

News Digest

By The Associated Press

Unrest in the Philippines

Aquino fires Cabinet; army foils coup attempt

MANILA, Philippines — President Corazon Aquino fired her entire Cabinet, including controversial Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile, after the army foiled a coup attempt Sunday by dissident officers and political foes.

Aquino credited army chief of staff Gen. Fidel V. Ramos with taking "preventive measures against the recklessness of some elements in the military."

She warned that "sternest measures" would be taken if anyone tried to undermine her nine-month-old government.

Ramos issued a statement confirming that politicians loyal to deposed President Ferdinand E. Marcos, backed by "some elements in the military," had planned to set up a rival government. He said the situation was under control.

He did not identify the plotters or mention Enrile. The defense chief, who also served under Marcos but helped oust him last February, increasingly has been critical of Aquino.

A senior government official said the plot involved taking over the National Assembly, reinstating the pro-Marcos National Assembly abolished by Aquino and calling presidential elections.

The official, who demanded anonymity, said more than 100 members of a military faction identified with Enrile were in on the plot, with the coup to begin at 2 a.m. Sunday. The government learned of it at 10 a.m. Saturday, he said.

Troops loyal to Aquino and Ramos surrounded radio and television stations in Manila and elsewhere Saturday, and tightened security measures at the presidential palace and other key points.

The official said he did not know if Enrile knew about the plot.

On Sunday, after holding a lengthy Cabinet meeting, Aquino announced on television that she had asked all Cabinet members to resign.

She said Enrile complied, and she immediately swore in his replacement, Deputy Defense Minister Rafael Ilet.

Enrile refused to see reporters who gathered outside his home at a fashionable suburban village, but sent out his daughter, Katrina.



U.S. stands by Aquino

WASHINGTON — The administration and key congressional leaders repeated Sunday "strong and unequivocal" support for Philippine President Corazon Aquino and expressed satisfaction that a reported coup attempt failed.

Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Richard Lugar said Aquino "is the only unifying factor in Filipino politics," and added that, "... Aquino is receiving assurances every day from the United States government of 100 percent support."

We are pleased that this reported coup attempt failed," State Department spokeswoman Anita Stockman said as news came from Manila that Mrs. Aquino was receiving the resignations of her Cabinet members. The president's request for resignations followed a night in which soldiers loyal to her took over radio and television facilities as coup rumors swept the capital.

Ramos cited intelligence reports that politicians from the Marcos regime planned to move against the government with backing from "some elements of the military."

In Brief

Nebraskans sixth on life expectancy list

OMAHA — Nebraskans rank sixth nationally in average life expectancy, according to figures released by the National Center for Health Statistics.

The agency of the Department of Health and Human Services indicates Nebraskans live an average of 75.5 years, sixth behind Hawaii's 77 years, Minnesota's 76.2, Iowa and Utah at 75.8 and North Dakota 75.7.

Every 10 years the center does a state-by-state comparison of life expectancy. To calculate the figure, the center uses actual and estimated Census Bureau statistics over a three-year period and runs the information through a complex mathematical process.

Iraqi planes bomb Iranian cities

NICOSIA, Cyprus — Iraqi warplanes bombed two western Iranian cities Sunday, killing 112 civilians, Iran reported. It vowed to retaliate by shelling Iraqi cities.

Iraq confirmed it bombed the cities, Bakhtaran and Islamabad Gharb. It said the targets were an air base, an oil refinery and military camps.

Iran's official Islamic Republic News Agency said the attack killed 98 civilians and wounded others in Bakhtaran, also known as Kermanshah. It said 25 houses were destroyed or badly damaged.

IRNA, monitored in Nicosia, said Iraqi bombs killed 14 people and destroyed eight houses in Islamabad Gharb, also known as Shahabad.

War information headquarters in Tehran said Iranian forces would shell Iraqi cities "in retaliation for the savage Iraqi air raids," IRNA reported.

Newspaper: Libya has Soviet nerve gas

LONDON — A weekly newspaper said Sunday that Libya has Soviet-made nerve gas warheads and has passed some of them on to Syria and Iran.

The conservative Sunday Telegraph quoted unidentified Western intelligence sources as saying the warheads can be fired from Scud-B missiles and contain a lethal nerve agent capable of killing anyone within 25 square miles of a target.

The warheads also render a city uninhabitable for about 24 hours after an attack, the report said.

The newspaper's defense correspondent, Simon O'Dwyer-Russel, wrote that Libya supplied the nerve agents "within the last few weeks" to Syria and Iran, which operate identical Scud-B systems.

British intelligence services have "traced the source of the nerve agent back to the Soviet Union," the report said.

GM strike over; layoffs may continue

KOKOMO, Ind. — Workers began returning to a key parts plant Sunday after a strike that forced layoffs for more than 47,000 General Motors Corp. workers nationwide, but GM officials could not say when the layoffs would end.

The six-day strike at the Delco Electronics plant triggered layoffs in eight states and threatened to shut down the nation's No. 1 automaker as the supply of radios and electronic parts for all GM cars was exhausted.

The 7,700 United Auto Workers at the GM subsidiary walked off the job Nov. 17 in a dispute over subcontracting and a plan to produce Delco's newest radio line in Mexico.

A contract resolving those issues and implementing Japanese management techniques was approved Saturday by UAW Local 292.

