

News Digest

By The Associated Press

Israeli leader says he'll go to Jordan for peace talks

UNITED NATIONS — Prime Minister Shimon Peres told the General Assembly's 40th anniversary session Monday that he is willing to go to Jordan to negotiate peace in the Middle East.

Most Arab delegations, including Jordan's, walked out when Peres took the podium, their customary reaction when Israeli leaders speak. The delegation from Egypt, which signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1979, remained in the hall.

"I hereby proclaim: The state of war between Israel and Jordan should be terminated immediately," Peres said. "Israel declares this readily in the hope that King Hussein is willing to reciprocate this step."

Peres suggested negotiations that "can take place before the end of this year, in Jordan, Israel or any location as

mutually agreed upon. We will be pleased to attend an opening meeting in Amman," Jordan's capital.

He was one of 20 speakers Monday, including President Daniel Ortega of Nicaragua, who said he would not remove the suspension of civil rights imposed last week until the United States ends "state terrorism" against his Central American country.

The Israeli prime minister seemed to be answering a speech King Hussein of Jordan delivered here Sept. 27, in which Hussein declared his readiness to negotiate "promptly and directly" with Israel within the framework of an international peace conference.

The Peres gesture was reminiscent of the 1977 offer by the late President Anwar Sadat of Egypt to travel to Jerusalem. The trip started the process that led to the 1979 peace treaty.

There were gaps between the posi-

tion expressed Monday by Peres and Hussein's call for a conference including all parties to the Middle East conflict and the five permanent members of the Security Council: the United States, Britain, China, France and the Soviet Union.

Peres eased Israel's opposition to such an international conference with his statement that negotiations "may be initiated with the support of an international forum as agreed upon by the negotiating states," but said the actual peace talks "are to be conducted directly, between states."

He seemed to rule out participation by the Palestine Liberation Organization. Hussein and PLO chairman Yasser Arafat reached agreement in February on a joint approach to peace in the Middle East, and the king insists the PLO be involved.

After the hijack Picking up the pieces

Craxi asked to form new government

ROME — Bettino Craxi was asked to form a new government Monday, four days after he resigned as prime minister. Politicians expect him to try to resurrect the same coalition that fell apart over the Achille Lauro hijacking.

"I will immediately start work to resolve the political crisis, which does not lend itself to easy solutions," Craxi told reporters after President Francesco Cossiga named him premier-designate.

Politicians said Craxi would try to form a government with the same four parties that joined his Socialists in the former coalition — The Christian Democrats, Republicans, Social Democrats and Liberals.

Craxi's previous government was the 44th since World War II and in another month would have been the longest-lived.

Political sources said another five-party coalition headed by Craxi would be the most realistic way of obtaining a comfortable parliamentary majority and fending off Communist Party attempts to gain a foothold.

U.S. envoy to Egypt says meeting a 'good first step'

CAIRO, Egypt — President Reagan's special envoy said a meeting Monday with President Hosni Mubarak was "a good first step" toward easing diplomatic tensions over Egypt's handling of the Achille Lauro hijacking, incident and the U.S. interception of the plane carrying them out of Egypt.

John C. Whitehead, deputy secretary of state, told reporters he gave Mubarak a letter from Reagan that "expressed his continued commitment to close U.S.-Egyptian relations and his hope that we can now put our recent differences behind us."

He came to Egypt from Italy, whose coalition government collapsed over Prime Minister Bettino Craxi's decision to release Palestinian guerrilla leader Mohammed Abbas accompanied the four alleged hijackers out of Egypt on an Egyptian jetliner which took off 10 hours after Mubarak said they had already left the country.

Mubarak had accused the United States of treachery for intercepting the Egyptian airliner on Oct. 10 and forcing it to land in Sicily, where the alleged hijackers were arrested and charged with piracy and the murder of an American passenger aboard the cruise ship.

Whitehead left Cairo on Monday afternoon. U.S. Embassy spokesman Edward Bernier would not comment on

his destination, but air controllers at Cairo airport said Whitehead's pilot filed a flight plan for Tunis, Tunisia.

