

News Digest

By The Associated Press

Pope begins visit in Miami

MIAMI — Pope John Paul II, prepared for dissent but claiming the support of a "silent majority" of Catholics, launched his second U.S. tour Thursday as "a friend of America and all Americans."

President Reagan, who had come from Washington to welcome the pontiff on a clear, 90-degree afternoon, made a pointed reference to Central America as he portrayed himself as a supporter of human freedom.

Said the pontiff: "I come as a friend — a friend of America and of all Americans: Catholics, Orthodox, Protestants and Jews, people of every religion, and all men and women of good will."

"I come as a friend of the poor and the sick and dying; those who are struggling with the problems of each day; those who are rising and falling and stumbling on the journey of life; those who are seeking and discovering, and those not yet finding, the deep meaning of 'life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.'"

Reagan came to Miami with Mrs. Reagan to head the receiving line.

The president's aides had said privately that Reagan intended to make an obvious reference to his support for the Contra rebels, though he did not mention Nicaragua specifically.

As his Alitalia 747 headed to Miami, the pope said he anticipated protests in the nine cities he will visit.

"Of course it (dissent) is a serious problem," he added, "but the other question is, if that is the dissent of many, many faithful people, or if it is a dissent of some very pronounced theologians or publishers, writers, perhaps journalists."



Michelle Miklos/Daily Nebraskan

Posters, pope-sicles prominent

MIAMI — Pope John Paul II didn't have to peer far out of the bullet-proof bubble of his popemobile for evidence of the peculiar American sense of humor that adds to the celebration of a celebrity.

Arturo Mari, the sharp-eyed Vatican photographer, is sure to have pointed out to him the "Let Us Spray" sprinkler in a backyard as the motorcade from the airport turned off the interstate toward St. Mary's Cathedral. This example of papal schlock features a miniature likeness of the Holy Father that rotates and flutters its hands as it asperges the grass in a simulated

blessing.

Along Biscayne Boulevard, the route of the Orange Bowl parade, vendors offered relief from the record September heat with frosted "pope-sicles." They also hawked "pope-corn," cuddly "Popey-bears," arrayed in the tall, triangular papal hat called the mitre and balloons inflated into a smiling caricature of the pilgrim from Rome.

Posters and T-shirts with all sorts of strange devices called attention to Miami's first papal visit: "IS THE POPE A CATHOLIC?" "THIS POLE TOPS ALL POLLS."

Administration seeks millions for contra aid

WASHINGTON — Secretary of State George P. Shultz, arguing that the alternative is a "communist victory" in Nicaragua, said Thursday the administration will ask Congress for \$270 million in aid to the contra rebels for an 18-month period.

Testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Shultz said additional aid to the contras is the best insurance that Nicaragua will comply with terms of the Central American peace agreement it signed last month in Guatemala.

The announcements drew immediate criticism from a number of congressional Democrats and is certain to produce another round of heated debate on Capitol Hill over the administration's Central America policy.

Shultz said, "If the Guatemalan agreement is to be implemented in a way that secures a negotiated ceasefire, a democratic opening in Nicaragua, and accommodation of basic national security interests... the United States must continue to furnish support to the freedom fighters."

White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater told reporters the aid request

will "keep pressure on the sandinistas as we go through the peace process and let them know the president is serious in his commitment not to desert the resistance."

The Guatemala agreement, among other steps, calls on the Sandinista government to arrange a cease fire and implement democratic reform measures by Nov. 7 — about five weeks after the current Contra aid allotment expires. It also calls on the United States to cease funding the contras.

House Speaker Jim Wright, D-Texas, who has played an increasingly influential role in the Central America issue, said it was inappropriate for the administration to make a request for more contra money while the peace process was under way.

"Such a request would anticipate the failure of the peace process. I don't anticipate the failure of the peace process. I anticipate success," he said.

Sen. Christopher Dodd, D-Conn., an outspoken critic of administration policy in Central America, told Shultz during Thursday's hearing that a contra aid request at this time "is the worst possible signal you could send."

Iran-contra involvement Poindexter wasn't scolded

WASHINGTON — After National Security Adviser John M. Poindexter confessed to President Reagan last Nov. 25 of his involvement in the most damaging incident in Reagan's political career, there was no scolding or reprimand, just sympathy from the president and those around him.

According to documents and transcripts released Thursday by the congressional Iran-contra committees, Poindexter said he was merely told by the president and his men they were sorry he had to resign.

In private testimony taken in four separate sessions last May, June and July in preparation for Poindexter's televised testimony in mid-July, the Navy rear admiral also said he was never particularly bothered by the idea of swapping arms to Iran for Americans held hostage in Lebanon.

Although Reagan has said repeatedly he never intended to approve such a swap, Poindexter told the committees: "I frankly don't find that distasteful."

