

Bus driver describes aborted rescue mission

United Press International
TEHRAN — The driver of the bus stopped by commandos at the remote desert staging area for the aborted mission to rescue the hostages aided the American troops.

U.S. officials have indicated that Iranian dissidents were to have helped in the operation, in which eight American servicemen were killed in the fiery collision of a transport plane and helicopter after the mission was aborted.

Mohammad Ali Afraz said 10 to 15 Iranians were with the American team that stopped the bus he was driving on the road between Yazd and Tabas in the pre-dawn darkness Friday.

In an interview published Sunday in the Persian-language Kayhan newspaper, he said there were about 80 "foreigners" and that the Iranians were dressed in uniforms.

The reference to uniforms meant the Iranians apparently wore the local military uniform which was recognizable to the rural Iranians.

One of the Iranians questioned the

passengers and then ordered all the passengers to get off the bus, Afraz said.

"Dozens of flares placed on tripods lit up the desert," he said. "Planes and helicopters were still landing."

The bus passengers were ordered to put their hands on their heads and were sent in single file to a place away from the bus.

One of the American soldiers then took the bus to a spot several miles away.

"Every quarter of an hour an airplane or helicopter was landing," Afraz said. "From each of them would emerge 60 to 70 troops carrying weapons, equipment and sleeping bags or communications equipment."

"A military jeep and two motorcycles on the ground guided the aircraft (after they landed)," he said.

"By 3 a.m. there were eight planes and seven helicopters on the ground and there was the sound of planes still in the air."

Afraz said the Americans "first put the bus passengers aboard one air-

craft and then aboard another and then told them to get off the second aircraft."

"Suddenly one of the aircraft on the ground exploded."

"Then they guided us towards the bus and, after we got on, they took the bus a few kilometers further away and fired into the rear tires to flatten them," the bus driver said.

He said the passengers were told: "At sunrise you may continue your journey." Afraz said he drove the bus out when dawn broke around 6 a.m.

As they left, he said, they could still see five helicopters on the ground, and smoke and flames rising from the burning aircraft.

He recalled that before the shah's downfall and withdrawal of U.S. military advisers from Iran in 1979, the Americans used to bring their planes in the same place.

Major-Gen. Amir Bahman Bagheri, commander of the Iranian Air Force, told the state television Saturday night the Americans had built the airstrip themselves some 30 years ago.

Dollar falls after Vance resigns

United Press International
LONDON — Reports of U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance's resignation pushed the dollar down Monday on European financial markets. The price of gold also fell.

The price of gold fell \$19 in Zurich to \$535.50 and was down \$13.50 in London at \$536 an ounce, but dealers reported "no real selling."

In Hong Kong, gold closed at \$533.50, 50 cents down from Monday morning's opening price. Market sources said local selling interests overtook a rush of early buying triggered by the news of Vance's resignation.

The aftermath of the abortive mission to rescue the hostages in Iran and Vance's resignation sent the dollar lower on all the money markets.

A slight easing of Eurodollar rates also hurt the dollar. West German dealers said. London dealers reported West Germany's central bank intervened

to check the dollar's slide.

In Frankfurt, the dollar opened at 1.8040 marks compared with 1.8145 Friday night, and in Zurich it slipped to 1.6715 Swiss francs from 1.6880. The dollar rate in Amsterdam opened at 1.9950 guilders down from 1.9975.

In Paris, one dollar bought 4.2062 francs against 4.2225 Friday and the price in Brussels was 29.5250 Belgian francs against 29.73 at the end of last week. In Milan, where markets were closed Friday for a bank holiday, the dollar was worth 848.50 lire compared with 852.50 Thursday.

In Tokyo the dollar slipped to close at 243.20 yen down from 245.90.

The dollar also came under fresh selling pressure in London where the comparative strength of the pound pushed the American currency to its lowest level since early February. The pound opened at \$2.2980 against \$2.2760 at close of trading Friday.



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61-day hostage seige over after captives freed in Cuba

United Press International
BOGOTA, Colombia — Leftist guerrillas flew to Cuba with 12 diplomatic hostages, to peacefully end a 61-day siege at the Dominican Embassy, taking a \$2 million ransom, but not the jailed comrades they vowed to die for.

U.S. Ambassador Diego Asencio, a captive throughout the two-month occupation, was released with the other hostages in Cuba and flew to Homestead Air Force Base, Fla., for a reunion with his family.

Nine of the other 11 diplomats later returned to Bogota for an emotional reunion with their wives and children, while the Mexican ambassador returned to Mexico City.

The worst diplomatic kidnapping in the world was settled, as the Colombian government promised, in a manner that was bloodless, decorous and legal," said President Julio Cesar Turbay, in a nationwide radio-TV speech.

The occupation ended in a whimper compared to its Feb. 27 start when the M-19 guerrillas shot their way into the embassy at a diplomatic reception, wounding four people and losing one man, but taking 57 hostages in the largest mass kidnapping of diplomats ever.

Shortly after dawn Sunday, 15 guerrillas — 10 men and five women — walked out of the embassy, herding 16 hostages at gunpoint into two Red Cross buses escorted by three ambulances for the drive to Bogota's El Dorado Airport.

In 24 rounds of negotiations with a hooded woman guerrilla representing the M-19 movement, Colombia never yielded to the demand that it release prisoners facing court martial on subversive charges.

The M-19 guerrillas took a privately raised cash ransom payment estimated at \$2 million along with promises from the government to permit international monitoring of trials of leftists by military courts.

But the government's promise of letting a Colombian human rights group observe trials of leftists and driving the International Red Cross to visit jails and detention centers throughout the country broke the siege.

During earlier stages of the 61-day crisis, the leftists freed all the rest of their original 60 hostages, except for

one, the Uruguayan ambassador, who escaped.

The end to the long drama began just after dawn with the arrival of the Cubana jetliner at El Dorado airport.

Two aging Colombian Red Cross buses, with all but the driver's window painted red, arrived at the embassy, five miles from the airport.

The guerrillas and their hostages piled into the bus, escorted by members of the OAS Human Rights Commission, Cuban Ambassador Fernando Ravelo and a Swiss representative of the International Red Cross, Armin Kobel — all of whom participated in the negotiations to break the siege.

At the airport, the buses parked nearly out of sight of the terminal, where the Cubana airliner waited.

The ambassadors of Egypt, Israel, the Dominican Republic and Venezuela were then released along with two Colombians who had stayed inside the embassy to report the drama at their own request.

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