UAW shop chairman Mike Thayer said some production workers returned at midnight Saturday and the first full shift would start at midnight Sunday.

John Mueller, a GM spokesman in Detroit, said he didn't know when the stalled assembly plants might resume production. "It depends on how much there is in the system still, and when they can get this stuff out of Kokomo," Mueller said.

Delco spokeswoman Marilyn Grant said new shipments out of Kokomo were uncertain and would vary among the plant's departments.

The strike was the first to test GM's new "just-in-time" inventory system, in which parts are made to order and shipped immediately to assembly plants, rather than stockpiled until needed.

Because of the system, the effects of the strike were seen in some GM plants within 24 hours. By Friday, 37,550 workers had been laid off around the country. In all, more than 47,000 had been laid off at one point or another.

Mount Mihara subsides, another volcano erupts

TOKYO — Mount Mihara subsided Sunday after a fiery eruption that forced 11,000 people to flee a small island, but hundreds of miles away another volcano erupted and sent a big rock flying into a hotel, injuring five people.

Officials said Mount-Sakurajima hurled a rock 6 1/2 feet in diameter into a one-story concrete hotel just outside Sakurajima, about 620 miles southwest west of Tokyo.

Officials of the Central Meteorological Agency said Mount Sakurajima has erupted often since 1955, including 474 eruptions last year.

Officials said the eruption was not linked with that of Mount Mihara, about 540 miles away on Oshima Island. Oshima is 70 miles south of Tokyo.

One Central Meteorological Agency official said about 30 gas explosions were recorded Sunday morning in the craters of Mount Mihara, compared

with countless explosions Saturday, but that none was observed Sunday afternoon.

Only light smoke was seen coming from the mountain, but streams of yellow water were observed on the island's eastern and southern sides, indicating possible underwater eruptions, the official said.

The volcano, dormant for 12 years, erupted twice last week. The second eruption, on Friday, sent lava streaming toward Oshima Island's main town and forced the evacuation of more than 11,000 people, including tourists and nearly all 10,300 residents.

The agency official said 54 earthquakes had been counted on the island on Sunday by 8 p.m.

On Saturday, 92 quakes were recorded, with the strongest 6.1 on the Richter scale, he said.

Hidehiro Kato, an official of the Tokyo Fire Department, said lava had



come within 165 yards of the town of Motomachi, but had almost stopped.

However, Professor Shigeo Aramaki of Tokyo University's Seismic Research Institute said, "Volcanic activity has by

no means ended." Tokyo police said more than 400 people still were on the island, including more than 200 police and 130 journalists.

Dole criticizes Schultz for Iran stand

WASHINGTON — Senate Republican leader Bob Dole rebuked Secretary of State George Shultz on Sunday for "not doing anything" to support President Reagan in the Iran arms controversy, and suggested Reagan act quickly to "remove some of the problem."

Dole did not mention any administration officials by name when he said the president should move to "cut our losses," as the Iran issue continued to consume the administration and reports circulated that top advisors were calling for the ouster of Shultz, White House Chief of Staff Don Regan and National Security Adviser John Poin-

dexter.

Dole, after praising Shultz's past performance, said, "But I think right now they ought to circle the wagons; either that, or let a couple of the wagons go over the cliff."

"I think the president was well-intentioned, well-motivated," in his decision to send arms to Iran, Dole said in an interview on CBS-TV's "Face the Nation."

With his comments Sunday, Dole, R-Kan., added his voice to others calling for presidential action to restore administration unity as details con-

tinued to emerge about the Iran operation.

White House spokesman Roman Popadiuk said he had no information on reports in The Washington Post and Los Angeles Times that a group of presidential advisers was pushing for a high-level shakeup in Reagan's staff.

"When people say, 'Why aren't you supporting the president?' it's rather difficult when the secretary of state is not doing anything," Dole said Sunday.

Shultz has made clear his opposition to the arms shipments and said last week that officials behind the operation had told him little about it.

Red Cross helicopter hijacked

ROME — Two gunmen hijacked a Red Cross helicopter Sunday, lifted two inmates from a prison courtyard and flew off firing automatic weapons at guards, police said.

The chopper landed a short time later in a Rome soccer field where a match was under way, and hijackers and convicts fled by car. Police set up roadblocks and searched the region with helicopters.

Officials said the hijackers spoke French and that one jailbreaker, a Tunisian-born Frenchman, was sought by French authorities in connection

with a Paris bank robbery and murder.

Police said the hijackers walked into San Camillo Hospital in western Rome, cornered the helicopter pilot, 42-year-old Mauro Pompa, at gunpoint to take them to the helicopter parked across the street.

The white helicopter with red crosses painted on the sides then flew across the city to Reoibbia Prison in eastern Rome. There it hovered three feet above the courtyard where about 50 inmates were exercising at 10:45 a.m., Deputy Warder Giancarlo Baldassini told reporters.

As the hijackers laid down covering gunfire and lowered a rope ladder, two inmates jumped in.

A guard was slightly injured by flying glass in the shootout, police said. They said two shots fired by a guard hit the helicopter.

The Italian news agency ANSA said the six guards on duty at first thought the helicopter was arriving for a medical emergency.

ANSA said police identified the escaped convicts as Gianluigi Espo-sito, 30, and Andre Bellaiche, 36.

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