

world

Mechanics of rescue revealed

Choppers got no special care

United Press International
WASHINGTON — Here is a chronology of events in the ill-fated attempt to rescue the Americans held captive in Iran.

Nov. 4, 1979 — Iranian militants storm the U.S. Embassy in Tehran and take Americans inside hostage.

Nov. 9 — President Carter orders plans for rescue operation.

November-April: The Joint Chiefs of Staff and military services draw up rescue plan. The plan involves all intelligence assets, including spy satellites, agents in Iran, construction in United States of an embassy snookup, lengthy training for the maneuver itself, including seven detailed exercises. Two realistic dress rehearsals duplicating all the hazards are carried out flawlessly.

April 11 — President Carter gives the operation a go-ahead. Target date: April 24.

April 22-24 — High winds over Iran which could interfere with helicopter operations threaten starting date, but winds abate.

April 24: 10:00 a.m. EST and 7:30 p.m. Iran time — Six C-130 transports take off, probably from Egypt, and eight RH-53 helicopters embark from the USS Nimitz carrier in the Arabian Sea for "Desert-One" base in Iran.

April 24: Noon EST and 9:30 p.m. Iran time — Washington receives report one helicopter forced down in Iran. Crew is rescued by its "buddy" helicopter which proceeds to desert base.

April 24: 2 p.m. EST and 11:30 p.m. Iran time — First C-130 lands successfully beside road at desert base in darkness. Just as plane lands, a bus with 44 Iranians passes down road. Security troops from plane in May 7, but fail to stop a pickup truck which is also passing or decodes.

April 24: 3 p.m. EST and April 25

12:30 a.m. Iran time — Washington receives report a second helicopter has run into trouble flying through a sandstorm and has returned to USS Nimitz.

April 24: 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. EST and April 25 12:30 a.m. to 1:30 a.m. Iran time — All six C-130s and six RH-53 helicopters — the minimum needed force — have safely arrived at Desert One and are refueling for second stage of mission. One RH-53 is found to have an unfixable hydraulic problem: advance planning called for aborting mission at this stage if less than six helicopters available.

Commander at Desert One and overall mission commander, located at secret base outside Iran, confer and recommend aborting. Some grumbling by disappointed subordinates.

Abort recommendation sent to Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington.

April 24: 4:15 p.m. EST and April 25 1:45 a.m. Iran time — President Carter summons Defense Secretary Harold Brown to White House. In Iran, C-130s, which have completed their mission, begin departing Desert One.

April 24: 5 p.m. EST and April 25 2:30 a.m. Iran time — President Carter accepts abort recommendation; terminates mission.

April 24: 6 p.m. EST and April 25 3:30 a.m. Iran time — Washington receives report that partially refueled helicopter took off, climbed to 15 foot altitude, flew around parked aircraft to a nearby C-130 which has been ordered to finish refueling helicopter.

In banking, helicopter's rotor blade struck a parked C-130 and crashed. Both aircraft burst into flames. Troops evacuated from rear of C-130, but five crew members killed in cockpit. Three helicopter crew killed, but pilot survives.

Ammunition starts exploding,

spewing shrapnel. On-scene commander orders general evacuation of troops in remaining C-130s, abandoning four workable helicopters, charred bodies of dead, some secret materials.

April 24 about midnight EST — Defense Secretary Harold Brown re-

turns to Pentagon and confers throughout the night with aides.

April 25 about 1 a.m. EST — President Carter retires for the night.

April 25 7 a.m. EST — President Carter addresses the nation on failed operation.

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Soviets say rescue betrayed U.S. allies

United Press International
MOSCOW — The Soviet Union Saturday said the American rescue mission in Iran had betrayed the United States' European allies and was threatening to draw them into "a dangerous conflict in the Middle and Near East."

"The Carter administration is engaged in an irresponsible game," the Communist Party daily Pravda said. "An end should be put to such recklessness."

Although the Soviets still were hurling epithets at the United States in a stream of reports that filled the Soviet Tass news agency wires and Radio Moscow's broadcasting bands, the focus of the Kremlin's press comments appeared to be concentrated Saturday on a move to divide America and its allies.

Pravda said the incident in the Iranian desert betrayed the trust of the Western European nations because they had been persuaded to take economic and diplomatic sanctions against Iran, "under Washington's strong pressure," as a "demonstration of Atlantic solidarity" (that) could help keep the United States from dangerous military steps.

"The U.S. venture in Iran has shown that such calculations are untenable," Pravda commentator Gen-

nady Vasiliev wrote. "Carter not only took that dangerous step, but he did so, as he himself admitted, wholly on his own responsibility."

"The complacency of West European allies consequently leads to quite opposite results. Such a policy threatens to draw West European countries, irrespective of their will, contrary to their national interests, into a dangerous conflict in the Middle and Near East."

A separate commentary by the Tass news agency late Friday said that Western Europe and Japan might become the victims of an oil embargo if they fully support U.S. economic sanctions against Iran.

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