

News Digest

By The Associated Press

DC-8 crashes, all 258 killed

GANDER, Newfoundland — A DC-8 charter full of U.S. soldiers returning from the Middle East crashed and exploded Thursday near Gander International Airport, killing all 258 aboard and scattering gifts and weapons across snow-covered woods.

Families and friends learned of the disaster as they assembled for a brass-band welcome at the headquarters of the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Ky.

Cause of the 6:45 a.m. (4:15 a.m. CST) crash remained under investigation, but the White House said preliminary reports showed no indication of sabotage or an in-flight explosion in history's eighth-worst aviation disaster.

The charred cockpit voice and flight recorders were recovered and will be taken to Ottawa for analysis, said Peter Boag of the Canadian Aviation Safety Board, who was directing the investigation.

The charter flight operated by Arrow Air of Miami carried members of the 101st Airborne who were being rotated home after six months service in the multi-national peacekeeping force in Egypt's Sinai peninsula.

Celebration shattered; relatives wait

FORT CAMPBELL, Ky. — A homecoming celebration Thursday for 250 soldiers was shattered by the crash of a chartered DC-8 jet in Canada, leaving friends and relatives to hope that their loved one was on another flight.

"Right now, the assets of Fort Campbell are geared for one thing, helping the families," said Maj. James Gleisberg, a public information officer at the base.

No next-of-kin had been officially notified, he said, because a roster of the victims had not been compiled. Once that is done, it could take up to two days to notify all families, he said.

By midday more than 200 people crowded a gymnasium where a gala welcome had been planned for the members of the 3rd Battalion, 502nd Infantry of the 101st Airborne Division, Air Assault.

Through its storied history of combat in World War II and Vietnam, the division had never suffered more deaths in one day, military historians said.

Military authorities said it might take a day or two to notify all the next-of-kin, as long as a week to positively identify remains.

CBC television showed debris smoldering in the snow beneath tall evergreens in sparse, hilly woods where the plane went down about a half-mile from the runway near Gander Lake.

Canadian Transport Minister Don Mazankowski said the plane climbed

no higher than 1,000 feet before crashing.

At Fort Campbell, base commander Maj. Gen. Burton D. Patrick told a news conference an Army team would help transfer remains from Newfoundland to Dover Air Force Base in Delaware, where identification of the bodies could take up to a week. A temporary morgue was established at the airport, Boag said.

Hoch to run for governor

LINCOLN — Nancy Hoch, an NU regent who lost a close Senate race to incumbent J. James Exon last year, said Thursday she would seek the Republican nomination for governor.

"Our workers have been kind of chomping at the bit" to get started on the campaign, Hoch said.

She said finance and political committees already have been set up, and that she plans to make a formal announcement of her campaign next week.

In Omaha, campaign political director Steve McCollister said Hoch tentatively plans to make her announcement on an 11-city swing through the state next Thursday and Friday.

"She'll hit five or six one day, five or six the next," McCollister said. The itinerary has not been set, but it will include Omaha, Lincoln and Grand Island, he said.

Hoch's campaign committee, Nebraskans for Nancy, announced her candidacy in a flier that Nebraska newspaper publishers received in the mail Thursday.

The flier included a sketch of an elephant, symbol of the GOP, and a



Hoch

headline that read, "Nebraska Needs Nancy Hoch — Republican Governor."

"Committees will be formed shortly to elect Nancy Hoch the next governor of Nebraska," the flier said, asking recipients to volunteer for the campaign.

Hoch has been getting "literally hundreds" of inquiries on whether she would run, and people were holding off political decisions pending the announcement of her plans, McCollister said.

"The flier's purpose was basically to hold the supporters" and to begin sounding the campaign's theme, he

said. Hoch made a brief statement in the flier. It said in part: "It's time to move Nebraska forward. We must take the great resources we have in our people and state and build Partnerships for Tomorrow."

Hoch said she returned to Nebraska on Wednesday night with her husband after visiting their daughter and her family in Mexico.

