

Beirut militias agree to limit territory fights

United Press International
BEIRUT — