

News Digest

By The Associated Press

Caller threatens to murder 6 U.S. hostages in Lebanon

BEIRUT, Lebanon — An anonymous caller said Islamic Jihad extremists planned to kill their half-dozen American hostages Thursday, and a second caller claimed they were dead. But no bodies were found in the designated spot.

The captives were to be "executed" by firing squad because indirect negotiations with the United States had reached "a dead end," the first man said in a call to a Western news agency.

In Washington, however, a White House official said "contacts" in the Lebanon hostage case had not broken down. And President Reagan said of the death threat, "Evidently there is no substantiation of that at all."

Since the calls could not be authenticated, it was impossible to determine

whether they were a macabre hoax or simply part of a war of nerves being waged by the shadowy Shiite Moslem faction to pressure Washington into making a deal.

Six Americans are missing in Lebanon. Islamic Jihad claimed Oct. 4 it killed one of them, diplomat William Buckley, 57. But no body has turned up.

Islamic Jihad, or Islamic Holy War, believed made up of fundamentalist followers of Iran's Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, had said it would release the Americans when Kuwait frees 17 Shiite comrades serving prison terms for the bombings of the U.S. and French embassies in Kuwait in December 1983.

A representative of the news agency, which declined to be identified, said the first call came Thursday morning

from a man who, speaking in classical Arabic, declared the American hostages would be shot by firing squad.

"We wish to tell America that the sad end of the American hostages will not be the last. We shall shake the earth at America's feet and the feet of its agents," said the caller.

He promised to call again to say where the bodies had been dumped. That call was never made. But another man, speaking colloquial Lebanese Arabic, called. He said that "all the bodies of the Americans, including Buckley's," had been dumped in the basement of the derelict, shell-pocked Coca-Cola factory in the Kola district of South Beirut.

Policemen, reporters and Moslem militiamen found nothing.

Sailor given subpoena

NEW ORLEANS — A lawyer for the Senate Agriculture Committee arrived here Thursday carrying a subpoena for a ship-jumping Soviet sailor in a last-minute bid to make certain the seaman wants to return to the Soviet Union.

The subpoena, written in English, Russian and Ukrainian, was to be taken to the ship, docked at a grain elevator at Reserve, Louisiana, 30 miles upriver from New Orleans.

A copy of the subpoena was to be given to Customs officials to prevent them from giving the ship clearance to leave U.S. waters until Ukrainian seaman Miroslav Medvid answers the summons, said committee spokesman Ron Phillips.

Reagan administration officials said in Washington that Medvid had made his intentions to return to the Soviet Union emphatically clear and "the case is closed."

In Brief

Rulo murder labeled 'brutal'

FALLS CITY — Two former residents of a survivalist farm near Rulo have told authorities that they whipped a man whose body was later found on the farm, Richardson County Attorney Doug Merz said Thursday.

Merz revealed the information during a district court session in which James Haverkamp and John David Andreas each pleaded guilty to charges of carrying a concealed weapon, second-degree assault and possession of stolen property. The court had previously entered pleas of innocent on behalf of both men, but the pleas were changed as part of an agreement with prosecutors.

Before Haverkamp and Andreas entered their pleas, Merz told Judge Robert Finn that the defendants admitted to whipping Thimm 15 times each at the farm on April 29. Merz said the men claimed the whippings were ordered by Michael Ryan, the reputed leader of the group that lived on the farm.

In a news conference after the court session, Andreas' attorney said his client and Haverkamp witnessed "certain events which led to the deaths" of Thimm and Stice. Asked if the treatment of the two victims at the farm could be described as "brutal" or "bizarre," attorney Steven Brott of Falls City said, "I would use both those words."

Surrogate gives birth to girl

MALDEN, Mass. — A healthy baby girl was born Thursday to a woman who had agreed to have a child for her sterile sister by impregnating herself with her brother-in-law's sperm.

Kristen Jennifer was born at 3:35 a.m. at Malden Hospital, into the waiting arms of her mother-to-be, Carole Jalbert.

Jalbert, who was present throughout the labor of her sister, Sherry King, exclaimed, "Oh, my baby! My baby!" when the 7-pound, 6½-ounce baby was born, the statement said.

"To this day, I feel like an aunt. I was just babysitting," said King, the surrogate mother. She added that the delivery "hurt, but it was worth it."

Lincoln pilot injured in crash

LINCOLN — A Lincoln dentist was injured Thursday when the single-engine plane he was piloting crashed while he was apparently performing an aerial stunt for a television cameraman, a KMTV editor said. Dr. Charles Carothers was taken to Lincoln General Hospital after rescue workers pried him out of the wreckage with jaws of life equipment. A hospital spokeswoman said she didn't know Carothers' condition or what injuries he suffered.

The plane crashed about 5 p.m. at a private airstrip just east of Lincoln, said Richard Mackey of the Lancaster County Sheriff's Office.

House considers 5% cut

WASHINGTON — House Democratic leaders, raising the ante in the Capitol Hill budget game, said Thursday they would propose about a 5 percent cut in domestic and military spending as an amendment to a stopgap money bill Congress must pass next week.

The move is aimed at backing up the House position on a sweeping balanced-budget plan that the House and Senate have been kicking back and forth. That budget plan is attached to another measure needed next week to increase the government's line of credit.

Treasury Department officials have said the government will be in default Nov. 15 without the increase in borrowing authority. Meanwhile, a stopgap money bill now in place to keep money flowing to most of the government expires Nov. 14. In addition, several other stopgap laws that temporarily

extended several taxes — including the federal tax on cigarettes — expire Nov. 14.

Those deadlines, combined with political warfare over the budget issue, are setting up a legislative train wreck for next week.

"I think next Wednesday's going to be one of the most chaotic days in the history of Congress," said Rep. David Obey (D-Wis.).

Democratic leaders said their proposal for an across-the-board cut would correspond to the House-passed balanced-budget plan that calls for a fiscal 1986 deficit of \$161 billion.

While the actual cuts would be in effect only for the length of the stopgap bill, it would be a way for the Democrats to meet Republican charges they are not serious about such an ambitious deficit target.

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