

News Digest

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WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1997



3 Libyans, 2 German sisters go to trial for 1986 bombing

BERLIN (AP) — Three employees of Libya's former embassy in East Germany and two German sisters went on trial today in the bombing of a disco that killed two American servicemen 11 years ago.

The blast occurred at 1:50 a.m. on April 5, 1986, just as the popular West Berlin hangout for American servicemen was filling up, and prompted retaliatory U.S. air strikes on Libya. Prosecutors say they have evidence of what the United States alleged from the start: Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi ordered his agents to bomb the disco.

Presiding Judge Peter Marhofer, who opened the trial under tight security, said the difficult legal question — proving Gadhafi's alleged involvement — at the heart of the proceedings made it "the most meaningful trial in recent Berlin judicial history."

Marhofer warned both sides against dragging out the trial, which has taken more than a decade of investigations, arrests and extradition requests to come to court.

Kazakstan seeks to enhance economy-related relations

WASHINGTON (AP) — Kazakstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev said today his Central Asian nation wanted to develop closer ties with the United States, build a strong market economy and play a role in international affairs.

As part of that strategy, he said that during his stay in Washington he would sign 14 agreements with President Clinton and other U.S. officials covering security, defense, trade and oil and gas exploration.

Kazakstan is looking for U.S. assistance in building a highly efficient military force after dismantling of its former Soviet nuclear missiles.

Nazarbayev will see Clinton later today. He met Monday with Vice President Al Gore, Defense Secretary William Cohen and Energy Secretary Federico Pena.

Kazakstan, one-third the size of the United States, may have half of central Asia's estimated 100 billion barrels of oil. The United States is anxious to promote development of these resources to lessen dependence on the Middle East.

Nazarbayev said Kazakstan, which became independent in 1991, has developed a 30-year strategic plan "to integrate itself into the world economy and take its place in the geopolitical arena."

CORRECTION

A story in Friday's Daily Nebraskan incorrectly stated that the Environmental Resource Center would use some money from a fundraiser to raise awareness about a proposed development on Wilderness Park. The center does not take sides on political issues.

The story also incorrectly stated the date of the event. The fund-raiser happened Sunday.

Clarification

The proposed development is being considered for a location near the official, legal boundaries for Wilderness Park. Some believe that movement of Salt Creek, which lies in Wilderness Park, also has altered the park's boundary.

Militants responsible for attack

LUXOR, Egypt (AP) — Militants blamed for most of the violence in Egypt's five-year Islamic rebellion claimed responsibility Tuesday for the revolt's deadliest attack: the massacre of 62 people at an ancient temple crowded with tourists.

The al-Gamaa al-Islamiya, or the Islamic Group, said in a faxed statement that Monday's attack was a failed attempt to take hostages to trade for the freedom of their spiritual leader, a blind Egyptian cleric jailed in the United States for plotting to bomb New York landmarks.

The sandstone terraces of the Temple of Hatshepsut were blood-stained Tuesday, but dozens of tourists warily returned. Many others were fleeing the country, however, and agencies were scrapping tours — spelling trouble for Egypt's important tourism industry.

President Hosni Mubarak visited the temple on the Nile River's West Bank across from Luxor to reassure tourists, and replaced his interior minister, blaming him for lax security.

Thirty-one of the dead were Swiss, police said. The others included eight Japanese, five Germans, four Britons — including a child — a Bulgarian, a Colombian and a French citizen. Seven of the dead were still unidentified. There were 24 people wounded.

Police shot the six attackers as they tried to escape. Authorities said one was a member of al-Gamaa, the group that claimed responsibility for the attack.

Al-Gamaa has been a main target of police battling a violent campaign aimed at overthrowing Mubarak's secular government and turning Egypt into a strict Islamic state.

The government has arrested and jailed thousands of suspected radicals, put hundreds on trial and executed 63 people in the past five years. But al-Gamaa and similar radical groups are difficult to fight because of their small, loosely connected cells.

Last year, al-Gamaa took responsibility for killing 16 Greek tourists at a hotel near the pyramids on the edge of Cairo. The group also claimed an assassination attempt on Mubarak while he was visiting Ethiopia in June 1995; he was unharmed.

In its statement Tuesday, the group said the gunmen's "brave" hostage attempt went awry because police opened fire too quickly, forcing militants to return fire.

Witnesses, however, said the six gunmen opened fire as soon as they entered the temple grounds, spraying wildly with automatic weapons and killing 58 foreign tourists and four Egyptians.

A coroner's report said some victims were stabbed after being shot. One Swiss survivor said the "very young" gunmen calmly shot victims who had dived to the ground or run for cover behind temple pillars.

Rosemarie Dousse, the Swiss tourist shot in the arm and the leg, hid under the bodies of other tourists for at least an hour.

"They made us get down on our knees. And then they started shooting. A man who was very heavy fell on top of me and the lady behind me also covered me," she said. "Then they started again — shooting those who were still alive, in the head."

Police gunned down one attacker at the site and the five others after they hijacked a bus. Authorities counted only six gunmen, but the al-Gamaa statement said nine others escaped.

It said it had hoped to trade hostages for the release of Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, imprisoned for plotting to blow up the United Nations building and other New York landmarks.

