

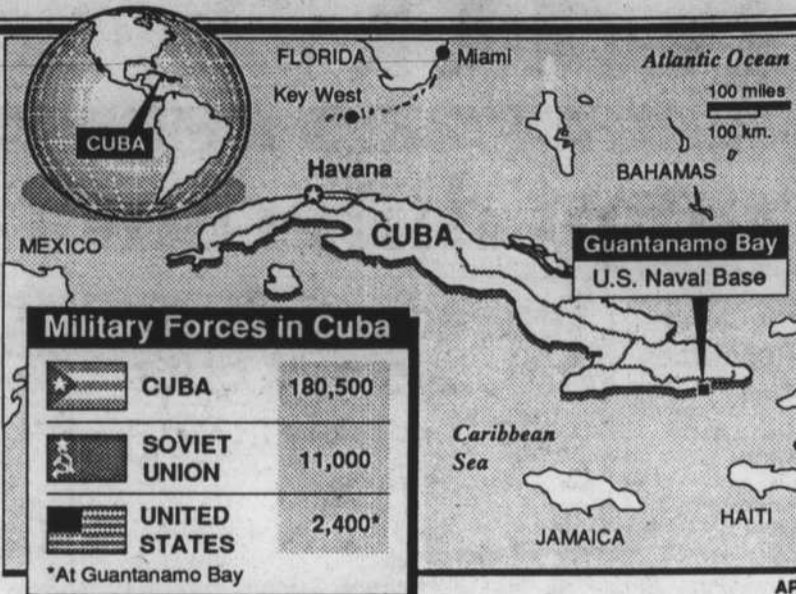
Gorbachev announces pullout from Cuba

MOSCOW — President Mikhail Gorbachev said Wednesday that the Kremlin would pull thousands of troops out of Communist Cuba, a major step toward erasing one of the lingering irritants in U.S.-Soviet relations.

The planned withdrawal of the troops, first sent in the wake of the Cuban missile crisis, would stop short of a complete Soviet pullout from the island 90 miles off Florida. And no timetable was given.

It was the first concrete sign of a reversal in the 30-year-old Kremlin policy of maintaining a military presence on the United States' doorstep.

The pullout would sharply reduce the size of one of the largest Soviet foreign bases. It signaled a return to



Gorbachev's policy of military retrenchment following the Aug. 18-21 coup that discredited hard-liners.

Gorbachev made the announcement after a midday meeting with visiting U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, who called Gorbachev's decision "a substantial step" toward better superpower relations.

Gorbachev said talks would begin with Cuban officials on removing a

training brigade based outside Havana. Asked how many from the brigade would be involved, he said "about 11,000," without specifying how many were soldiers, dependents or others.

There was no reaction Wednesday from Cuba.

Baker said the decision to remove troops "will be very important in terms of public opinion in the United States."

Thomas vows to keep open mind on abortion

WASHINGTON — Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas said Wednesday that he was "very, very pained" by the thought of back-alley abortions and insisted he would have an open mind as a justice about keeping medically safe abortion legal.

He declined under persistent questioning to say whether he believed the Constitution protected a woman's right to end her pregnancy.

On the second day of his Senate Judiciary Committee confirmation hearings, Thomas was immediately confronted on the issue by Sen. Howard Metzenbaum, D-Ohio.

Metzenbaum pressed for his view and Thomas refused to say how he would vote on challenges to the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion.

To answer that question "would undermine my ability to sit in an impartial way on such an important case," he said.

"I have no reason or agenda to

prejudge the issue . . . or a predilection to rule one way or another on the issue of abortion," he added.

Thomas, who would become only the second black justice in history after replacing Thurgood Marshall, was also asked why he had criticized Supreme Court decisions upholding affirmative action programs to remedy discrimination.

Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., expressed concern about whether Thomas would respect the intent of Congress while interpreting civil rights laws that have long been regarded as requiring affirmative action hiring.

Thomas said he would follow the intentions of lawmakers and added that his criticisms of Congress and of Supreme Court decisions were made when he was chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

"I advocated as an advocate, and now I will rule as a judge," Thomas said.

Israel frees prisoners, raising hostage hopes

NABATIYEH, Lebanon — Hopes grew Wednesday for the release of Western hostages in Lebanon after Israel freed 51 Lebanese prisoners and handed over the remains of nine guerrillas in exchange for word that one of its servicemen was dead.

The Israeli move was seen as a crucial break in the hostage stalemate, heightening prospects for a broad swap including the rest of Israel's dead and missing servicemen, more Arab detainees and the 11 missing Westerners.

