

News Digest

By The Associated Press

Iowa poll: Simon tops Democrats; Dole leads Bush



DES MOINES, Iowa — Illinois Sen. Paul Simon has moved to the top of the Democratic presidential field in Iowa, while Senate Republican Leader Bob Dole holds a narrow lead over Vice President George Bush in the GOP race, a poll published Sunday indicated.

The poll, conducted by the Des Moines Register, said Dole was favored by 36 percent of those likely to attend the Republican precinct caucuses in February, compared to 30

percent for Bush. The rest of the GOP field trailed far behind.

Among Democrats, Simon got the backing of 24 percent of those who said they'll attend Democratic caucuses, with Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis in second at 18 percent. Missouri Rep. Richard Gephardt, who led in the last poll published in August, was third with 14 percent.

"A lot of little things are breaking in the right direction," said Simon during a campaign stop in Minnesota.

"I think it means clearly that as the people of Iowa get to know Paul Simon, they like what they see," said Pat Mitchell, Simon's Iowa campaign manager.

Gephardt downplayed the poll's results, and aides insisted he'll make a strong showing in the February caucuses.

"I don't want to peak in November, I want to peak on Feb. 8 in Iowa," Gephardt said. "I think we are proceeding in a steady and consistent

manner, and I think we will get a good result."

Questioned during a Iowa campaign stop, Dole said the poll confirmed his feeling that the GOP battle is a two-person race.

"Unless I miss something, it's a race between myself and Bush," Dole said, taking a shot at Bush's role in Washington. "One is a player, one is an observer. I'm the player."

New York Rep. Jack Kemp was in third place among Republicans while Jesse Jackson was fourth among Democrats.

Ortega makes surprise stop

MEXICO CITY — Nicaragua's President Daniel Ortega made a surprise stop here on his way home from the United States and said he would brief the president on a new Nicaraguan proposal for a truce in the Contra war.

"Now is a good time to exchange views with President Miguel de la Madrid, so he knows directly the steps my country is taking to comply" with a Central American peace plan, he told reporters when he arrived at Mexico City airport Saturday.

Nicaraguan and Mexican officials declined to say what Ortega was doing on Sunday. The arrival of Ortega and his family came as a complete surprise to Mexican officials.

A presidential press official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Ortega will meet with de la Madrid on Monday.

Plane flips in snow killing at least 18

DENVER — A Continental Airlines jet with 81 people aboard flipped on its back while taking off from Denver's airport in a snowstorm Sunday and skidded along the runway, killing at least 18 people and causing numerous injuries, authorities said.

"We counted 18 dead outside the plane, and there are several dead in the fuselage," said Stapleton International Airport spokesman Richard Boulware.

The plane, Flight 1713, was traveling to Boise, Idaho, said Continental spokesman Ned Walker. The crash took place shortly after 2 p.m. MST.

Rescue work was hampered by snow and ice, and some survivors were still trapped inside the plane more than two and a half hours after the accident, said Boulware.

"Many people are survivors at this point," Walker said. "It's too early to speculate on anything that

could have occurred (to make the plane crash)."

Rescue workers set up emergency lights on the runway and used electric saws to remove wreckage. The airport was closed shortly after the accident.

Paul Spurgeon, division chief with the Denver Fire Department, said the plane flipped upside down on a north-south runway and skidded for over one-quarter mile before coming to a halt.

Daily Nebraskan

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The Daily Nebraskan (USPS 144-080) is published by the UNL Publications Board, Nebraska Union 34, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448, weekdays during academic year (except holidays); weekly during the summer session.

Readers are encouraged to submit story ideas and comments to the Daily Nebraskan by phoning 472-1763 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The public also has access to the Publications Board. For information, contact Don Johnson, 472-3611.

Subscription price is \$35 for one year. Postmaster: Send address changes to the Daily Nebraskan, Nebraska Union 34, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448. Second-class postage paid at Lincoln, NE. ALL MATERIAL COPYRIGHT 1987 DAILY NEBRASKAN

Kennedy nomination splits anti-abortion community

WASHINGTON — Anthony M. Kennedy's Supreme Court nomination has split the anti-abortion community, even though he has never ruled on an abortion case during 12 years on the bench.

A presidential press official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Ortega will meet with de la Madrid on Monday.

One anti-abortion organization offered positive, but guarded praise for the nomination, a second strongly criticized it, and two other groups took no position.

The abortion question is crucial to these groups and to pro-choice organizations because the court is considered split 4-4 on the issue. The next nominee could tip the balance for years to come.

Pro-choice groups and other women's organizations have taken no position yet on Kennedy.

The anti-abortion National Right To Life Committee reacted positively toward Kennedy because he favors

judicial restraint — interpreting the law, not making it. The organization said only a judicial activist would favor a decision such as Roe vs. Wade, the 1973 Supreme Court ruling that legalized abortion.

But another anti-abortion group, the American Life League, said it mistrusts anyone the Reagan White House would nominate for the court and opposes Kennedy because he didn't criticize the Roe decision in the one chance he had.

That was in 1980 when Kennedy wrote for a three-judge panel in the case of Beller vs. Middendorf. The ruling upheld former Navy regulations calling for the automatic discharge of sailors who engaged in homosexual conduct. Kennedy cited Roe in that ruling without making any comment, favorable or unfavorable.

In Brief

Fahrbruch is new Nebraska high court judge

Lancaster County District Judge Dale Fahrbruch has been appointed to the Nebraska Supreme Court, Gov. Kay Orr announced Friday.

A district judge since 1973 when he was appointed by then Gov. J. James Exon, Fahrbruch is a Republican who on two previous occasions was a finalist for positions on the Supreme Court. He will fill the vacancy created this fall when Orr named then Supreme Court justice William Hastings to the position of chief justice.

Poles may get huge price hikes for basic needs

WARSAW, Poland — Newspapers on Saturday announced price increases next year of 110 percent for basic foods and up to 200 percent for heating and rents, provoking expressions of anger or pained resignation from many Poles.

The hikes are to take effect if the population endorses the government's program of economic reform in a nationwide referendum Nov. 29.

Late fall tornados tear through Texas towns

CALDWELL, Texas — Tornados swept through east-central Texas on Sunday, killing three people, injuring at least 15 and damaging mobile homes, barns and power lines.

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