

News Digest

By The Associated Press

Nicaragua arrests American

Sandinistas: Prisoner had maps of military targets, worked for espionage group

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — An American said to be the brother of a U.S. congressman was arrested at an air base and told authorities he worked for a group specializing in military espionage, Nicaragua's government said Sunday.

The leftist Sandinista government identified the man as Sam Nesley Hall and said his case would be treated like that of U.S. mercenary Eugene Hasenfus.

Officials said that when Hall was arrested, at 10 a.m. Friday at Punta Huete air force base, about 13 miles northeast of Managua, he was carrying maps and sketches of military targets stuffed in his shoes.

Reports in the United States said Hall, 49, is the brother of Rep. Tony P. Hall, D-Ohio, and is himself a former Ohio state legislator and a onetime Olympic diving medalist.

Government officials said Hall's presence could be seen as a preparation for a U.S. attack on Nicaragua.

State Department spokesman Bruce Ammerman said in Washington he had no confirmation of Hall's arrest. Officials at the U.S. Embassy in Managua could not immediately be reached for comment.

Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto said Sam Hall would be investigated in

the same manner as Hasenfus, who was sentenced to 30 years in prison last month. Hasenfus, of Marinette, Wis., was on a weapons supply flight for U.S.-backed Contra rebels which was shot down.

The base, on a peninsula jutting into Lake Managua, accommodates "all types of military aircraft," the Defense Ministry said. Reagan administration officials have said the base was built

for Soviet-made MIG jet fighter planes.

After his arrest, Hall first identified himself as a writer, but then said he was an adviser to Miskito Indians fighting to oust the Sandinista government, D'Escoto said.

The Interior Ministry quoted Hall as saying he worked for a group called the Phoenix Battalion, described as a private intelligence-gathering organization.

Voyager aircraft attempts world's first non-stop flight; damages wing in takeoff

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE, Calif. — The aircraft Voyager took off Sunday in the first attempt to fly around the world non-stop without refueling, but dragged and damaged the flexible wing on the runway.

Despite the damage, mission controllers told co-pilots Dick Rutan and Jeana Yeager to continue, and they flew the ungainly airplane over the Pacific Ocean to begin what is expected to be a 10-day flight.

"At this moment we have no reason to abort the mission," spokesman Peter Riva said.

Voyager took off a few minutes after 8 a.m., using 14,000 feet of a 15,000-foot dry lakebed paved runway before it lumbered into the air at 106 mph, its first takeoff with a full, 9,750-pound load of fuel and supplies.

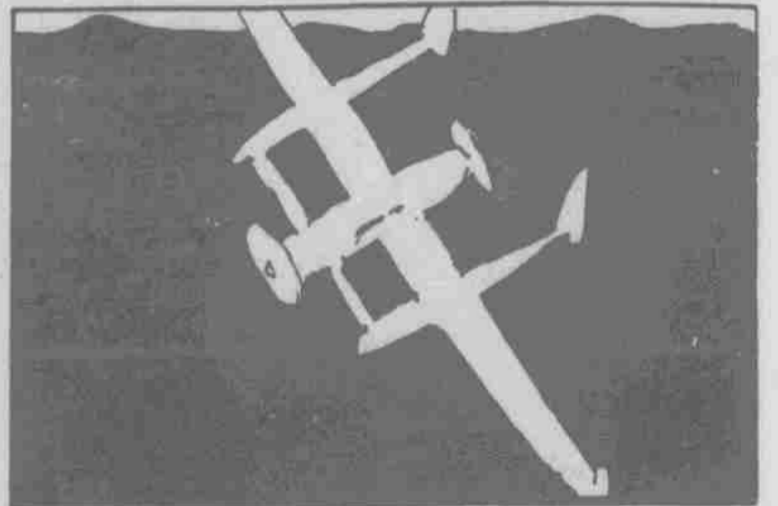
"In good spirits," Yeager reported from the bathtub-sized cockpit after Voyager got off the ground. "If it were easy, it would have been done before."

