

National

Press secretary doing well after 5-hour skull surgery

United Press International
WASHINGTON — White House press secretary James Brady has no fever, "responds

normally to questions" and is making a "very satisfactory" recovery after delicate new surgery to repair holes in his bullet-damaged

skull, doctors said Thursday. Brady underwent more than five hours of surgery Wednesday night to repair a series of holes that allowed unwanted air to seep into his brain.

"His vital signs, including temperature, are normal and he remains in satisfactory condition," said a medical bulletin issued by the White House Thursday. "He

has slept intermittently through the night as the usual effects of anesthesia wear off, but he is readily awakened and responds normally to questions."

Dr. Dennis O'Leary said Brady, 40, was back in his room at George Washington University Medical Center early Thursday, and Dr. Arthur Koblirine, Brady's surgeon, was "pretty pleased."

O'Leary, who has been serving as the hospital's chief spokesman, said Brady's recovery from the surgery appeared to be "very satisfactory."

But physicians cautioned that "several days of careful monitoring will be required before the effectiveness of the surgery can be adequately assessed." Doctors said Brady continues to receive "broad spectrum antibiotic coverage."

The surgeons closed holes along a passageway dug by the bullet that struck Brady in the March 30 assassination attempt against President Reagan.

O'Leary said the operation, Brady's second major surgery in less than four weeks and described as "non-urgent" by the hospital, "probably represents a setback in the totality of recovery."

"But as far as his neurological condition, we don't think we've lost any ground and this area is very good. He has a new incision that has to heal again."

Reagan was informed of the operation halfway through the surgery and his national security adviser, Richard Allen, was among those at the hospital.

O'Leary said the problem was

discovered Wednesday afternoon when Brady "had become less responsive." A subsequent brain scan showed a substantial amount of air in the brain ventricles — the inner canals of the brain that normally are filled with spinal fluid.

"In order to relieve pressure on the brain two needles were placed in Brady's head in the ventricles — a procedure which removed the immediate difficulty" and relieved the pressure. Afterward, Brady was immediately responsive, he said.

Doctors decided on surgery because air was seeping in through the shattered bone near Brady's sinuses, along the track of the bullet that entered the left side of his forehead and ended up on the right side of his brain above his ear.

Brady went into surgery about 7 p.m. EST, giving the "thumbs up" sign, O'Leary reported. The operation lasted 5 hours and 15 minutes. Koblirine performed the initial surgery on Brady, when the press secretary was given a 1-in-10 chance of survival.

O'Leary said damaged sinuses were packed with muscle tissue

and then sewn in place. A "tent hole" in the brain's dura membrane, also was repaired, fibrous tissue.

O'Leary said the new surgery gave Koblirine an opportunity to "look at the brain and the healing well."

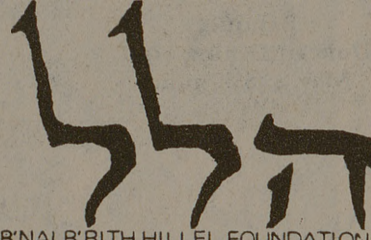
The surgery was described as extremely delicate and slow, taking an hour longer than originally anticipated.

Brady had been making an "extraordinary" recovery, according to his doctors. His mental processes had returned, he had been reading and talking and was expected to be able to take a few steps with the help of a cane in a few weeks.

Doctors had said, however, that an assessment of permanent damage to his motor functions would take months away.

Earlier Wednesday O'Leary said, "Oh, you bet" when asked whether Brady's job would be kept open for him.

Noting Brady's injuries as the worst of the four casualties of the assassination attempt, he added, "I am so grateful for the optimism about his recovery that's a daily prayer."



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Board fees for each plan are as follows:
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Day students, including graduate students may purchase either of the board plans.

Boston living costs tops in U.S. again

United Press International
BOSTON — Metropolitan Boston once again has the highest cost of living in the continental United States, a dubious honor held for nine straight years.

In figures released Wednesday by the U.S. Department of Labor, middle income Boston area family of four spent \$27,029 for essential goods and services in 1980, compared to a national average of \$23,134.

Bostonians on a lower budget spent \$15,076, fifth highest in the nation behind San Francisco-Oakland, Seattle-Everett, Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles-Long Beach.

In the upper-income brackets, the affluent Boston family spent \$41,306, coming in a close second to New York City's \$42,736. The Sun Belt ranked as the cheapest part of the nation in which to live.

Atlanta, Dallas and Houston were listed as the three cheapest in which to live in all three budget categories.

Bureau of Labor Statistics spokesman Paul Mulken said the family budgets reflect differences in the quality of purchases, and differences as to whether the family buys used or new autos, or public transportation.

Social Security up as price index rises

United Press International
WASHINGTON — The 36 million Social Security and Supplemental Security Income recipients will get an 11.2 percent increase in their benefits beginning with the July check, the government said Thursday.

