



Hostages' escape ends standoff

DUNDALK, Md. (AP) — Slaying suspect Joseph Palczynski announced that he planned to kill one of his three hostages, so the captives ended their long ordeal by drugging him with prescription medication, one of them said Wednesday.

With Palczynski sleeping on the living-room sofa in their apartment, Lynn Whitehead and Andy McCord climbed out a first-floor bedroom window late Tuesday, leaving their 12-year-old son asleep on the kitchen floor.

Palczynski, accused of kidnapping Whitehead's daughter and killing four people before the standoff began, died minutes later when police stormed the apartment and shot him. The little boy was rescued.

Earlier that day, the suspected multiple killer had told Whitehead that "today is the day she's going to die," McCord recalled Wednesday.

She took prescription pills, Xanax, crushed them and put them in Palczynski's iced tea, McCord told The Associated Press. Xanax can be used

as a tranquilizer or as a sleeping pill.

McCord and Whitehead then made their escape when Palczynski finally fell asleep after a standoff of almost 100 hours.

"I'm just so glad it ended up how it did. My family's safe," Mary McCord, who is both Whitehead's sister and McCord's sister-in-law, told WJZ-TV. "And now we can all sleep, go on with our life."

Her husband David McCord said his brother Andy had called during the weekend and said: "'Dave, I love everybody,' he said, 'and tell Mom — tell her I love her, too, because I don't know if I'm going to make it or not.' And he was crying his eyes out."

Palczynski, a 31-year-old unemployed electrician, stormed into the apartment on Friday. Police negotiations had continued even after shots were fired out of the apartment over the weekend.

"We were willing to stay as long as it took," police spokesman Bill Toohey said afterward. Whitehead fled first and McCord followed several minutes

"We were willing to stay as long as it too."

Bill Toohey
police spokesman

later. Once they left, police said they had no choice but to enter.

"They knew there was one 12-year-old boy in there and a man who had murdered four people," Toohey said.

Palczynski's mother, Patricia Long, told WJZ-TV early Wednesday that another son, Jimmy, called her and told her the hostages had escaped unharmed and there were two shots fired.

"I says, 'Oh, my God.' And then ... Jimmy said the paramedics were there, they left. Right then and there, I knew he was dead," Long said.

Palczynski had had a long history of mental problems and run-ins with the law. His mother said she blamed "the system for letting that boy out and not giving him the proper treatment,

not giving him the medicine he needed, because they knew of his condition."

Palczynski was asleep on a sofa with a gun on his lap under a blanket when police burst in through a living room window, Toohey said.

Palczynski "began to sit up, and tactical officers shot and killed him," police spokeswoman Vickie Warehime said. She said two officers fired shots, but the number of shots was not known immediately.

Attorney David Henninger, a long-time friend of Palczynski who was involved in the negotiations, said he knew the end was coming.

"I knew it would end today one way or another," Henninger said. "I was hoping it would end in a better way, but the hostages were safe."

Pope's visit spurs Palestinian hopes

Pope John Paul II visits site of Jesus's birth as Palestinians battle police.

BETHLEHEM, West Bank (AP) — Journeying to the cradle of Christianity, Pope John Paul II knelt and prayed Wednesday at the traditional spot of Jesus' birth.

He also kissed a golden bowl of Palestinian soil — one of several gestures the Palestinians saw as recognition of their dreams for statehood.

As a beaming Yasser Arafat looked on, the 79-year-old pontiff proclaimed Palestinians' "natural right to a homeland" and visited a crowded, dusty camp for refugees exiled from their homes since the 1948 Mideast War.

But soon after he left, Palestinian frustrations turned violent: Hundreds of camp residents hurled stones at baton-wielding Palestinian police in a battle that lasted for nearly half an

hour. Police at the Dheisheh camp pushed the protesters back, then had to retreat under a hail of rocks. Some minor injuries were reported in the melee, a show of dissatisfaction with Palestinian leadership and the slow pace of peace.

Earlier in the day, the pope called for international action to end Palestinian suffering.

"Your torment is before the eyes of the world," he declared. "And it has gone on for too long."

However, the day in Bethlehem — the city John Paul II said was at the heart of his pilgrimage — also had a strong spiritual note. In Manger Square, near Jesus' traditional birth grotto in the Church of the Nativity, a golden-clad pontiff leaning on a silver staff celebrated Mass before thousands of faithful.

Later, he descended into the grotto and knelt before the star marking the spot where Mary is believed to

have given birth. In the soft glow of candles, the pope sat in silence as his aides respectfully slipped out of the grotto.

Despite the Vatican's portrayal of the papal trip as purely spiritual, the pope touched on contentious issues of clear consequence to the region. The Palestinians, in turn, lost no time deriving home the message of their aspirations of independence.

"Welcome to our land," Arafat told the pope at a formal reception that kicked off the only day the pope was spending in Palestinian territory. He called the pope an "esteemed guest of Palestine, and its eternal capital, Jerusalem."

Israel claims all Jerusalem as its capital, while Palestinians want the city's eastern section as the capital of a future Palestinian state.

In his arrival speech, the pope referred to "legitimate Palestinian aspirations" and the need for peaceful negotiations to realize them.

"Your torment is before the eyes of the world. And it has gone on for too long."

Pope John Paul II

"The Holy See has always recognized that the Palestinian people have a natural right to a homeland," the pope said, speaking in a slurred voice — a symptom of Parkinson's disease, a progressive neurological disorder.

Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls parried suggestions the pope was endorsing a Palestinian state, saying such a state has not been proclaimed yet and that the Vatican would consider the issue when that happened.

U.S. government to pay \$508 million to settle

Federal overseas news and information agency denied jobs to women.

WASHINGTON (AP) — Some 1,100 women who were denied jobs with the federal agency that disseminates U.S. government news and information overseas won \$508 million from the government Wednesday in the largest-ever settlement of a federal sex discrimination case.

The agreement, which requires approval from a federal judge, comes 23 years after the first woman, then-29-year-old Carolee Brady Hartman, accused the U.S. Information Agency and its broadcast branch, the Voice of America, of turning her down for a job because of her gender.

"I went for a job interview, and the man who was interviewing me told me that he was not going to hire me because I was a woman," said Brady, today a 52-year-old divorced social worker. "At the time, I just didn't know how to respond. Now, I have a way of responding, and this is the victory that we all celebrate today. It is a delicious victory."

In addition to the \$508 million that must be paid to the women — approxi-

mately \$450,000 apiece before taxes — the federal government must also give them nearly \$23 million in back pay and interest and pay their attorneys' fees. Those fees will be at least \$12 million, because the lawyers intend to bill the government for approximately 90,000 hours of work over the 23 years.

The Justice Department said although larger settlements involving other forms of discrimination have been awarded, this was the largest federal sex discrimination case since the Civil Rights Act was signed into law in 1964.

In the end, after years of insisting on trying each case in the courts, though the suit had been certified as a class-action case, government lawyers decided to settle; they had lost 46 of the 48 cases that had gone to trial, with each woman winning about \$500,000. They will share in Wednesday's settlement.

"We took into account the prior court decisions of the trial and appellate courts ..., the results of the individual class members' hearings that had been conducted to date, as well as our independent projections of the likely results of the remaining hearings in the absence of a settlement," said Wilma A. Lewis, U.S. attorney of the District of Columbia.

WEATHER

TODAY

TOMORROW

Thunderstorms
high 51, low 48

Rain
high 61, low 46

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