

# National

## Charges judicial system failing

# Reagan calls for law reforms

United Press International  
WASHINGTON — President Reagan says the criminal justice system "just plain isn't working" and advocates legislation that would provide swift retribution for those who prey on innocent Americans.

code and reforming bail laws to allow judges to keep some defendants off the streets.

In addition, Reagan says he will support mandatory prison terms for those who carry guns while committing felonies.

Reagan unveiled his anticrime program Monday in an address to the International Association of Chiefs of Police in New Orleans.

"All too often, repeat offenders,

career criminals...are robbing, raping and beating with impunity...and quite literally getting away with murder," he said.

"It's time for honest talk, for plain talk," he said. "There has been a breakdown in the criminal justice system in America. It just plain isn't working."

In his New Orleans speech, Reagan ruled out poverty and "social ills" as the basic causes of crime.

"The truth is that today's criminals, for the most part, are not desperate people seeking bread for their families," he said. "Crime

is the way they've chosen to live."

Recalling his days as governor of California when 12 criminals, with 34 victims among them, were up for parole, Reagan said, "I think if we had capital punishment in the beginning, we would have reduced that figured considerably."

Reagan was criticized for coming out in favor of reforming the judicial "exclusionary rule" — a provision he said allows cases to be thrown out of court on technicalities, "no matter how guilty the defendant or how heinous the crime."

The rule provides for the ex-

clusion of evidence obtained through illegal searches.

Murray Janus Jr. of Richmond, Va., newly elected President of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, said: "Those technicalities the president is talking about are not technicalities at all."

"They're called the Bill of Rights under the Constitution. And, yes, some criminals do get off because of technicalities, but the whole purpose is to protect you or I in our homes from illegal searches and we're protected from being interrogated by the police."

## Bess Truman's condition better

United Press International  
KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Former first lady Bess Truman, showing the resilience that carried her through previous illnesses, has responded so well to treatment for a stroke that hospital officials upgraded her condition to fair.

Truman, 96, suffered what her physician termed a "mild stroke" Saturday night and was transferred Sunday morning to Research Medical Center. Since then she has been treated with a "mixture of different body nutrients."

A nursing supervisor said Truman's favorable response to the nutrients prompted her personal physician, Dr. Wallace Graham, to take her off the serious list Monday and declare her in fair condition.

Graham said he continued to be optimistic for Truman's complete recovery. He said her vital signs were stable, her heart appeared strong and she was thinking clearly when he spoke to her Monday.

Truman, the widow of the

late President Harry S. Truman, was still having trouble swallowing, so the extra nutrients were being fed to her through a tube inserted in her shoulder, Graham said.

Examinations Sunday and Monday showed that a mild spasm of a blood vessel in Truman's brain caused the stroke, but that it was very short-lived. It was not believed that she suffered any permanent damage.

It was the second time in less than a year Truman was hospitalized. Truman fractured her hip in a fall at her home last May and was hospitalized for six weeks after doctors rebuilt the hip. She experienced various complications after the surgery, including pneumonia, kidney dysfunction and heart irregularities.

Even before breaking her hip, Truman had been confined largely to a wheelchair because her arthritis prevents her from walking without assistance. While at her home, Truman has 24-hour nursing care.

## Attorneys claim Hinckley insane at time of shooting

United Press International  
WASHINGTON — The case against President Reagan's accused assailant, John W. Hinckley Jr., will likely become a battle among psychiatrists over the college dropout's mental state when the shots were fired.

Attorneys for Hinckley said Monday they are willing to concede the evidence shows Hinckley shot Reagan and three others on March 30, but maintain their client was insane at the time and should not be held criminally responsible.

The offer of a concession of fact in the case marked the first time Hinckley's lawyers had disclosed their intention of using insanity as a defense at his upcoming trial.

Under the laws of the District of Columbia, where Hinckley will be tried, mental disturbance is a basis for acquittal, but only if the jury finds the defendant "lacked substantial capacity to appreciate the wrongfulness of his conduct or to conform his conduct to the requirements of the law."

If convicted, Hinckley, 26, could be sentenced to up to life in prison. He is being held at the Army stockade at Fort Meade, Md.

Hinckley was taken into custody March 30 moments after Reagan, White House press secretary James Brady and two law enforcement officers were gunned down outside a Washington hotel.

Hinckley's lawyers offered to admit he shot Reagan and the three others. Government prosecutors rarely agree to such a stipulation of the facts in cases involving insanity defenses.

In legal papers filed with the U.S. District Court, Hinckley's lawyers said:

"The only real issue in this case (is) the defendant's mental state at the time of the shooting. That these four men were shot and grievously wounded is not in any dispute. That the defendant held the gun and fired the shots that wounded these men is similarly not in any dispute."

Defense lawyers asked U.S.

District Judge Barrington Parker to hold a two-part proceeding with two juries to consider separate issues — first, Hinckley's guilt or innocence, and second, his state of mind at the time.

"If the same jurors who are exposed to the evidence are also the jurors who decide the question of John Hinckley's mental state at the time of the shooting, the prejudice to Mr. Hinckley will be massive," his lawyers said.

Law enforcement officials searched Hinckley's Washington hotel room within hours of the shooting and found an unmailed letter to actress Jodie Foster.

Officials believe Hinckley may have been motivated by a crush on Foster, a student at Yale University.

Earlier this month, Hinckley's lawyers unsuccessfully sought access to any statements he made to government psychiatrists concerning Foster and "elements of fantasy" in Mr. Hinckley's thinking."

## U.S. team ready to aid hostages

United Press International  
WASHINGTON — America now has a rescue team ready to respond quickly to hostage situations similar to the seizure of U.S. diplomats in Tehran, the commander of ground forces in the ill-fated Iran rescue mission said Tuesday.

Soon-to-retire Col. Charlie Beckwith said the United States was not prepared to move fast to rescue the Americans captured in the Nov. 4, 1979, Tehran embassy seizure "for two reasons — a lack of intelligence, and we didn't have a team put together."

"And now I'm happy to say — I will not discuss any of the details of this — I'm happy to say we've got a team together now," Beckwith said in an interview on ABC's "Good Morning America."

"Now we've got a team of aviators. Of course the Delta force has always been cocked and loaded, among others, and we have a team ready to go. So now sort of the ball's in the intelligence court," said Beckwith, who led the "Delta force" unit of the Army's little talked about "Blue Light" team stationed at Fort Bragg, N.C.

Beckwith, 52, revealed the existence of the new team when asked if civilians have misconceptions about the April 24, 1980, raid.

He also defended the decision by former President Carter to rescue the hostages as "a prudent decision."

"I think any president would do the same thing," he said. "I think that it pointed out that when something like that occurs that time is of the essence and you should move very quickly. Unfortunately we couldn't do that" because of the lack of both intelligence and a standing rescue team.

The hostage rescue mission was

recalled because only six of the eight huge helicopters sent to a desert landing site arrived, and one of those broke down. Mission planners figured six were needed to go on to Tehran, so the attempt was scrubbed. As the aircraft were withdrawing, an RH-53 "Sea Stallion" helicopter struck a C130 aircraft, and the ensuing fire killed eight soldiers and injured five others.

"In my view, the equipment was 98 percent of the problem," said Beckwith, adding it was "impossible to do the job with five" helicopters because he expected to lose some as the mission unfolded. And, he said, there has been a lot of "what ifing" about the numbers, but it was difficult to hide more helicopters aboard the aircraft carrier launch site without raising suspicion.

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