

News Digest

By The Associated Press

Philippine coup attempt fails

MANILA, Philippines — The government said it foiled a coup attempt Sunday after rebel soldiers stole an armored vehicle. President Corazon Aquino said martial law was "not yet necessary" despite continuing instability.

The rebels stole the personnel carrier from army headquarters and drove it undetected to Santo Tomas University despite a full military alert. The six-man crew abandoned the vehicle about a mile from the president's residence and escaped with a machine gun

and ammunition. Acting Manila Gov. Jejomar Binay said renegade Lt. Col Reynaldo Cabauatan had planned to launch an attack on the presidential compound from a campus staging area.

Cabauatan, sought since a coup attempt in January, denied any role in the theft.

Presidential spokesman Teodoro Benigno said the incident could have been staged to embarrass a government still seeking to restore public confidence after 53 people died in a

coup attempt Aug. 28.

Another opposition source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said rebels planned to mount a "military operation" but it failed after someone tipped off pro-government forces.

Troops and tanks rushed to the presidential palace and the university area, and security was increased at military installations in the capital.

The August military mutiny was the gravest threat to Mrs. Aquino since she was swept to power in a February 1986 civilian-military rebellion that ousted President Ferdinand Marcos.

Swedish prisoner escape opens door to debate

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — Convicted spy Stig Bergling did not need a hacksaw to escape from Swedish prison. Knowing the liberal prison system, he simply walked away.

Bergling, 50, fled with his wife after being left unguarded during an overnight conjugal visit at his suburban Stockholm apartment Oct. 8. He had been serving a life sentence for selling defense secrets to the Soviet Union.

His escape further tarnished the image of the Swedish police and security forces, already under fire for their failure to catch Prime Minister Olof Palme's assassin 20 months after the murder.

The latest scandal also fueled debate about the liberal penal system, where serious criminals often serve mild sentences in prisons that would put some hotels to shame.

Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson, calling the affair "extremely serious," ordered a top-level investigation and canceled an overseas trip to monitor the chase.

Shultz continues peace mission

REHOVOT, Israel — Secretary of State George Shultz indirectly chided right-wing Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir on Sunday, urging him to take the risk to explore new options for peace.

"No one helps the chance for peace by doing nothing," Shultz said. "Those who are reluctant to explore new ideas or even revisit old ones have an obligation to offer something different as an alternative to the status quo."

His remarks in a speech at the Weizmann Institute in Rehovot were seen as a prod to Shamir.

Shultz's mission of peace, which began Friday, met with a setback when a group of eight Palestinian leaders refused to meet him.

In Brief

More customers are using gasohol in 1987

Gasohol consumption is on the rise again after a sickly 1986 showing. Nebraskan's use of gasohol rose by 8.6 percent during the first eight months of 1987, and the eight-month total of 159.6 million gallons is 46.7 million gallons short of the amount sold last year.

Baby fights for life after landmark surgery

LOMA LINDA, Calif. — A baby born with a lethal heart defect was in critical but stable condition Saturday on his second day of life, a milestone doctors said he would not have reached except for a heart transplant hours after birth.

Surgeons, led by Dr. Leonard Bailey, labored 4 1/2 hours Friday to perform the transplant, just three hours after Paul Hold was delivered by Caesarean section. He was the youngest person ever to undergo an organ transfer.

West African president killed in bloody coup

OUAGADOUGOU, Burkina Faso — Capt. Thomas Sankara and 12 other officials were executed and buried Friday after Sankara's chief adviser ousted him as president of this impoverished West African nation, an official source said.

Capt. Blaise Compaore, leader of a bloody coup, declared a national holiday. A statement read on national radio called Sankara a "madman."

First lady expects full recovery from surgery

WASHINGTON — Doctors told President and Nancy Reagan on Sunday that the final tests from her breast cancer surgery show there has been no spread of her cancer and that the "prognosis for full recovery is excellent," a White House spokesman said.

Doctor's removed the first lady's left breast and several lymph nodes from under her arm on Saturday following a needle biopsy that revealed a quarter-inch malignant tumor.

U.S. calls Iranian missile a 'lucky shot'

MANAMA, Bahrain — The Iranian missile that wrecked a U.S.-flagged tanker was "a lucky shot" that could have hit Kuwait's oil terminal complex or several other ships in the area, U.S. military sources said Sunday.

Kuwaiti officials lodged a formal protest with Tehran, Iran's foreign minister virtually acknowledged Iran launched the missile Friday and hinted at more attacks.

In Tehran, Iranian officials accused U.S. forces of torturing four wounded Iranian sailors detained in a clash in the gulf this month. The four were repatriated to Iran through neutral Oman on Saturday.

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