

News Digest

By the Associated Press

Nicaragua shoots down plane Sandinistas claim U.S., CIA involvement

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — Sandinista helicopters arrived Tuesday at a remote jungle area to pick up a man Nicaragua claims is a U.S. military adviser who survived when a rebel transport plane was shot down, a Defense Ministry source said.

Washington said the man has no connection with the American government.

The leftist Sandinista government said the man was an adviser from El Salvador who was on a plane that was downed Sunday, 35 miles north of Costa Rica and 91 miles southeast of Managua, while carrying weapons and ammunition for Nicaraguan rebels. It said three Americans aboard were killed.

Secretary of State George P. Shultz said in Washington that the plane did not belong to the U.S. government, and a CIA spokeswoman denied Sandinista claims that the survivor was an employee of the intelligence agency.

In Managua, the Defense Ministry identified the survivor as Eugen Hafenful, 35, but said it was not certain of the spelling of his name. It said the man identified himself as a U.S. military adviser to El Salvador, but did not say whether he was a soldier, and told Sandinista troops the three men killed were Americans.

U.S. Embassy spokesman Alberto Fernandez said the embassy delivered a note to the Foreign Ministry on Tuesday morning requesting permission to meet with the survivor.



The Defense Ministry said Sandinista forces shot down the aircraft with a Soviet-made surface-to-air missile. It said the plane, tentatively identified as either a DC-6 or C-123 aircraft, carried 50,000 rounds of ammunition for Soviet-made AK-47 rifles, rocket-propelled grenades, dozens of automatic rifles, jungle boots and other military supplies.

Surgeons remove fetus, correct bladder problem

SAN FRANCISCO — Surgeons partially removed a fetus from its mother's womb, corrected a bladder problem and returned it to its previous position where it developed until birth nine weeks later, the doctors reported Tuesday.

The infant, Baby Mitchell, was later delivered in a Texas hospital by Caesarean section.

The baby is now a smiling, walking 1-year-old, the longest survivor of such an operation, according to doctors at the University of California at San Francisco. They said it was only the third such open-womb surgery since the first one was performed in 1981.

In the case of Baby Mitchell, a blockage of the fetus' urinary tract was preventing the buildup of amniotic fluid in the mother's womb, threatening to prevent the normal growth of fetal lungs and to collapse the mother's uterus.

The surgeons opened the uterus and brought out the legs and lower body of the 23-week-old fetus. The upper part of the fetus' body remained attached to the placenta inside the uterus.

Impeachment trial begins; Senate urges fair trial

WASHINGTON — Opening an impeachment trial steeped in tradition but conducted in keeping with the television era, the Senate was urged Tuesday to avoid a "rush to judgment" on U.S. District Judge Harry E. Claiborne.

With the sergeant at arms ordering silence "on pain of imprisonment" and Vice President George Bush presiding, Claiborne attorney Oscar Goodman argued for a "full and fair" hearing for the Nevada jurist, who's serving time in prison on a federal income tax evasion conviction.

Goodman, standing at a lectern on the blue-carpeted Senate chamber, portrayed Claiborne, 69, as a victim of vengeful federal prosecutors, and of hired tax preparers who bungled his returns. Goodman asked for the right to summon witnesses to the Senate floor.

Responding to the House charges, Goodman said his client may have been "grossly negligent" about his tax returns but was "not a foolish person." He said it "borders on the incredulous" to suggest that Claiborne would deliberately try to defraud the government when he knew he was targeted for prosecution by vengeful federal agents.

"Shame on him and shame on the accountant who permitted him to sign his return in blank," Goodman said of Claiborne and the accountant who prepared his 1979 tax return, Joseph Wright of Las Vegas.

LaRouche claims innocence; vows to resist arrest

WASHINGTON — Political extremist Lyndon LaRouche, his inner circle penetrated by indictments and a sweeping federal fraud investigation, declared Tuesday that "I have committed no crime" and "will not submit passively to an arrest."

LaRouche, who was not indicted, responded to the charges against 10 of his followers and five of his organizations by saying the Reagan administration will be "condemned by history" if federal prosecutors seek to charge him, after a massive raid seeking records at his headquarters in Leesburg, Va.

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In Brief

Rather recovers from attack

NEW YORK — Dan Rather, recovering from being beaten by two men in a mysterious weekend attack, anchored the "CBS Evening News" on Monday night and told his audience that he felt some stiffness but was luckier than some crime victims.

Rather, his face noticeably swollen, closed the newscast by saying he was "assaulted with violence on a Manhattan street."

"Why and exactly by whom remains unclear, and it may never be determined," he said.

Rather, 54, told police he was accosted Saturday night as he walked down Park Avenue by a well-dressed man who said, "Kenneth, what is the frequency?" When Rather responded, "I don't know what you're talking about," the questioner punched Rather and knocked him down, said Sgt. Raymond O'Donnell.

Rather ran into an apartment building, followed by the assailant and another man, still being asked, "Kenneth, what is the frequency?" O'Donnell said.

The men knocked Rather down and kicked him until the building's superintendent came to his rescue. The attackers fled.

"I do know that I was luckier than many other Americans who have been victims of violent crime, and for that I'm very thankful," he said. "Aside from a little stiffness and some bumps and bruises, I'm feeling fine."

U.S. battles for America's Cup

FREMANTLE, Australia — Stars and Stripes of the United States, skippered by Dennis Conner, defeated Azzurra of Italy by 3 minutes, 19 seconds Monday for its second victory in a preliminary round of the America's Cup challenger elimination series.

The series will determine which boat will oppose face Australia in the America's Cup finals, which begin Jan. 31.

Two other American yachts, San Francisco's USA, skippered by Tom Blackaller, and Heart of America of Chicago, skippered by Buddy Melges, also scored victories. USA beat Courageous IV of the United States, sailed by Dave Victor, while Heart of America defeated Challenge of France.

Thirteen challengers are seeking the right to face Australia's defender, still to be decided. They will compete in three round-robin series in which each boat will meet the other once during each series. Each victory in the first round-robin is worth one point. Five points is given for each victory in the second round-robin and 12 to each winner in the third series.

For the second straight day, Stars and Stripes trailed as Azzurra crossed the starting line four seconds ahead of the San Diego boat. But Stars and Stripes took the lead on the first windward leg and never was headed.

It was the second straight victory for Conner, considered the world's best match race skipper, over an Italian boat. In Sunday's opener, he easily defeated Italia.

Commonwealth official wants new trial

LINCOLN — Former Commonwealth Savings Co. officer Marvin Copple Tuesday filed a motion in Lancaster County District Court requesting a new trial, citing seven errors allegedly committed by the court.

The motion also asks Lancaster County District Court Judge Robert R. Camp to reverse a \$500,000 judgment handed down against Copple Sept. 29.

Camp handed down the judgment against Copple after the case, originally scheduled for jury trial earlier in September, was submitted to Camp Sept. 5 through mutual agreement of the parties.

The judgment was obtained on two causes of action filed by the state Department of Banking and Finance involving a 1980 real estate transaction between Copple and Phillip and Virginia Stettinger.

In his motion for a new trial, Copple alleged that the court erred in finding that there was sufficient evidence to find against Copple in the Sept. 29 judgment.

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