The increase is automatic, triggered by the rise for the first three months of 1980 in the Consumer Price Index, which also was made public Thursday. Last year benefits increased 14.3 percent, and in 1979 they rose 9.9 percent.

The current maximum Social Security benefit for a worker retiring this year is \$677 a month. The average benefit for a retired worker living alone is \$337 and for a couple who both receive benefits

is \$576.

With the 11.2 percent increase, the maximum check will be \$752.90 a month. The average benefit for an individual will be \$357 and for the couple both receiving benefits the payment will be \$694.

The minimum benefit, which President Reagan wanted eliminated because it goes mostly to retired workers getting two pensions, would rise from \$153 to \$170.30.

The SSI program, which is an additional program for the elderly, poor, blind and disabled, currently pays an average of \$238 per individual and \$357 per couple. The 11.2 percent increase would raise the average to \$264.70 and \$396.

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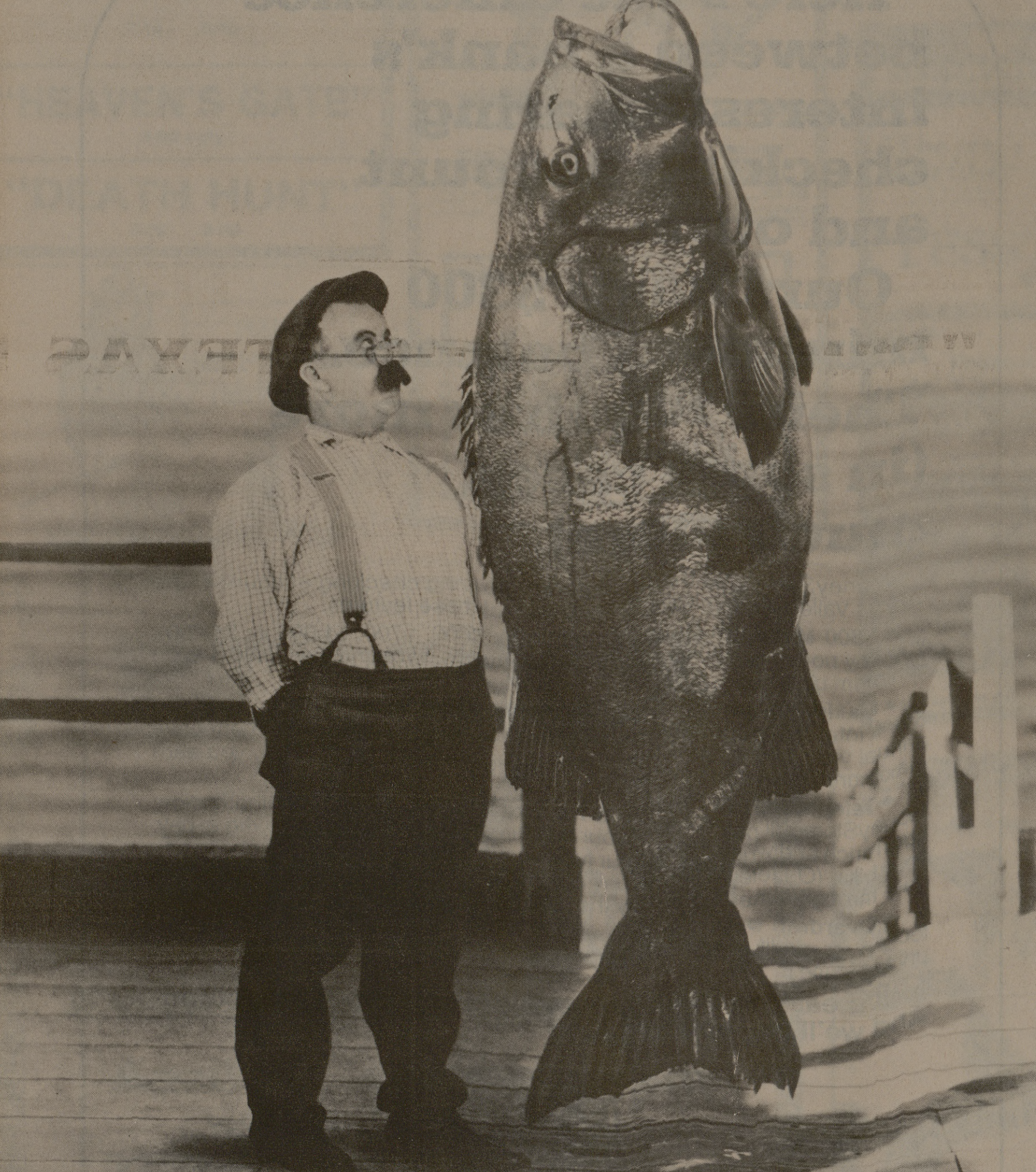
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