U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar was "very encouraged" by the day's developments, said his spokesman, Francois Giuliani.

"He will now redouble his efforts to find a solution to the problems of all hostages, detainees and missing persons," Giuliani said.

Perez de Cuellar met Wednesday with Iranian officials in Tehran, but his spokesman gave no details about the talks.

In Washington, the Bush administration welcomed the latest moves. "We are very hopeful that this has ramifications that are helpful to the hostage situation," said White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater.

Sheik Mohammed Hussein Fadlallah, spiritual mentor to Hezbollah, which is believed to be an umbrella for the pro-Iranian hostage-holding

factions, said the releases create "an atmosphere conducive to positive results."

Fadlallah, who spoke to reporters in Beirut, said he expected movement on the hostage issue as a result, but did not predict any timetable.

Israel's chief hostage negotiator, Uri Lubrani, also expressed optimism about prospects for an overall settlement in the wake of Wednesday's "positive omen."

"We all hope this is the beginning of a process which will end with the solution, once and for all, of the tragic problem of our POWs and MIAs and of the Western hostages," he said at a news conference in Tel Aviv.

Alcohol laws shot down by loopholes, official says

WASHINGTON — State laws intended to prevent minors from drinking are "riddled with loopholes" that make it easy for teen-agers to buy and drink alcoholic beverages, Surgeon General Antonia Novello said Wednesday.

"The federally mandated, 21-year-old minimum age drinking law is largely a myth," the surgeon general said in releasing a report describing the weaknesses of youth alcohol laws and difficulties in enforcing them.

Although all states have set their minimum drinking ages at 21 at the direction of the federal government, loopholes in the federal law and loosely

written state laws allow many opportunities for youth to buy, possess and consume alcohol, she said.

Novello noted that:

- Five states and the District of Columbia, while outlawing the sale of alcohol to minors, do not specifically stop minors from purchasing it.
- In 21 states, minors are not barred by law from consuming alcohol.
- Minors in 44 states can sell and serve alcoholic beverages without adult supervision.

"State laws, we have discovered, are riddled with loopholes, with laxity and with lip service," Novello said.

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Plane crash kills 14 in Texas

EAGLE LAKE, Texas — A Continental Express commuter plane crashed and burned Wednesday after a fiery explosion blew off a wing, witnesses said. All 14 people aboard were killed, authorities said.

The twin-engine plane crashed during a flight from Laredo to Houston, spewing wreckage over a southeast Texas ranch.

The late-morning crash occurred about 60 miles west of Houston, killing the occupants of Flight 2574, said Mike Cox, a state Department of Public Safety spokesman.

Witnesses said they heard explosions and saw a fireball, but Continental Express President Stephen Kolski said explosion claims were unconfirmed.

Micro Madness
Free Microcomputer Classes

The Computing Resource Center is offering free microcomputer seminars to UNL faculty, staff, and students. The seminars will feature an introduction to Microsoft Word for the Macintosh and WordPerfect for IBM machines. Each session will last for about an hour.

Introduction to Microsoft Word for Macintosh	Lab Location	Dates	Times
	Schramm	Tuesday, September 10	3:00 & 4:00
	E. Campus Union	Wednesday, September 11	2:00
		Wednesday, September 18	2:00
	Neihardt	Thursday, September 12	3:00 & 4:00
	Burr-Fedde	Tuesday, September 17	3:00 & 4:00
	Sandoz(Mac)	Thursday, September 19	3:00 & 4:00
Advanced Microsoft Word for Macintosh			
	Andrews	Tuesday, September 24	3:00 to 4:30
Advanced WordPerfect 5.1 on IBM			
	Sandoz(IBM)	Thursday, September 26	3:00 to 4:30

Friday, September 20, 1991
4pm-4am

All Night with Campus Rec

3RD ANNUAL
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA - LINCOLN

Some tournament playbegins at 4pm
Intramural Events: Wallyball Tour, Hackey Sack, Frisbee Skills
No Pre-Registration Required!

Family Events 6pm-8pm

Infant/Toddler Races
Obstacle Course
Jello Eating Contest
Soccer Shoot
Volleyball Serving
Frisbee Golf
New Games
And much more!

For Everyone 8pm-4am

3-on-3 Basketball Tournament
Slam Dunk Contest
Powerlifting Meet
TV Marathon
Wallyball Tournament
Table Tennis
Volleyball
And much more!