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Off The Wire

National and international news from the Reuter News Report

President Reagan signs dairy measure

WASHINGTON — President Reagan Tuesday signed a bill creating a 15-month program to pay dairy farmers to reduce milk production. A nine-member delegation of congressional leaders earlier Tuesday had urged him to approve the measure, which seeks to reduce the government's increasing stockpiles of milk, cheese and butter.

White House political aides had warned Reagan that a veto would jeopardize the reelection chances of a number of key Republican senators, but budget officials had opposed the bill because of its cost and the dairy payment scheme. The bill will cut the government's milk price support to \$12.60 per 100 pounds from \$13.10, and pay farmers \$10 for every 100 pounds of milk not produced. It also will freeze price supports for tobacco.

Space experiments begin

HOUSTON — The six astronauts aboard the space shuttle Columbia began 25 scientific experiments during their first day in orbit and all were going well, the mission's chief scientist said Tuesday. Dr. Richard Chappell said Spacelab, the European-built laboratory in the shuttle's hold, was proving a good platform for scientific experiments.

The only problem reported was the partial failure of an electronic switching device that relays deta and commands between Spacelab's computers and several instruments carried outside it in the shuttle's open cargo hold. Mission officials said the computers were able to send commands to the instruments but the devices were not able to relay data back to the computers.

The crew members spent the major portion of their time Tuesday conducting experiments on themselves to study the effects of space flight and weightlessness on the human body.

New ties with Israel

WASHINGTON - President Reagan Tuesday announced new political and military ties with Israel that he said would give priority to dealing with the threat posed by increased Soviet involvement in the Middle East, Reagan and Israeli Prime Minister Yltxhak Shamir, after their second day of talks, said the two countries are setting up a joint politicalmilitary committee to examine possible joint maneuvers and stockpiling U.S. military supplies in Israel. They also reaffirmed their commitment to the May 17 accords under which Israel agreed to withdraw its troops from Lebanon if Syrian and Palestinian fighters pull out as well. The accords, denounced by Syria, are expected to be the focus of U.S. official talks when Lebanese President Amin Gemayel arrives sometime this week.

Rape victim jailed

OTTAWA, Canada — The victim of an alleged rape has been jailed for one week for refusing to testify against two men who were charged with assaulting her but were set free for lack of evidence. Justice Joseph O'Brien decided to jail the woman because, he said, failure to do so would "encourage anarchy" and make desperate and dangerous men think they could threaten witnesses. The woman said she refused to testify because she feared for herself and her family.

Amnesty finds lost books

CHICAGO — The Chicago Public Library reported Tuesday that it recovered 83,590 lost books during a weeklong amneaty in which borrowers could return overdue books without paying fines.

No more British motorcycles

COVENTRY, England — The once-dominant British motorcycle industry was laid to rest Tuesday when the machinery of Triumph Motorcycle went under the auctioneer's gavel. Triumph, based at Meriden in central England, was the sole survivor of an industry that had dominated world markets with motorcycles from Norton, BSA, Velocatte and Vincent until & solispeed in the face of Japanese competition.