

Official: Kuwaitis caused deadlock

ALGIERS, Algeria — An Algerian official said Wednesday that Kuwait's "intransigence" had created a deadlock in negotiations with Shiite Moslem hijackers for the release of 32 hostages on a Kuwaiti jumbo jet.

Food and water were taken in the afternoon to the blue-and-white Boeing 747, which the hijackers call the "plane of martyrdom." It baked under the North African sun on an isolated patch of tarmac at Hourari Boumedienne airport.

A delegation from Kuwait arrived Wednesday afternoon to help in efforts to free the remaining hostages and the plane, which was hijacked April 5 on a flight from Bangkok to Kuwait with 112 people aboard.

It spent three days on the ground in Mashhad, Iran, flew to Cyprus on Friday and arrived here early

Wednesday.

The six to eight gunmen, who have killed two passengers, demand that Kuwait free 17 pro-Iranian extremists convicted in the 1983 bombings of the U.S. and French embassies there. The hostages included three members of the Kuwaiti royal family.

Sheik Nawaf al-Ahmed al-Sabah, Kuwait's defense Minister, affirmed Wednesday his country's "unwavering and principled stance of rejecting blackmail," the Persian Gulf sheikdom's official news agency KUNA reported. "We would not change our attitude."

A ranking Algerian official told The Associated Press privately: "If they merely wanted to restate their known position, there was no need for them to send their high-level delegation to Algiers." He said "the intransigence" of Kuwait had stalled negotiations.

His remarks appeared to confirm unofficial reports that Algeria was pressing Kuwait for more flexibility.

The jet left Larnaca, Cyprus, early Wednesday after 12 more hostages were released. They arrived Wednesday night in Kuwait and were met by the interior minister, Sheik Salem Sabah al-Sabah.

On the same Boeing 727 to Kuwait were the bodies of the two slain passengers, their coffins covered in the red, black, green and white Kuwaiti flag.

Fifty-seven other hostages were freed at Mashhad, a city in northeastern Iran. Passengers released Tuesday said one gunman boarded the plane at Massad and the hijackers got a new supply of weapons there.

Dukakis: Gore should get facts straight

NEW YORK — Democratic presidential candidate Michael Dukakis said Wednesday that rival Albert Gore Jr. "ought to get his facts straight" after Gore touched off a campaign clash about the use of nuclear weapons in Europe.

President Reagan, with his vice president on the campaign trail and talking tough about drugs, stepped into the political arena himself, saying politicians don't criticize Jesse Jackson for fear of being labeled racist.

"I have to believe that a great many of us would find ourselves in great disagreement with the policies that he is proposing, and would perhaps be more vocal about them, if it wasn't for concern that that'd be misinterpreted into some kind of a racial attack," Reagan said.

In Albany, N.Y., Gov. Mario Cuomo met with Jackson and praised the candidate as "a singularly impor-

tant Democrat." Jackson applauded Cuomo's decision not to make an endorsement before the primary season June 7—and more importantly in this pivotal state, before Tuesday's New York primary.

"Governor Cuomo, just keep a freeze on all endorsements and keep extending your support," he said.

Gore stirred a new foreign policy controversy in the final week of the New York primary campaign after Dukakis told the New York Daily News "we reserve the right to use nuclear force" in the event of a Soviet invasion of Europe "when there appears to be no other alternative." He added, "I don't think that's going to happen."

Gore, battling for survival in the three-candidate race for Democratic presidential nomination, quickly jumped on the Massachusetts governor and said he had "made a significant mistake in saying that he would

launch a nuclear strike against the Soviet Union under . . . specific circumstances." However, Dukakis never used the word "strike."

Gore, a senator from Tennessee who has rejected appeals that he tone down attacks on his rivals, said the Dukakis statement was "unwise and irresponsible and it underscores . . . that experience in foreign policy is relevant."

At a news conference in Boston, Dukakis said Gore "ought to get his facts straight."

"The policy I advocated has been the policy of the government of the United States for many, many years. It's the policy of the NATO alliance," he said.

"We have always reserved the right to use nuclear force under those circumstances. That's not saying we're going to do it, but we have always reserved the right to do so," Dukakis said.