Voyager's takeoff date, postponed several times by weather, was put on hold again briefly by frost Sunday. It was nearly scuttled Saturday after Yeager developed a head cold. Doctors pronounced her fit to fly early Sunday.

The spindly twin-winged plane was loaded with 1,090 gallons of fuel for the 27,000-mile trip. It was that huge load in the plane's wing tanks that apparently caused both tips of the main wing to scrape the runway during taxiing.

Almost immediately, a chase pilot directly behind Voyager radioed Rutan that there was extensive damage to the right tip of the 111-foot-long wing.

Minutes later, the right winglet, a small verticle fin at the end of the wing which boosts air flow over the surface, fell



away.

Chase plane pilot Burt Rutan, designer of the craft and co-pilot Rutan's brother, ordered Voyager sideslipped twice, breaking off a lower left winglet.

Riva said the pilots reported no loss of control. There was not fire danger, but he said there may be a loss of performance but that would be evaluated over several days.

Rutan, 48, and Yeager, 32, climbed into the slender plane's tiny cockpit at 9 a.m. EST as several hundred spectators stood in the chilly pre-dawn desert darkness.

The attempt to fly around the world non-stop, without refueling, is a feat regarded as one of the last great goals in aviation.

"We've been waiting about six years for it," Rutan said Saturday.

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Study: Inmate populations rising; more prison guards being hired

WASHINGTON — Rising state prison populations have drastically cut the amount of cell space for each inmate, but more guards are being hired to keep the lid on violence that might erupt from overcrowding a federal study said Sunday.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics study reported an 11 percent decline in the average amount of living space per inmate from 1979 through 1984.

The typical inmate in one of the nation's 694 state prisons in 1984 occupied 57 square feet of housing space and spent about 11 hours a day in a cell.

During the five years beginning in 1979, states hired 35,000 additional prison guards, pushing the total nationwide to more than 90,000. Inmate

totals, meanwhile, went up by 120,000, to 382,000 people. Staffing ratios in that time improved from 4.6 inmates per officer to 4.1 per officer.

Though inmates in state prisons had less space per person in 1984 than in 1979, staffing increases may have helped to control "the prevalence of some negative events," said the report by Christopher Innes, a statistician at the Bureau of Justice Statistics, a Justice Department agency.

The annual number of prison suicides rose from 1979 to 1984, but the number of homicides fell, from 89 in 1979 to 81 in 1984.

The study concluded there was little evidence that population density was directly associated with death rates, assaults or disturbances.

Paper says Saudi net \$250,000 in arms deal

TEL AVIV, Israel — Saudi Arabian businessman Adnan Khashoggi made \$250,000 on a seven-day loan to finance the first shipment of U.S. arms to Iran, the Israeli newspaper Haaretz reported Sunday.

Khashoggi admitted in a television interview last week that in 1985 he advanced \$1 million to Iranian arms merchant Manucher Ghorbanifar "to get things going."

If the Haaretz report is correct, Khashoggi received 25 percent per week interest on his loan, or an annual rate, not compounded, of 1,300 percent.

Haaretz reporter Zeev Schiff said Iran paid Israel \$5 million for the shipment of 500 TOW anti-tank missiles in return for the release of American hostage held in Lebanon, the Rev. Benjamin Weir, in September 1985.

Some of the money went to cover the expenses of Israeli arms dealer Yaakov Nimrodi, a business associate and friend of Khashoggi's who was instrumental in organizing the first deal, Schiff wrote.

Previous news reports have said the weapons alone were valued at \$3.5 million.

Schiff said it was still not clear if the rest of the money went to the United States to pay for the weapons or if it went "to other channels overseas." He did not elaborate, but U.S. officials have said some profits from the sale of arms to Iran went to Nicaraguan Contra rebels.

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