A visit to Tunis by Whitehead was expected to be aimed at smoothing diplomatic feathers ruffled by the Reagan administration's refusal to condemn Israel's Oct. 1 air raid on the Palestine Liberation Organization headquarters outside the Tunisian capital.

Egyptian officials did not comment on Whitehead's meeting with Mubarak. Sources in the Egyptian government, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Mubarak is anxious to avoid further worsening of relations with the United States. Egypt received \$2 billion in U.S. aid during the last fiscal year.

In a statement read to reporters after Monday's meeting, Whitehead described relations between the United States and Egypt as "close and vital and important." He added: "Today's meeting was a good first step toward furthering this relationship."

Whitehead said he assured Mubarak that the U.S. takeover of the Egyptian aircraft was "in no way directed against Egypt or its people."

Whitehead said Mubarak explained Egypt's actions in the hijack drama, and the U.S. envoy said the two countries "now have a better understanding of each other's point of view."

Klinghoffer eulogized; slayers vilified

NEW YORK — Leon Klinghoffer's body, cast into the sea during a terrorist hijacking, came to rest in the earth on Monday. The death of this crippled man was "a holocaust of one," said his rabbi.

More than 600 attended the funeral at Manhattan's Temple Shaaray Tefila, including Gov. Mario Cuomo, Mayor Edward Koch, Sens. Daniel P. Moynihan and Alfonse D'Amato, and two representatives of the Israeli government.

Klinghoffer, wheelchair-bound because of two strokes, was aboard the Italian cruise liner Achille Lauro when it was hijacked on Oct. 7. Authorities say the terrorists shot him and then ordered crew members to throw Klinghoffer and his wheelchair into the Mediterranean.

The body washed onto the shore in Syria. Four men have been charged by Italian prosecutors with the piracy and murder.

Klinghoffer's wife, Marilyn, kissed her hand and touched it to the coffin as she entered the synagogue. Her daughters — Lisa, 34, and Ilisa, 28 — walked beside her.

A family friend, Charlotte Spiegel, also spoke. She remembered a "very good friend, a gentle man of humble origins," who was "the victim of a mad and depraved bunch of criminals." Spiegel also was a passenger on the cruise ship.

In Brief

Reagan seeks arms sales to Jordan

WASHINGTON — President Reagan on Monday formally proposed selling \$1.9 billion in aircraft and other sophisticated arms to Jordan, igniting a fight with Congress that administration supporters conceded won't be won without major concessions.

Even as Pentagon officials issued the formal arms sale notification to Congress, Sen. Richard Lugar, R-Ind., chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, was exploring the possibility of drafting legislation that would make the transaction contingent on progress toward peace in the Middle East.

The Pentagon, in releasing the formal notification, said it was asking Congress to approve the sale of 40 advanced jet fighters and 300 air-to-air missiles at an estimated cost of \$1.1 billion.

Also proposed was the sale of improved HAWK air-defense missile batteries and shoulder-fired Stinger missiles for roughly \$710 million, plus 32 Bradley M3-calvary fighting vehicles for an estimated \$75 million.

Nebraska Shares relief plan launched

LINCOLN — A statewide program was launched Monday that will ask Nebraska farmers to donate grain to help feed famine-stricken Africa and reduce mountainous surpluses that have plagued U.S. agriculture.

"We find ourselves in an intolerable position," said Sen. Loran Schmit of Bellwood, who announced the start of the Nebraska Shares campaign along with Sen. Don Wesley of Lincoln.

"While millions of people are starving around the world, the Nebraska farmer and the American farmer is suffering severe financial difficulty because of low commodity prices" caused by a huge surplus of farm products, Schmit said at a Statehouse news conference.

Milk, Moscone slayer White kills self

SAN FRANCISCO — Former Supervisor Dan White, who shot and killed Mayor George Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk in their City Hall offices in 1978, committed suicide Monday, city officials said.

White killed himself by carbon monoxide poisoning by attaching a garden hose to the exhaust pipe of his car and passing the other end into the passenger compartment, said Police Chief Cornelius Murphy.

"I am very sorry to hear that Dan White has taken his life," said Mayor Dianne Feinstein, Moscone's successor who announced the City Hall shootings almost seven years ago.

