

NEWS DIGEST

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PAGE 2

Court denies Pinochet immunity

LONDON (AP) — In a precedent-setting ruling cheered by both his detractors and his supporters, Britain's highest court on Wednesday denied Gen. Augusto Pinochet immunity from arrest, but threw out almost all the charges leveled against him.

The former Chilean dictator now faces only three of 32 counts for crimes allegedly committed during his 1973-90 regime: torture, conspiracy to torture and conspiracy to murder.

In a 6-1 decision, the House of Lords dismissed the remaining 29 counts in a Spanish warrant seeking his extradition, saying he could not be held accountable for acts of torture committed before 1988, when Britain signed a law making it an international crime.

Pinochet, 83, must remain in Britain under police guard while Spain seeks his extradition on the remaining counts. But the court said Home Secretary Jack Straw should reconsider whether to allow the extradition to go forward in light of the greatly reduced case.

"The basis of this case has now changed and now there is really not much left," said Louise Delahunty,

an extradition expert with the law firm of Peters and Peters, which is not connected with the case.

In Chile, a close associate of Pinochet, retired Gen. Luis Cortes, said the former dictator "is very happy because this ruling has made justice."

After speaking with Pinochet by phone, Cortes said, "He now has no doubts whatsoever that he will come back home."

The ruling marked the first time a national court has denied immunity to a foreign head of state accused of an international crime.

Legal experts said it should put heads of state on notice that they could be at risk when they leave power — and when they leave their own countries.

Pinochet was arrested in London Oct. 16 on the Spanish warrant, which alleged abuses by his secret police after the bloody 1973 coup in which he toppled Chile's elected Marxist president, Salvador Allende.

In his decision, Lord Justice Nicholas Phillips wrote that if Pinochet was still in office, "he and Chile would be in a position to complain that the entire extradition process was a violation of the

"*He now has no doubts whatsoever that he will come back home.*"

LUIS CORTES

Retired Chilean general and associate of Pinochet

duties owed under international law to a person of his status."

But, Phillips said, Britain has no legal obligation now Pinochet is no longer head of state.

The general's supporters were jubilant that the case was so drastically reduced.

But his opponents were just as thrilled that the case still can go forward, and that the general must remain confined in the rented mansion west of London where he has resided under police guard for months.

World and Nation DATELINES

Arkansas

McDougal testifies, says husband wanted claim

LITTLE ROCK (AP) — Susan McDougal's late ex-husband encouraged her to claim she had an affair with Bill Clinton so Kenneth Starr's prosecutors could "get" the president McDougal testified Wednesday.

She also said James McDougal tried out versions of an "outlandish" story about Clinton and a fraudulent loan in an effort to satisfy Starr's office and get out of having to go to jail.

Virginia

Board: Rudder problems caused airline crashes

SPRINGFIELD (AP) — Boeing 737 rudder problems caused two fatal airline crashes — including the 1994 crash of USAir Flight 427 outside of Pittsburgh — and nearly triggered a third, a federal safety board concluded Wednesday.

Although the Boeing Co. and the Federal Aviation Administration say the rudder problems are being eliminated, the National Transportation Safety Board called for them to work together to devise further improvements.

Washington, D.C.

Children's cars recalled for electrical flaws

The Associated Press — Peg Perego USA Inc. is recalling 274,000 battery-powered children's vehicles for repair after receiving more than 300 reports of electrical components overheating or accelerator pedals getting stuck, the Consumer Product Safety Commission said Wednesday.

According to the government and the Fort Wayne, Ind.-based company, 30 fires have been reported, resulting in one child suffering third-degree burns to his hand.

Washington, D.C.

Congress members urge cancellation of game

The Associated Press — Two Cuban-American members of Congress urged the government Wednesday to cancel an exhibition baseball game this weekend in Havana between the Baltimore Orioles and the Cuban national team.

But Michael Ranneberger, the Clinton administration's coordinator of Cuban affairs, defended the contest as part of a U.S. effort to reach out to the Cuban people.

Suspect goes on trial for Shepard beating death

LARAMIE, Wyo. (AP) — One of two men arrested in the beating death of gay college student Matthew Shepard went on trial Wednesday with the defense attorney asking prospective jurors not to punish his client to redeem this small town's image in the eyes of the nation.

The killing "has literally injected into our community a feeling of guilt. The press wants us to think that we are somehow responsible for what went on Oct. 6," said Wyatt Skaggs, the lawyer for Russell Henderson, 21.

"Are any of you here going to judge this case because you feel guilty and want to make a statement to the nation?" he asked the prospective jurors. They replied, "No."

Prosecutor Cal Rerucha told the prospective jurors that Shepard was "not the same as you and I" but that every individual should be treated equally under the Constitution.

Authorities said Henderson and Aaron McKinney, 21, posed as homosexuals and lured the 5-foot-2, 105-pound Shepard out of a bar Oct. 6, kidnapped and pistol-whipped him and left him tied to a fence in the cold. The University of Wyoming student died five days later at a hospital.