In Brief

Soviets send 15,000 new troops to Afghanistan

WASHINGTON — The Soviet Union, on the verge of signing an agreement calling for the withdrawal of its forces from Afghanistan, sent 15,000 more troops plus armored vehicles into that country, administration sources said Wednesday.

The troops were sent across the border within the past week, said U.S. intelligence sources who have been monitoring the fighting. The sources spoke on condition they not be further identified.

At the same time the Soviet troops were dispatched, the sources said, Soviet armored units already in Afghanistan moved south from Kabul to relieve the beleaguered city of Gardez.

These units consisted of an undetermined number of soldiers and 420 vehicles, including T-72 tanks, armored personnel carriers and mobile rocket launchers.

The increased activity was reported the day before the Soviets were expected to sign as guarantors of a United Nations agreement on the withdrawal of the Red Army from Afghanistan.

Reagan says he did not know about fake quotes

WASHINGTON — President Reagan said Wednesday he did not learn until recently that his former spokesman, Larry Speakes, had put words in his mouth on at least two occasions while briefing reporters on presidential meetings.

Reagan did not directly answer, however, when asked whether he approved of the practice or would allow it to continue. His current spokesman, Marlin Fitzwater, has condemned any such procedure and said he never would do it.

Taxpayers handle tax forms better than expected

WASHINGTON — With a Friday midnight deadline in sight, taxpayers are having less trouble with the new federal tax law than had been expected, government auditors said Wednesday.

Filers are making fewer mistakes than expected and asking fewer questions of the IRS than had been anticipated. And they are not running in droves to professionals to do their returns.

Chances of getting the correct answer to your tax questions from the Internal Revenue Service have improved slightly, but the agency's telephone "assistors" are still giving the wrong answer to 279 of every 1,000 queries. IRS Commissioner Lawrence B. Gibbs told the House Ways and Means oversight subcommittee.

Gibbs and Rep. J.J. Pickle, D-Texas, agreed that is too many errors. "You get better odds in Las Vegas," Pickle said.

"We must and will improve our accuracy rate for our customers," Gibbs promised. He mentioned plans to make assistors full-time rather than seasonal employees; to raise their pay; and to give each immediate access to computerized information necessary to answer questions.

Merchants fund business climate improved by better political ties

MOSCOW — Seven major U.S. companies said Wednesday they've joined forces with the Soviets to produce everything from crackers to computer disks in a consortium that will market capitalist products in a socialist economy.

In addition, U.S. industrialist Armand Hammer announced a joint venture under which he will build two plastics factories in the Ukraine.

U.S. Commerce Secretary C. William Verity and a group of about 400 American business leaders are in Moscow this week for meetings with Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev and other officials about the possibility of expanding trade between the superpowers.

Several agreements have been announced already, and the businessmen say the climate for broader cooperation has warmed considerably in recent months.

James H. Giffen, president of the new American Trade Consortium involving the seven companies, said this week's activity could lead to an unprecedented volume of U.S.-Soviet trade.

Giffen, who also is president of The Mercator Corp., attributed the trade successes to "the improved political atmosphere" following Soviet Communist Party General Secretary Mikhail S. Gorbachev's visit to the United

States in December.

Both governments began campaigning for expansion of commercial ties after the Washington summit, the businessmen said.

The Soviets are actively seeking joint business projects with capitalist countries to help improve the quantity and quality of consumer goods and to earn convertible foreign currencies to pay for grain and other imports.

Few U.S. companies had been able to put together joint ventures. While there is huge demand among Soviets for consumer goods and service, they have only rubles to spend, which cannot be converted by the western businesses seeking to take home their profits.

But on Monday, Honeywell, Inc. announced a joint venture to supply automated production controls for Soviet fertilizer factories, and on Tuesday Roma Food Enterprises of Piscataway, N.J. began selling pizza in Moscow from a mobile van.

Hammer's \$200 million plastics plant deal was the second joint venture he has announced recently, and the companies forming the new consortium claim their efforts will result in a network of projects to make goods for both Soviet and foreign markets.

"This is not aid, this is trade," said Giffen. "What we're after is profit."



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