White shot Milk, a popular gay supervisor, and Moscone on Nov. 27, 1978, just days after resigning his elected office. He had come to the mayor's office on the day of the shootings to ask Moscone to give him his job back, but Moscone refused.

The former police officer and firefighter was convicted of voluntary manslaughter instead of murder on a defense of diminished capacity due in part to the consumption of junk foods. The defense became famous as the "Twinkie defense."

Local phone rate hikes lower than '84

WASHINGTON — Local phone rate increases, which were \$3.9 billion last year as the telephone industry adjusted to the breakup of the Bell System, are much smaller this year, according to a federal report released Monday.

In cases completed in the first nine months of 1985, public utility commissions in 31 states and the District of Columbia have approved 49 percent of the \$1.7 billion in revenue increases requested, or local rate hikes of \$828.9 million.

Pending in 26 states are another \$2.7 billion in increases. In some of those states, rate increase requests from previous years were completed this year and new ones are already on file, some of them from different phone companies.

Even if all of those are approved — and history shows only half of revenue requests are honored — the total increases for this year would fall hundreds of millions of dollars below last year's \$3.9 billion.

The rate hikes do not all show up in monthly residential phone bills.

Smoking linked to lower birth rate

BOSTON — Intensive care for babies born too small because their mothers smoked during pregnancy costs Americans \$152 million a year in medical expenses, a new study concludes.

A variety of studies in the past have found that smoking mothers are more likely than non-smokers to produce unusually small babies, or those under 5.5 pounds (nearly 300,000 babies in 1983).

Gerry Oster, who conducted the analysis, is a medical economist at Policy Analysis Inc., a Brookline, Mass., firm that researches health cost issues. He presented his findings last week at a conference on smoking and reproductive health in San Francisco.

On average, the babies of women who smoke are seven ounces lighter than those of non-smokers. Research has shown that the more women smoke, the smaller their babies tend to be. Smoking more than a pack a day doubles the likelihood of producing a low birth-weight baby.

Oster concluded that maternal smoking is responsible for 5 percent of the total annual cost of newborn intensive care in the United States.

Drug eases cocaine use, cravings

DALLAS — Researchers have eased Cocaine craving and withdrawal with a drug that triggers production of an important brain chemical partly depleted in chronic cocaine users.

Cocaine use gradually reduces the brain's supply of a chemical that certain brain cells use to communicate. The chemical, called dopamine, is believed to play a critical role in the pleasure centers of the brain, said Dr. Todd Estroff in a report Monday in Dallas at the annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience.

But the brain cannot cope with such large amounts of dopamine, and so the system for maintaining adequate levels of the substance is adversely affected, Estroff said. Estroff theorized that the low levels of dopamine produced a craving for cocaine.

He tested the theory by giving two heavy cocaine users a commercially available prescription drug known to stimulate dopamine production in the brain. The drug users were asked to rate their cocaine craving on a scale of one to 100, before and after taking the drug, called bromocriptine.

Both cocaine users reported sharply decreased cocaine craving within minutes after they had taken the drug.

Newsmakers

A roundup of the day's happenings

An expert on sexual preference law and gay rights said Monday that quarantining AIDS victims would be unconstitutional. Rhonda Rivera, associate dean of the Ohio State University College of Law, also blasted Lincoln psychologist Paul Cameron, who has been promoting such a quarantine. "The only person I would like to see quarantined is Paul Cameron," Rivera said after lecturing UNL law students on how to represent gay clients.

Ted Wright of Lincoln recently puffed his way to victory at the annual competition of the International Association of Pipe Smokers Club of Moline, Ill. Wright, a

physical education teacher at West Lincoln Elementary School and a smoke shop owner, smoked his 3.3-gram issue of tobacco for 81 minutes and 20 seconds Saturday to beat 38 competitors.

The winners of the Inland Daily Press Association's 38th Annual Local Public Affairs New Contest have been announced, with the Lincoln Star winning second place in its division of the Sustained Coverage category for articles on credit problems facing Nebraska farmers and ranchers. The articles were written by farm reporter Dan Looker.