

world

# Iran situation

## U.N. commission can see hostages

United Press International  
AYATOLLAH Ruhollah Khomeini, the supreme leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, has overruled the U.N. commission will be allowed to meet with the Americans.

contradictory statements issued by the militants Tuesday.

The five-member U.N. panel has been in Tehran since Feb. 23.

The radio was monitored in London.

Ghotbzadeh also reiterated the council's approval, originally issued earlier this week, of such a meeting but did not specify when it would take place.

The Moslem militants holding the Americans hostage said Tuesday they would not permit the U.N. commission members to meet with all 50 of the hostages, but would let them visit some, on the basis they

are "spies, not hostages."

That statement — made in a telephone interview with UPI in London — was the latest in a series of confusing and seemingly contradictory announcements by the militants throughout the day.

First, a militant spokesman was quoted on Tehran Radio as saying a visit by the commission with some — but not all — of the Americans would be allowed.

Several hours later, the radio said the militants sent a message to the five commission members at their Tehran hotel, telling them they would not be permitted to see the Americans because the hostages had nothing to do with the commission's investigation of the "crimes" of the deposed shah and the United States.

That was followed by the telephone interview in which the spokesman said: "We decided to show the commission some of the spies who are here and documents found here."

# Colombia forces warn against rebel release

United Press International  
BOGOTA, Colombia — Negotiations between the government and leftist guerrillas resumed Wednesday for the ransom of 21 foreign diplomats held for a week in the Dominican Embassy but the Colombian armed forces warned against release of imprisoned guerrillas.

Foreign Ministry officials Ramiro Zambrano and Camilo Jimenez met with a hooded woman guerrilla and hostage Mexican Ambassador Ricardo Galan in a cream-colored police van in front of the embassy seized by the armed militants last Wednesday.

While the talks proceeded after a two-day recess, the armed forces issued a stern statement in the form of an editorial in the military newspaper Armed Forces.

The editorial spoke in general terms of supporting the constitution and democracy but its phrasing appeared to be an indirect warning that the armed forces would not tolerate the release of 311 jailed leftists who are facing court-martial for subversive acts or who have been convicted.

The prisoner release is the guerrillas' key ransom demand.

The Colombian armed forces respect the constitution and legal order, the editorial said. It said anyone who would try to "undermine the pillars of the Colombian state" should consider his position carefully.

The armed forces "know who they are faithful to and why," the editorial said.

In the context of Colombian society, the statement was both a pledge of loyalty to the civilian government and an indirect warning of military opposition to handover of prisoners whose cases are being handled by military courts.

Wednesday's meeting between the government and the April 19th Movement guerrillas was only the second face-to-face negotiation for the release of the diplomats and other hostages held in the besieged embassy.

The guerrillas have been demanding \$50 million ransom, safe passage out of the country and the release of 311 jailed leftists. They have been offered political asylum in Panama.

In the Vatican, meanwhile, Pope John Paul II appealed for the release

of the hostages, who include the U.S. ambassador and the papal nuncio to Colombia. Pope John Paul said he had sent his special envoy in Argentina, Monsignor Pio Laghi, to Bogota to keep in close contact with the situation and perhaps to aid in negotiations.

"In virtue of the rights of man to regulate international relations, their persons and their liberty are inviolable," the pope told his weekly general audience.

With the leftist guerrillas and Colombian officials still stalemated over ransom demands, the only break in the week-long ordeal at the Dominican Embassy was the delivery of care packages from home to the 21 diplomatic hostages.

For the first time since the hostages were seized, they received fresh changes of clothes, letters and games from their families to pass time.

As a security measure, police cautiously shuffled several decks of playing cards, opened and inspected a game called "Conquest," checked cardboard boxes filled with food, then allowed the shipment into the occupied building.

# Afghan rebels close to loss in eastern state

United Press International  
ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — Many men and children reportedly have fled in a new exodus of tribes fleeing advancing combined Soviet and Afghan thrust against Moslem rebel forces in eastern Afghanistan.

The rebels have all but conceded defeat in bitter fighting against Russian and government troops in the province of Kunar, on the border with Pakistan.

The Foreign Ministry of the Kabul government charged Pakistani military forces were violating Afghan airspace in Kunar, Soviet and Cuban planes were reported to be in the area.

Many civilians, especially women and children, drowned in the Kunar River when trying to flee from advancing Soviets, a spokesman for the Hizbi Islami (Islamic Front), the largest of the rebel groups, said Tuesday in Peshawar.

The Islamic Alliance for the Liberation of Afghanistan, a coalition of rebel groups, said Wednesday some 7,000 Afghan families are making the dangerous trek across the mountains into Pakistan, where thousands of refugees are now living.

The rebel parties conceded the combined Soviet-Afghan force captured the main Kunar towns of Asmara and Shegal in three days of bitter fighting.

The Hizbi Islami spokesman said guerrillas had retreated to the mountains where they were being pinned down by tank fire and continuous heavy bombardment by helicopter gunships and MiG fighters.

Villages in the plains of the provinces were destroyed by Soviet napalm attacks, the rebels said.

Western sources could not confirm the rebel claims but said independent reports indicated there was

heavy fighting in Kunar.

There are an estimated 75,000 Soviet troops in Afghanistan.

The rebel groups claimed "hundreds of Soviet soldiers and more than 2,000 Afghan troops" were killed in the fighting. They would only say insurgent and civilian losses were "heavy."

A spokesman for the Alliance appealed Wednesday for arms and aid from Moslem countries and the United Nations.

"This is not a football match going on in Afghanistan," he said. "Our only weapons are those we capture."

In Washington, the Pentagon said the 1,800-man Marine force ordered to the Indian Ocean as part of the U.S. response to the Soviet action were to have arrived Wednesday in Thailand. They are to join a Navy task force in the Indian Ocean later this month.

# Pakistan rejects offer of U.S. military aid

United Press International  
ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — Pakistan has officially rejected the \$400 million aid package offered by the United States to counter the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, it was disclosed Wednesday.

The presidential foreign affairs adviser Shahi told a meeting of municipal officials that his government told Washington it was not interested in the arms and economic

package and that Pakistan had specifically disassociated itself from any U.S. initiatives to introduce the relevant legislation in the U.S. Congress.

The aid package, proposed by President Carter in January, consisted of \$200 million for military equipment on credit and \$200 million in economic aid to be spread over a period of 18 months.

After the Soviet invasion of his neighbor, Zia asked for Western aid to counter the threat of any hostile moves Moscow might make toward Pakistan.

Moscow has charged that Pakistan

serves as a conduit for U.S. and Chinese aid to rebels fighting the Marxist regime in Kabul, propped up with the help of 70,000 Russian troops.

Both the United States and China have denied the claim.

Shahi told the conference Wednesday that in view of the "developing threat" to Pakistan, the United States had shown a revival of interest in the original U.S.-Pakistan agreement, reached in 1959, along with the aid package offer and an effort to organize a consortium of additional assistance through friendly countries.

# India famine leaves 17 dead

United Press International  
NEW DELHI, India — Seven people have died of starvation in central India where some people are eating grass, roots and flowers to survive, Indian news reports said Wednesday.

Widespread famine and drought gripped India's central Madhya Pradesh state. Villagers say a "food-for-cash" scheme in the region has

officials have ordered a probe following reports 17 people starved to death in the region near Raipur City, 500 miles southeast of New Delhi.

Families in Kusli village near Jabalpur were forced to eat grass, roots and bark of the gular tree because of severe drought, said Munder Rama, a member of Parliament and member of the ruling Congress-I

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