That plot was uncovered before the attacks could be carried out, but Abdel Rahman also was said to have advised the six men convicted in the 1993 bombing of New York's World Trade Center, which killed six people and injured more than 1,000.

Clinton orders increase in Gulf military power

WASHINGTON (AP) — Strengthening his hand in the standoff with Iraq, President Clinton ordered a fresh buildup of U.S. firepower in the Persian Gulf on Tuesday even as signs emerged of an accelerated push for a diplomatic solution.

Clinton told the Air Force to dispatch six of its F-117 stealth fighters, six B-52 long-range bombers and four refueling planes. Pentagon officials said the decision was based in part on a heightened state of alert by Iraq's air defenses.

A U-2 surveillance plane flew over Iraq without incident — despite Iraqi threats — and the Pentagon said at least one more mission would be flown this week.

The fresh warplanes are to arrive in the region by the end of the week, officials said.

Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon said the president also authorized Gen. Anthony Zinni, commander of U.S. forces in the Middle East, to send up to 30 other warplanes — including F-15 and F-16 fighters and B-1 bombers — if he deemed it necessary.

The president's national security adviser, Sandy Berger, said the addition of U.S. aircraft, pushing the total to more than 300 in the Gulf region, was a precautionary step — not a signal that Clinton had concluded a military clash was inevitable.

"This is part of our effort to be prepared in a prudent way for any contingency that may arise in the region," Berger said at the White House.

The United States had about 1,700 combat aircraft in the Gulf during the 1991 war against Iraq.

Berger said the buildup was not related to a U-2 surveillance flight over Iraq on Tuesday morning. The spy plane, operating in support of U.N. efforts to monitor Iraq's weapons program, completed its mission without incident, he said. Iraq had threatened to shoot down the U-2, but U.S. officials said it did not try.

Bacon said the U-2 flew for about one hour just west of Baghdad, and he added that at least one more surveillance mission would be flown by the end of the week.

Berger confirmed that the Clinton administration was prepared to consider altering a U.N. "oil-for-food" program under which Iraq currently is

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SANDY BERGER
national security adviser

allowed to buy \$4 billion a year in food and medicine from U.N.-supervised Iraqi oil export revenue. One possibility is that Iraq would be allowed to buy more goods.

Berger said Iraq would first have to comply with a U.N. demand that it permit U.N. weapons inspectors back, including the American team members it kicked out last week. "Saddam Hussein must reverse course and allow the inspectors back in," he said.

In New York on Monday, Iraq's U.N. ambassador, Nizar Hamdoon, called the proposal a "no-starter."

Although a senior administration official traveling with Secretary of State Madeleine Albright in Pakistan had characterized the "oil-for-food" suggestion on Monday as a "little carrot" for Iraq, Berger insisted the administration was not negotiating. He said changes in the oil sales arrangement had been under consideration before the current crisis arose more than two weeks ago.

"The president has mentioned this to me and raised this with me on a number of occasions over the past few months as there have been reports out of Iraq of hunger or malnutrition. So this has been a longstanding position of the United States," Berger said.

In Moscow, Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov told reporters that President Boris Yeltsin, in a meeting Tuesday with Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz, had come to an understanding on an unspecified diplomatic solution.

"In the course of the talks a certain program has been worked out that allows us, we think, to avoid a confrontation, to avoid the use of force and achieve a settlement," Primakov said.

Research shows Einstein had relativity idea first

WASHINGTON (AP) — For years there were whispers that Albert Einstein took a key part of the general theory of relativity from another scientist who wrote a similar paper at about the same time in 1915.

A prominent mathematician named David Hilbert produced a paper that was dated five days before Einstein submitted his conclusive paper on general relativity on Nov. 25, 1915.

After the Hilbert paper was published the next year, Einstein claimed that some of his work had been stolen. But the original date on Hilbert's paper suggested to some experts that it was Einstein who had cribbed the results.

A group of researchers from the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin, Tel-Aviv University in Israel and Boston University reported new evidence that it was Hilbert who took key parts of the theory from Einstein's work.

Einstein's general theory of relativity deals with the effect of gravity on time, space and even

light. An earlier work, published in 1905, was called the special theory. That included Einstein's famous equation for the relationship between mass and energy: $E = mc^2$. In a study published last week in the journal Science, the researchers say that page proofs of the Hilbert paper, dated Dec. 6, 1915, showed that Hilbert's work was only an incomplete version of the general theory. The early page proofs lacked key equations that were included in the Einstein work made public on Nov. 25.

When the Hilbert paper was published in March 1916, the equations were included.

The historians concluded that Hilbert must have seen the Einstein paper after the Dec. 6 date on the page proofs and inserted the equations into his own paper before it was published in March.

The analysis "excludes the possibility that Einstein plagiarized from Hilbert the last crucial step in completing general relativity," the researchers say.

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World Wide Web: www.unl.edu/DailyNeb
The Daily Nebraskan (USPS 144-080) is published by the UNL Publications Board, Nebraska Union 34, 1400 R St., Lincoln, NE 68588-0448, Monday through Friday during the academic year; weekly during the summer sessions. The public has access to the Publications Board.
Readers are encouraged to submit story ideas and comments to the Daily Nebraskan by calling (402) 472-2588.
Subscriptions are \$55 for one year.
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