

Iranian asset release illegal?

United Press International
American banks and companies doubt the legality of unfreezing Iranian assets and canceling all lawsuits against the Mideast nation to free the hostages, even if President Carter decides to comply with Iran's ransom demands.

Some attorneys predict those two conditions for release of the 52 American hostages would spark massive legal complications, and financial experts say banks could not release the billions of dollars in frozen assets without collateral for loans outstanding to the late shah's government.

More than 200 lawsuits trying to attach Iranian assets have been filed by U.S. corporations and individuals who are owed money by the former regime.

Two Dallas companies — SEDCO, an oil exploration company founded by Texas Gov. Bill Clements, and Electronic Control Data Corp. — have claims pending. The oil firm's suit seeks \$175 million in payment for property confiscated during the Iranian revolution. The computer company was awarded \$19

million by a federal judge, but Iran is appealing the decision.

AT&T is owed more than \$60 million and has sued to recover its money.

The Iranian parliament, however, has demanded immunity from all pending suits in U.S. courts.

"Whether President Carter has the legal right to do that (annul all

sure what legal questions are involved or whether we could just unilaterally cancel the debt without shareholder approval."

Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert Gruenberg, who said efforts to delay proceedings in nine suits in Chicago against Iranian defendants have been unsuccessful so far, noted it will be difficult for the president to con-

pending outcome of any legal proceedings.

In New York, Chase Manhattan bank said it was "confident that the government will not take lightly the legitimate legal claims that American companies and American individuals have against Iran."

U.S. commercial banks are holding some \$6 billion in Iranian assets — plus millions in interest — in New York and in their branches abroad. By some estimates, as much as \$13 billion in Iranian assets were frozen by President Carter last Nov. 14 after Iran threatened to transfer billions of dollars out of U.S. banks in retaliation for Carter's ban on oil imports from Iran.

Banks are not sure if agreeing to the second ransom demand — releasing the assets — would be legal.

"We're looking for definition from the government," said one banking official who asked not to be named. "There's not a damn thing we can do or will do until the government decides how it wants to handle it."

Most banks and companies involved in legal actions agreed with a statement by Bank of America that it concurs with President Carter's initial response to the Iranian Parliament's decision to release the hostages.

Bank of America has \$340 million in loans to Iran, but has deposits of over \$1 billion. Chase Manhattan has more than \$500 million in Iranian deposits against \$340 million in loans to that country.

"We all want the hostages to come home," said AT&T spokesman William Mullane. "But we're not quite sure what legal questions are involved or whether we could just unilaterally cancel the debt without shareholder approval."

claims) or not, I'm not sure," said Spencer Taylor, executive vice president of SEDCO. "But I seriously doubt that the companies that are involved will just roll over and play dead."

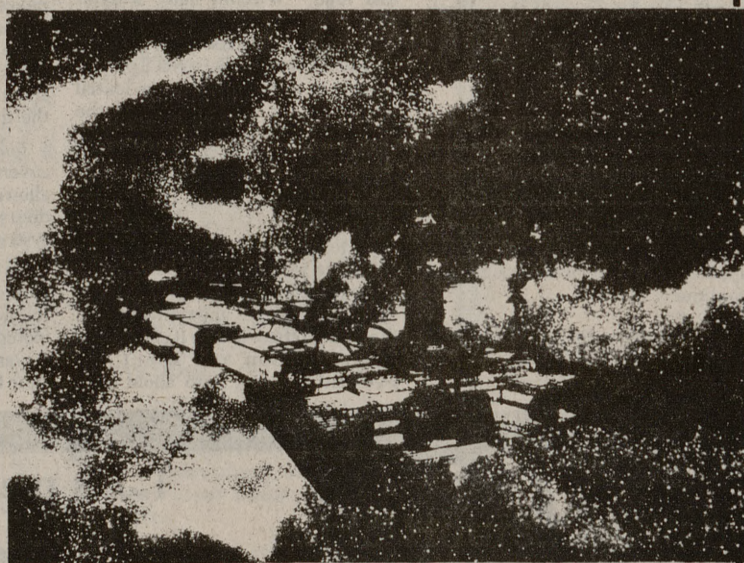
"We all want the hostages to come home," said AT&T spokesman William Mullane. "But we're not quite

vince individual plaintiffs to drop their suits since the right to sue for damages is guaranteed in the Constitution.

