

Monument hostage couple suffered previous tragedy

United Press International
WASHINGTON — One of the hostages who spent five hours trapped in the Washington Monument while a man threatened to blow it up said Wednesday she and her husband came to Washington "to get away from it all" after their house burned a week ago.

John and Sherry Simmons of Nashville, Tenn., told about their ordeal on CBS' "Good Morning America" program. Simmons said the first word he received that something was wrong was when their tour guide "hollared to us, 'Run.' And we suddenly found ourselves out of energy to run down the steps."

The elevator inside the 555-foot monument was not operating and Mrs. Simmons said they had to walk downstairs. When Norman Mayer, 66, agreed to release the people trapped in the monument, Simmons said the news was greeted with apprehension. "We had become a very close group by that time," he said.

Monument 'kidnapper' shot in order to protect others

United Press International
WASHINGTON — Police said Thursday they had to open fire on an aging anti-nuclear activist to keep a potential mobile time bomb from the city's population centers although his stated intention to blow up the Washington Monument proved an empty threat.

Firing at the van by police sharpshooters, said District of Columbia Police Inspector J.P. Shugart, was the only thing to do under the circumstances. "If there had to be a detonation, we'd much prefer to have it in a controlled area that we had established, rather than in the downtown portion of the city," Lindsay said.

U.S. Park Police Chief Lynn Herring said authorities were prepared to go on negotiating with Mayer. "Once he moved that vehicle, we knew we had actually a mobile time bomb," Herring said. "He supposedly had the explosives. He had the detonator, the electronic device in his hands. He never released it at any time."

Lindsay said both he and his officers had recently seen Mayer demonstrating on the sidewalk outside the White House. Although Mayer, who had handcuffed himself to the steering wheel, drove down a monument approach that leads in the general direction of the White House, Lindsay said police will never know if Mayer intended to head toward the executive mansion which is about 3,000 feet away.

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Authorities again said today they would have handled the situation the same way in order to contain the van that he said was packed with a half ton of explosives.

Norman D. Mayer, 66, who wanted a national dialogue to prevent nuclear annihilation, was shot in the head as he suddenly and without warning tried to drive the van down the knoll at the base of the monument, ending a 10-hour siege about 7:30 p.m. Wednesday.

There was no dynamite and no accomplice as police had earlier believed.

James Lindsay, operations commander of the National Park Service Police, said Thursday the decision to force Mayer to keep the truck at the monument was made earlier because investigators were convinced his threat was real.

"The decision had been made much earlier in the day, based on information we had. There was no way we could allow a potential mobile time bomb to enter into the populated areas of the city," Lindsay said.

...Norman Mayer, a part-time handyman with an arrest record dating back to 1949, drove his van to the base of the monument about 9:20 a.m. EST. He was killed trying to drive away about 7:30 p.m., but for hours afterwards police searched the monument for an accomplice. None was found. SWAT team officers fired tear gas into the building's door just before rushing in to start a hour long check of the monument's interior.

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Sniffing police dogs entered the van and gave a positive indication of explosives but none were found.

Shugart said officers considered Mayer a very intelligent individual acting under a planned situation. He knew exactly what he wanted to accomplish.

The police gunfire ended the most bizarre protest at the monument, a long-time site of demonstrations.

The drama disrupted Washington. Several government offices and buildings were evacuated, and hour traffic was rerouted.

Police officials said people were trapped in the building for five hours. However, inside said there were no bookstore employee, Ranger and six visitors.

Mayer, a part-time handyman with an arrest record dating back to 1949, drove to the base of the monument out 9:20 a.m. EST. He was trying to drive away about p.m., but for hours afterwards police searched the monument for an accomplice.

SWAT team officers fired tear gas into the building door just before rushing in to start a hour-long check of the monument's interior.

Mayer, said to be on the run with the nuclear war issue, had earlier this year been planning to take out a Washington to dramatic disarmament views.

Among the unanswered questions about Mayer where he got his money, his students at the Washington where he stayed on and if the past eight months spent some \$6,000 for his always paying with \$100.

Promises better economy

Reagan pushes grain deal

United Press International
WASHINGTON - President Reagan, promising a market-led recovery of the depressed farm economy, Thursday proposed

paying farmers with grain from bulging government stocks in exchange for agreements to produce less grain next year. Reagan endorsed the propos-

al, developed over the last few weeks by Agriculture Secretary John Block, following what he termed extensive discussion of the challenges facing farmers with his Cabinet Council on Food and Agriculture.