The crime led to demands for stronger hate-crime laws.

McKinney will be tried later. Both men could get the death penalty.

For the first time since Henderson

"*This case is not about hate. All crimes ... aren't about hate.*"

WYATT SKAGGS

defense lawyer

was arrested, Skaggs revealed a part of his strategy, saying he will argue that Henderson didn't participate in the beating and that the slaying wasn't premeditated.

Skaggs also told the jury candidates that the case "is not about lifestyles." "This case is not about hate. All crimes ... aren't about hate. They all come down to some real simple motives," he said.

One prospective juror, a man in his 40s, objected quickly: "No, I disagree. ... I think Matthew Shepard's lifestyle was part of this."

By midday, 10 of the 71 prospective jurors in the first pool had been dismissed for financial, medical or child-care related decisions. Opening statements are set for April 6.

The prospective jurors will be questioned individually in the judge's chambers.

Court wants ban on media 'ride-alongs'

Justices and lawyers argue allowing reporters and cameras on police arrests and searches.

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court appeared determined Wednesday to stop police from letting TV cameras and other news media accompany them into people's homes to observe arrests or searches.

Justice David H. Souter balked most emphatically at being told "media ride-alongs" can help deter crime and police excesses, and should trump concerns for personal privacy.

"What's the help provided here?" he asked. "I don't see why you have to take the news media people into someone's home ... it sounds like fluff."

When a lawyer contended that such ride-alongs are commonplace, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor shot back in incredulous tones, "Ride right into the house?" She later called one such incident "an amazing invasion."

Six of the court's nine members asked questions or voiced concerns, suggesting a willingness to let people sue law enforcement officers who let journalists enter someone's home.

For such liability to exist, the court must rule that police with court warrants violate the Fourth Amendment's protection against unreasonable searches and seizures when they take

journalists with them. If so, another legal issue looms: Can the journalists be punished financially, too?

Twenty-four news organizations have sided with officers in two cases from Maryland and Montana. They cite the media's role as a watchdog, but First Amendment rights were barely mentioned Wednesday.

The police practice of letting journalists accompany them has been given higher visibility in recent years by true-life programs that focus on police work.

"The only authority police have is to enter the home, (not) bring along the media on a news-gathering expedition," Washington lawyer Richard Willard argued. He represents a Maryland couple photographed by The Washington Post in their nightclothes in an unsuccessful search for their fugitive son.

Lawyer Richard Cordray of Grove City, Ohio, who represents the federal agents, urged the court not to ban every instance of the media entering someone's home at the invitation of police. But, under rapid-fire questions from the bench, he was hard-pressed to explain when such access is justified.

No one doubted that police are free to take along some outsiders to help them — such as translators or owners of searched-for stolen property — but Willard contended that journalists do not offer that kind of specific assistance.

ASUN grants approval to student fees allocation

By **KIM SWEET**

Staff writer

After scrutinizing the funds allocated earlier this semester by the Committee for Fees Allocation, ASUN voted to approve the budget submitted by the budgetary arm of student government Wednesday night.

But what was initially predicted to be a \$14 increase in student fees for the 1999-2000 school year turned into a \$15 increase, after a .75 percent increase was added for staff salary hikes that are pending in the Nebraska Legislature.

The increase means students will pay \$255 in student fees next year, which is a 6.25 percent jump over the 1998-99 school year.

Originally, only a 4 percent salary increase was figured into the fee projection for next year. But after the NU

Board of Regents requested a higher increase, it was necessary to add a .75 percent into the calculations, said James Griesen, vice chancellor of student affairs and adviser to CFA.

Technically, the fee per student adds up to \$255.33, but Griesen said he hoped to eliminate the 33 cents — which adds up to \$14,906 — by working with the Fund B fee users to come up with the money. One solution to is to estimate lower increases in the operation of the student ID card system, Griesen said.

After debate over the appropriations for the Daily Nebraskan, Campus Recreation and the Nebraska Unions, the senate voted to approve all the amounts passed earlier by CFA.

Each semester, students will pay \$4.81 to support ASUN, \$1.19 for the Daily Nebraskan and \$4.77 for the University Program Council.

To support Fund B users each semester, students will pay \$98.07 for

the University Health Center, \$50.44 for Campus Recreation's operating budget, \$9.50 for its repair and improvement budget and \$48.55 for the Nebraska Unions' budget.

CFA chairman Paul Schreier said he was glad that the senate voted to accept the recommendations of his committee.

At the end of the meeting, Griesen tried to put the \$15 increase in perspective to the senate.

Two percent of the more than 6 percent increase from last year simply comes from fewer students paying fees, Griesen said.

"When there are less students paying fees, students have to pay more," Griesen said.

But he pointed out there was hope for lower increases in fees for the future.

"The bright point is that in future years as we continue to increase, we'll be able to avoid increases on the upside as more students pay fees," he said.

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