And he said an order by Carter unfreezing the assets wouldn't necessarily have any effect. Individual judges could seize the funds,

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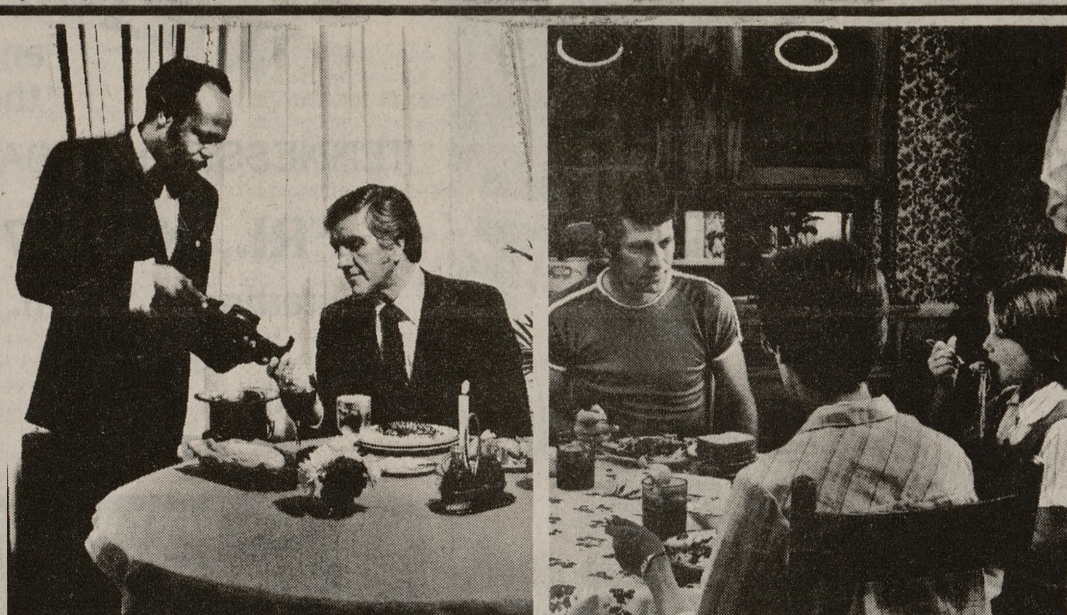
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Cross burning protested by Massachusetts students

United Press International
WILLIAMSTOWN, Mass. — Hundreds of Williams College students, black and white, wept and embraced at a rally to protest a cross burning at their small liberal arts college in the Berkshires.

School officials Monday offered a \$1,000 reward for information about persons involved in the Saturday night burning of a small wooden cross, set afire near a building where a homecoming party was being held by the black student union.

A college security officer doused the fire but didn't reach the area in time to arrest anyone, officials said. They said one or two "sheet-clad figures" were seen running away.

A security escort system was set up shortly afterward for those who requested it.

During Monday's anti-racism rally, Muhammed Kenyatta, a black senior at Williams, read an emotional prayer as students held hands in unity.

"We gather here because the burning of the cross was the burning of our hopes — the hopes of justice, of equality and of sisterhood and brotherhood among men," Kenyatta said. "The whisper that reaches us

here, even in this place, is but a whisper of a sweeping across our land."

John W. Chandler, president of the prestigious school, told students, "The deeply disturbing incident is an affront to the fundamental values and commitments of Williams College."

"In view of the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan in many areas of the country and the mysterious murders and disappearance of black children in Atlanta and Buffalo, black students have special reasons to be anxious and disturbed by what has happened," he said.