Nebraskans for Nancy was the name of Hoch's campaign organization when she ran for the Senate last year. She defeated several candidates to win the GOP nomination but lost a close race to Sen. Exon, D-Neb.

Hoch is the fourth Republican to announce a bid for the governorship. Wausa farmer Paul Rosberg, Louisville minister Everett Sileven and state Treasurer Kay Orr are the others.

Kermit Brashear recently resigned as chairman of the state Republican Party and has said he will decide soon whether he will run.

Gov. Bob Kerrey, a Democrat, is not seeking re-election. Several Democrats are considering a run for the nomination. Only state Sen. Marge Higgins of Omaha has announced her candidacy.

Congress ends work on interim bill

WASHINGTON — Congress, unable to agree on a multi-billion dollar funding measure for the full fiscal year, whisked through a stopgap bill Thursday needed to tide many federal agencies over for the weekend and prevent disruption of government services.

At the same time, administration officials reported progress in their efforts to cajole Republican lawmakers into reviving proposals for major overhaul of the tax laws — the top item of President Reagan's second-term domestic agenda. Even so, Rep. Richard Gephardt, D-Mo., told reporters, "The bill's not dead yet, but the patient is on the table and dying."

The stopgap spending measure re-

placed an existing bill due to expire at midnight, and was approved first by a voice vote in the House. The Senate quickly followed suit, with Sen. Mark Hatfield, R-Ore., chairman of the Appropriations Committee, saying that the alternative could be the "furloughing of federal employees" if the federal till ran dry.

With the end of the congressional session clearly in sight, House and Senate negotiators also made headway on a compromise long-term farm bill, and labored on a measure to cut federal deficits by as much as \$80 billion over the next three years.

Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole

said it would be an "abdication of everything we've done all year" if Congress left town without finishing work on the spending cuts. But others said agreement would be difficult, since many of the proposed cuts involve domestic programs.

A compromise bailout for the Farm Credit System also was on a short list of year-end legislation.

Weary lawmakers looked forward to the end of the session as Reagan, acting without ceremony, signed landmark legislation designed to force a balanced budget by 1991. That bill was cleared by Congress on Wednesday after months of wrangling.

Pilgrims trek to Virgin's shrine

MEXICO CITY — They came on their knees, in rickety buses in processions marching to tattered trumpeters — tens of thousands of pilgrims gathering to renew their faith where the Virgin is said to have appeared to a peasant 400 years ago.

The Day of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Dec. 12, is a very special one every year in this predominantly Roman Catholic country, but this one has extra meaning. Many of the supplicants prayed to Mexico's patron saint for friends or relatives among the 7,000 people killed in

September's great earthquake.

There was a festival atmosphere at the Basilica of Guadalupe on the city's north side despite the somber nature of some of the prayers.

Families who had traveled long distances spread makeshift picnics of tortillas, rice and beans.

Indian peasants in Aztec ceremonial dress performed rain dances that existed long before the Virgin Mary is said to have appeared to a startled peasant near where the basilica stands.

Vendors hawked wares of all des-

criptions, including pictures of the Virgin in plastic frames for the equivalent of 50 cents.

The faithful began arriving Wednesday night. Clattering buses carried them from the provinces. One group walked 60 miles carrying a five-foot-high floral tribute, accompanied by trumpeters and a few other musicians.

Many pilgrims crawled the last mile or so on their hands and knees, the traditional sign of penance and devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe.

In Brief

9,000 jailed in S. Africa in '85

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — Police have jailed nearly 9,000 people this year in their attempt to quell rioting against white rule, including many children and teen-agers who have been beaten or confined with criminals, a monitoring group said Thursday.

"Never in the recent history of South Africa has repression been greater," the Detainees Parents' Support Committee said.

Witnesses said police used rubber whips and clubs on about 150 white people who held a candlelight procession Wednesday night in Cape Town. Police began using such methods last week to disperse groups of people holding candles in protest of arrests under the state of emergency imposed on riot-torn black and mixed-race districts.