Appearing at short notice with Block in the White House briefing room, Reagan said the grain swap would help correct an imbalance between supply and demand that threatens to keep farm prices low.

Although the government earlier announced a plan to make cash payments to farmers agreeing to take land out of production, Reagan said recent developments indicate there may be a larger imbalance in the coming year.

Reagan called Block's plan, which will be presented to Congress, a highly innovative approach that will enhance long-term prospects for recovery in the farm economy.

By paying farmers with grain instead of cash, he said, the government can discourage price-depressing overproduction next year and reduce its own huge grain stocks to enhance the prospects for a market-led recovery.

"In other words, they will be paid in bushels of the surplus commodity they otherwise might have grown," he said. "These farmers would have full discretion to feed their livestock, to export, to store, etc., the commodity received."

"Government outdoor farm programs should be phased out and sound conservation practices would be applied," he said. "In short, Secretary Block and his team have come up with a good, imaginative program."

Block said the program would save outlays for the treasury and strengthen the balance of payments.

The proposal is an outgrowth of long deliberations in the administration on how to deal with a recession-wracked economy and mounting government stocks of grain which are costing the government billions of dollars to store.

Block said the swap would reduce burdensome government grain stocks hanging over the country's "thundercloud," but was less than he would like to say how much money it would save. He finally estimated it would eliminate about \$1 billion in payments by 1984.

Now you know

United Press International
At the same time that infants are learning to walk and speak, they may be developing another unexpected talent. Recent studies indicate that in babies under the age of 3, the ability to comprehend math may regularly bloom without the benefit of adult teaching.

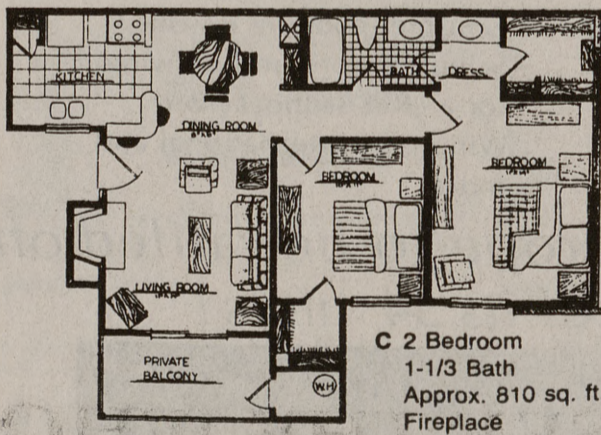
University of Rochester psychologist Herbert Ginsburg has found that preschoolers display a remarkable "mathematical intuition" that allows them to distinguish the concepts of more and less and perhaps even grasp the rudiments of addition and subtraction.

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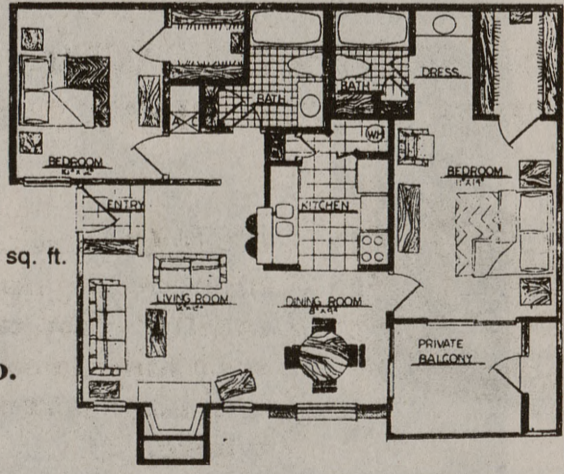
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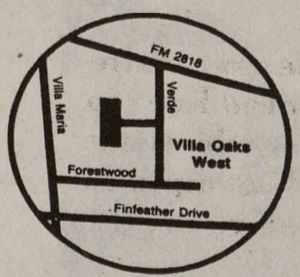
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DEC. 10, FRIDAY 6 p.m. — Jewish women's club sponsoring a Chanukah "luck dinner". Open to students and non-students. Reservations are needed. Call office 696-7313. Friday Evening Services will begin at 7:30 p.m. After services, there will be dreidel playing and dancing.

DEC. 11, SATURDAY 7:30 p.m. — A treat for Hillel members. Sigma Alpha Mu sponsoring a Chanukah Party, Candle lighting, music, Latkes — all at Hillel.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT BOTH EVENTS CALL 696-7313.
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