The cross burning recalls "a lot of things you can't visualize happening, especially the ivory tower." College Council President Darrell McWhorter, black student.

Kenyatta ended his prayer saying, "every time a cross is burned, or a child is murdered we just dedicate ourselves just that much more to the cause we believe in — that all people might be one, might be free, might live in peace and justice and dare we say it — live in love."

Medical research urged as social investment

United Press International
WASHINGTON — A Canadian scientist says it is time for the public and its leaders to change their attitudes about medical research and look at it as a social investment — not a charity.

"There is no more important public policy issue today than that of investing in science to prevent and cure disease — in humans, in animals and in the plant world," said Dr. William C. Gibson of the Universities Council of British Columbia.

"Public attitudes, nationally and internationally, must change," he said. "It is counterproductive to go on pretending that medical research is a charity to be indulged, rather than a great force to be liberated."

Gibson, writing in the Journal of the American Medical Association, cited polio as an example of a massive payoff from a relatively small investment.

In the first six years after the introduction of the polio vaccine in the United States 20 years ago, 154,000 cases of paralytic polio with 12,500 deaths were prevented.

This, he said, averted the loss of

\$6.3 billion in income. And \$2 billion in hospital costs alone were saved.

"Cost-benefit analysts — the doubting Thomases among economists — would be surprised to find that the total cost of the vaccine and its field trials was only \$41 million. The savings, per year, were 70 times the cost of the vaccine."

Gibson said the rubella vaccine in the United States prevented 9.7 million acute cases of measles in its first five years of use. He said these cases would have produced 3,244 instances of mental retardation. In addition, he said the vaccine saved 55,000 hospital days, 291,000 years of normal life and 1.6 million days of work.

He said the costs of developing and administering the vaccine were infinitesimal in comparison.

Yet Gibson said the full potential of science lies untapped. This, he said, is because countries cannot arrange for a small fraction of their gross national products to be committed steadily to science.

For example, Gibson said neglect of the aging human nervous system is costing taxpayers around the world

"staggering amounts, financially and socially."

In the United States alone, \$6 billion was spent in 1977 on nursing home care for people with chronic brain disorders, while \$4.5 million funded research on problems caused when the brain "wears out" years ahead of the body.

Malaria was cited as another example of a disease in dire need of research money. Gibson said 10 million people suffer from the disease in Africa, Asia and Latin America, less than 2 cents per person in malaria goes into malaria research.

This is in contrast to cancer research which he said receives \$1 per cancer case, thanks to private initiative and governmental aid.

"Most governments know that their population's income tax is more than cover the national research investment. A healthy population needs far fewer hospital beds. The savings can be enormous."

"To doubters, one can only say you think medical research is a waste, try disease."

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Vote machines served only one voter

United Press International
OKLAHOMA CITY — Many voters were standing in line more than an hour to use a voting machine early Tuesday, but one voter lived in that precinct.

"You're not going to believe, but one voter lives in that precinct," said state Election official Kip Stratton after the registration lists.

The voter, who happens to be a Democrat, lives in a subprecinct Ward 1, precinct 2.

He or she was to be the only person using that machine. Meanwhile, voters were waiting 40 minutes to more than an hour to use the voting machine for Ward precinct 2, which is in the sister Ward Acres.

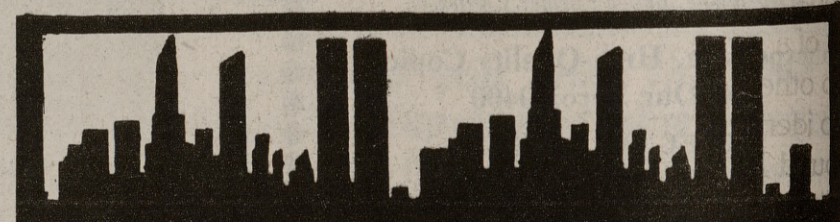
The precinct is in Senate District 40, while the subprecinct is in State District 47. So the machines must be programmed differently, Stratton said.

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