacks in nuclear warheads and an overall cutback of 30 percent.

But it would still force the Soviets to make some hard choices about their arsenal of heavy land-based missiles and the destructive force, or throw-weight, of their nuclear armories.

New ceilings would be set for various categories of weapons, including a limit of 7,500 intercontinental ballistic missile warheads and cruise missiles, the official said.

The Soviets had proposed a ceiling of 8,000, while the United States would have allowed no more than 6,000.

A final decision has not been made by Reagan, who is on vacation in California.

In Brief

Reagan to give drug speech

SANTA BARBARA, Calif. — President Reagan and his wife, Nancy, will make a joint broadcast address to the nation on the war against drug abuse at 9 p.m. CDT Sept. 14, it was announced Thursday.

"They wanted to do it together, from their home to our homes, as parents and friends as well as the first couple, to stress the importance of all segments of our society pulling together in a common, determined effort to get rid of drugs," said spokesman Larry Speakes.

He said the Reagans are writing the speech together and will deliver it from the family quarters of the White House.

"When the chapter on how America won the war on drugs is written, the Reagans' speech is sure to be viewed as the turning point," Speakes said. Speakes said the speech is intended to "mobilize the country as never before."

He described the address as a personal appeal from the first family to wage war against drugs and said the president "may talk about some of the things he's decided to do, policy-wise."

More moons for Saturn?

NEW YORK — Scientists have detected evidence of two new moons among Saturn's rings, and researchers say they may have helped furnish the icy material that forms the rings around that planet.

"I think it's significant in terms of the dynamics and the evolution of ring systems just to know there are large bodies in there," said Len Tyler of Stanford University's Center for Radar Astronomy, co-author of a report in Thursday's issue of the British journal Nature.

Such bodies "may be sources of some ring material," Tyler said, and the new finding "is a further clue as to how rings work." He also said he believes other moons still circle undetected among the rings.

Robbery suspects nabbed

CAMPBELL, Neb. — Three gunmen with their faces painted camouflage colors held up the Campbell State Bank on Wednesday, and authorities said they later apprehended five suspects in Kansas.

Franklin County Sheriff George Schmidt said three males and two females were apprehended in northern Kansas, but he would not say where. He would not disclose any other details on the arrests.

Campbell is in south-central Nebraska, southwest of Hastings and about 25 miles north of the Kansas border.

The robbers, each carrying a handgun, entered the bank about 10:45 a.m. and forced employees to lie down behind a counter, chief sheriff's deputy Jerry Archer said. The gunmen then took an undetermined amount of money from cash register drawers and ran to a car about a block from the bank, Archer said.

Authorities at first described the getaway car as a 1970 Dodge, but Archer later described it as a light blue Ford Maverick-style car from about 1970.

Archer also said the suspects were believed to be between the ages of 15 and 20.

Bank president Dwayne Hendricks said he could not comment on the robbery until reports were completed. He did say that no one was hurt.

Ex-Nebraskan spots Bigfoot

HASTINGS, Neb. — Although some people question his story, Clayton Paulson says he's convinced that what he saw walking on a hill in California last month was the legendary and elusive creature Bigfoot.

Paulson, 38, a former Hastings resident who now lives in Fresno, Calif., told his tale in an interview Tuesday. He was in Hastings this week visiting his mother.

Paulson said he saw Bigfoot the night of Aug. 4. At the time, he was working with a construction crew building a bridge in the Sequoia National Park.

He said he was getting ready for bed at the crew's campsite when he was startled by loud screeching from a hill about 700 feet away.

"I saw a big old creature walking across the top, screaming at us," he said. "It was a humanlike figure walking up there, giant-size."

Paulson said the creature screamed for two or three minutes as it walked up the hill and disappeared into the night.

Two members of the crew were natives of the area, Paulson said, "and knew that screech wasn't from any animal that inhabits the area."

"All five of us decided we weren't going to stay there that night," he said. The crew stayed in a nearby ranger's cabin.

In the morning they returned to the campsite and explored the hill where they spotted the creature.

"We found two different sets of humanlike footprints," Paulson said. "The prints had four or five toes and distinct crease marks, just like on your hand."

He said the prints ranged in size from 12 to 16 inches.

Experts: Chernobyl evacuation poor

WASHINGTON — Soviet authorities had to scrap their prepared emergency plans and start from scratch to evacuate 135,000 people after the Chernobyl nuclear accident, U.S. experts who attended an international conference said Wednesday.

"None of their emergency plans were adequate to the circumstance . . . The plan they looked at first they had to throw out," Harold Denton, director of reactor safety for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, told the NRC at a briefing on the conference held by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Denton said Soviet delegates to the meeting, which ended last weekend in Vienna, said the major lesson they learned was that "there is an absolute need for a single coordinating authority . . . one person in charge."

He said a translation of the initial Soviet plan was not yet available for comparison with U.S. emergency plans.

Denton said the direct causes of the accident were "multiple deliberate violations of procedure" and design flaws. "The causes are understood, the sequence is clear, but the details will have to be studied for a long time," he said.

Some 1,000 buses were used to evacuate 135,000 people from an 18-mile zone near Chernobyl, the site of an explosion and fire that began April 26 and sent a plume of radiation around the world. Thirty-one people died and hundreds were injured in the catastrophe.

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