

the nation

Fishing grounds in conflict

Court delays oil lease sale

United Press International
BOSTON - A federal appeals court judge said Thursday he will consider a request to block the sale of oil and natural gas exploration leases on the rich Georges Bank fishing grounds off Nantucket.

Presiding Judge Frank Coffin said he was not "overwhelmed" by an environmental impact statement that the fishing grounds could be harmed if oil companies are allowed to drill on the Georges Bank.

Environmentalists and lawyers for Massachusetts Attorney General Francis Bellotti appeared Thursday in 1st U.S. District Court of Appeals in another attempt to block the sale of 116 ocean bottom tracts of the Georges Bank — the world's most bountiful fishing grounds about 100 miles off the coast of Massachusetts.

Coffin listened to arguments from environmentalists and attorneys for the U.S. Interior Department and took the matter under advisement.

A U.S. District Court judge last month ruled that the nonprofit Conservation Law Foundation and the

attorney general failed to show sufficient cause to halt the sale, which was originally scheduled to be made Nov. 6 in Providence, R.I.

But the environmentalists won a temporary victory in an 11th-hour appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court. Justice William Brennan failed to rule on the case causing the sale to be delayed until Dec. 18.

At Thursday's hearing, government attorneys asked the three-judge panel to let stand the District Court ruling to allow the sale to go forward.

Coffin questioned Department of Interior attorney Mary Ann Walsh about the federal environmental impact statement on which the government has based a major portion of its argument.

"I don't think we (the judges) were overwhelmed with the statement at certain points," he said.

In brief arguments Conservation Law Foundation attorney Douglas I. Foy said Secretary of Interior Cecil Andrus has failed to adequately study the potential impact of drilling and has violated his duties to protect the "unique" marine environment on Georges Bank.

Passenger ruckus upsets pilot

Smoking dispute causes landing

United Press International
BALTIMORE — The pilot of an Eastern Airlines Washington-to-New York flight landed in Baltimore, only minutes after takeoff, because of a shouting match between smoking passengers and a nonsmoker.

An Eastern Airlines spokesman said the pilot, Capt. Larry Kinsey, decided to land the Boeing 727 Wednesday, with 177 passengers, in Baltimore — just 40 miles from Washington — when the arguing passengers refused to heed his request for order.

The passengers were causing such a ruckus that the pilot just had enough of it and said, in so many words, that "if you folks can't act like mature adults, I'm going to land the airplane in the interest of safety."

Airline spokesman Marty Barry said, "At the Baltimore airport, the passengers were removed from the plane, then boarded another plane to New York an hour later."

The nonsmoker, identified as a tax lawyer from Washington, was questioned by Maryland State Police in Baltimore but was not arrested.

Kinsey refused to comment on the incident.

Eastern officials said several businessmen got on the 8 a.m. plane, and a flight attendant overheard one man say, "I know my rights."

The officials said the man then headed for the smoking section, although there were seats open in non-smoking, and said, "I'm not

going to smoke and I don't want anyone else around me to."

At that point, passengers began shouting. The pilot told the passengers to act like adults, and then took off.

But the ruckus continued. Some passengers offered to switch places and the nonsmoker was offered a seat among fellow abstainers, but he refused, the officials said.

An Eastern spokesman said the lawyer has been involved in similar incidents on other airlines.

Wage freeze bill denounced by Chrysler

United Press International
WASHINGTON — Chrysler Corp. Thursday joined leaders of the United Auto Workers union in denouncing a Senate bill requiring a three-year wage freeze for its workers in order to get a government loan guarantee.

The third largest automaker firm announced, through a spokesman, that it was opposed to the freeze legislation co-authored by Sens. Richard Lugar, R-Ind. and Paul Tsongas, D-Mass.

The Lugar-Tsongas proposal, reported out by the Senate Banking Committee Nov. 29, would tie \$1.25 billion in loan guarantees to UAW workers at Chrysler accepting the freeze.

It also would require Chrysler to turn over 40 percent of its ownership to the workers in stock awards that would partially make up for the loss in increased income.

On Tuesday, about 250 leaders of the union at Chrysler unanimously rejected the proposal.

In its statement Thursday, Chrysler called the Senate proposal "unworkable" because it would impair worker productivity and would cause a serious loss of highly skilled design, engineering and technical workers essential to the company's future success.

Carter to pressure Iran

United Press International
WASHINGTON — President Carter told 100 congressmen Wednesday night he is prepared to start pressuring Iran daily until the 50 American hostages are released, sources said.

"The president said he is prepared to start turning the screws on Iran daily," a source said after congressmen from both parties got a two-hour briefing at the White House.

Several at the briefing said the behind-the-scenes effort to free the hostages has given new hope to members of Congress. They said third-party nations were being helpful.

Carter asked the congressmen attending the session not to quote him, sources said.

"He indicated he was staying in touch with all our allies and a number of secret moves were being made," said a source.

The congressmen declined to specify what Carter revealed. But, they said, the president clearly does not want debate about alleged crimes of the deposed Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi to interfere with efforts to

free the hostages.

"I find great reason for hope in the resolve and dignity our president has shown," Rep. Millicent Fenwick, R-N.J., said. "We heard some very interesting actions that were new to me."

"He did, but we're not at liberty to quote the president," Rep. Raymond Lederer, D-Pa., said when asked if Carter had given him hope. "All doors are open — other countries are being helpful."

Aides said Carter has approved new diplomatic and economic measures over the next few weeks to put pressure on Iran, but they, too, gave no clues as to their nature.

Earlier Wednesday, a group of American Moslem leaders met with Carter and gave him their support. They appealed to him not to use military force and left the 65-minute meeting apparently convinced he will not do so.

Since he has decided to stay close to the White House until the hostages are returned safely, Carter has kept his official schedule fairly light. Today he was meeting with his economic advisers to assess the inflation

picture as the year comes to an end. He also was meeting with the directors of the National Farmers Organization.

Reps. Tony Hall, D-Ohio, and Norman Minetta, D-Calif., said Carter does not want the Iranian claims against the shah to get in the way of discussions about the release of the hostages.

"He doesn't want to argue about the wrongness or rightness of any previous leader of Iran," Minetta said.

"I felt very close to the president, probably closer than I ever felt," Hall said. "I think he's handling things very, very well."

The Moslems were only slightly less restrained.

"I would like to express my support for the president in the way he is handling the situation and that support was given the president by all the members of this meeting," said Wallace Mohammad of Chicago, son of the founder of the Black Muslims.

Number of women in offices doubles

United Press International
NEW YORK — The number of women in public office has more than doubled in the past five years.

Women now hold 17,782 offices — 10.9 percent of the total, says an article in Ms. magazine reporting on women in the 1970s.



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