Contadora negotiations suspended

CARTENGA, Colombia — The Contadora group has suspended negotiations on a peace agreement for Central America for five months at Nicaragua's request, Colombia's foreign minister said Saturday.

Nicaragua officially proposed the suspension on grounds that new governments which take office in Guatemala and Honduras in January and in Costa Rica in April could change policy toward the negotiations, the Colombia foreign minister, Augusto Ramirez Ocampo, told the Associated Press.

He spoke during a meeting of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States.

Increase in retail sales cited

WASHINGTON — Retail sales rebounded slightly in November from their record fall the month before, but the modest 1.1 percent increase still left doubts among many analysts about just how good a Christmas merchants can expect this year.

The Commerce Department reported Thursday that sales climbed to \$115.9 billion last month, an increase of \$1.3 billion over the depressed October level.

Sales had fallen 4.2 percent in October, the biggest monthly decline on record, as car sales plummeted by 17.2 percent after dealers stopped most of the cut-rate financing incentives which had spurred a frenzy of buying in August and September.

With Americans holding a record amount of personal debt, many analysts have expressed fears that consumer spending will show little strength in the months ahead. Because consumer spending accounts for almost two-thirds of overall economic activity, these analysts believe the economy as a whole will be lackluster in coming months.

However, the Reagan administration said the November sales gain was pointing to the stronger economic growth it believes is on the horizon.

Study suggests advantages in merger

LINCOLN — Combined schools for the deaf and blind can save money and serve students well, according to a nationwide survey done by an assistant state education commissioner.

But some functions should remain separate and there may be more merger problems with parents and teachers than students, Bob Kellogg found in his review of eight of 11 states that have both facilities on the same campus or close to each other.

Kellogg is assistant education commissioner for the School for the Deaf in Omaha and the School for the Visually Handicapped in Nebraska City.

There was a strong feeling among those surveyed that blind people might lose money for their programs, Kellogg said, since the number of students and the budget for the visually handicapped are smaller than for a deaf school.

That can be overcome, Kellogg and those questioned said, by separating programming and portions of the budget. Parents of pupils at the School for the Visually Impaired in Nebraska City have expressed similar concerns.

Actress Anne Baxter dead at 62

NEW YORK — Anne Baxter, who played a two-faced schemer in "All About Eve" and won an Academy Award as a pitiable drunk in "The Razor's Edge," died Thursday of a cerebral hemorrhage. She was 62 and had been acting on stage, screen and television for 49 years.

Baxter had been starring in the weekly television series, "Hotel." The show's producer, Aaron Spelling, said earlier this week that she would not be replaced.

The actress collapsed Dec. 4 while walking on Madison Avenue and was admitted to Lenox Hill Hospital, where she died at 10:50 a.m. Thursday without ever regaining consciousness, her lawyer, Henry A. Perles, announced.

"Anne Baxter's death is a shattering shock to all of us who loved her and had the privilege of working with her," Spelling said in Los Angeles.

Mixup puts Xmas tots on betting line

HOLLYWOOD, Fla. — Some children calling Santa Claus for the latest on North Pole activities instead got the latest line on the Pacers-Knicks action.

A mixup switched a Dial Santa line to a sports betting line service featuring the National Basketball Association point spreads.

"We use a computer device that stores various programs," said Dialup Inc. President Dave Ryder. "Somebody pushed the wrong button Tuesday and you got betting information instead of ho, ho, ho."

The mixup lasted about three hours until a parent called from Columbia, S.C., to complain.

"I was shocked," Ryder said. "Santa has the power to tell kids anything and they'll believe him. He has a big responsibility."

The service advertises in 10 Southern states. Ryder had no idea how many calls were received Tuesday afternoon.

Thursday, the only mixup Santa had reported was about "Elfie" accidentally getting loaded into his sleigh with other toys.