Soviets may launch U.S. satellites

Aerospace attorney has contracts to get project off the ground

WASHINGTON — A Houston lawyer says he has contracts with the Soviets to launch American satellites into space and hopes to convince the State Department that the venture poses no risk to U.S. security.

Aerospace attorney Arthur Dula, just back from his third trip to Moscow to discuss the project, said the Soviets' ability to launch at an appealingly low price could help Western satellite owners get their satellites off the ground while the United States develops a private-launch industry.

"It's in the interests of both countries for this kind of commercial activity to take place," Dula said in a telephone interview Tuesday. "They're in the business to earn hard currency. They've got the rockets and hopefully we've got some use for it."

The launch crunch for Western satellite owners began with the January 1986 explosion of the Challenger that grounded the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's space shuttles. In August 1986, President Reagan an-

nounced that commercial spacecraft would not longer fly on the shuttle, a decision that was aimed at spurring the private sector to develop its own launch capacity.

Since then, three major U.S. companies have agreements to launch private satellites, but not until 1989 at the earliest. The other major western launch service, the French-based Arianespace, has booked its eight flights a year through the beginning of 1991.

The Soviets, however, are flying large

rockets with the capacity to ease the backlog, Dula said.

Dula declined to specify how many contracts his company, Space Commerce Corp., has with the Soviets or what companies have signed them.

"I think that we live in a very imperfect world, a very dangerous world, and sometimes you don't have the best options or the ideal option, and you've got to do what's necessary," Poindexter said.

ABA committee gives Bork its highest rating for judges

WASHINGTON — An American Bar Association committee, in a divided vote, said Wednesday that Robert H. Bork is "well qualified" to be on the high court, the ABA's highest rating for a prospective justice.

The ABA said a majority on the 15-member panel endorsed Bork as well qualified while a minority said it is either not opposed to Bork or said he is "not qualified."

The lawyers' organization refused to give a breakdown of the vote by the ABA Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary, and the dissenters' objections to Bork were not outlined.

As an opponent's remark, Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Joseph R. Biden Jr., D-Del., said, "It's amazing. I would have expected it would have been unanimous. They are timid usually about saying someone is not qualified."

The lawyer's organization has three rating categories in reviewing high court nominees: well qualified, not opposed and not qualified. In 1982, the ABA had unanimously given Bork its highest rating, exceptionally well qualified, in recommending that the Senate confirm him to be a federal appeals court judge.

Fewer smoking than ever

ATLANTA — The cigarette smoking rate in the United States has reached the lowest level ever reported, with less than 27 percent of adult Americans lighting up in 1986, federal health researchers said Thursday.

That's down nearly 4 percentage points from a 1985 survey and down nearly 14 points in two decades.

The first Adult Use of Tobacco Survey, taken by the national Centers for

Disease Control, questioned more than 13,000 adult Americans late last year. It found that 26.5 percent of them smoked — 29.5 percent of the men and 23.8 percent of the women.

Those numbers were down from a National Health Interview Survey of 1985, which found that 30.4 percent of its survey group smoked — 33.2 percent of the men and 27.9 percent of the women.

In Brief

Missing penitentiary inmate turns himself in

A convicted murderer who walked away Thursday from an assignment outside the Nebraska State Penitentiary for a suspected rendezvous with his wife turned himself in, officials said.

Curtis Rowland, 47, was missing for less than an hour after leaving a state Department of Roads maintenance building near the prison where he had taken a state vehicle for service, said Frank Gunter, director of the state Department of Correctional Services.

Researchers develop more accurate AIDS test

WASHINGTON — Scientists at the Research Institute of Scripps Clinic in La Jolla, Calif., said Thursday that they have developed an AIDS diagnostic test that readily can be tailored to detect new strains of the disease virus and is easier, cheaper and more accurate than existing test.

The test appears to be superior to the so-called Western Blot test widely used to confirm infection by the AIDS virus.

Major drug cartel smashed, Meese says

WASHINGTON — Twenty-nine people have been arrested and more than 70 tons of marijuana and nearly one ton of cocaine have been seized in the breakup of a major international drug cartel, Attorney General Edwin Meese III said.

Meese said the year-long investigation, code-named "Operation Intruder," involved the use of Drug Enforcement Administration agents as middlemen for distributing marijuana and cocaine to Atlanta, Denver, Detroit, New York City and West Palm Beach, Fla.

Mysterious blood covers floor of couple's home

ATLANTA — Human blood found on the floors and walls of a house was not the same type as that of an elderly dialysis patient who lives there, and authorities still don't know where it came from, a State Crime Lab official said Thursday.

Minnie Clyde Winston said she stepped out of the bathtub late Tuesday to find the floor covered with blood. The blood also was in various-sized splashes in the kitchen, living room, bedroom and halls of the home she and her husband William own.

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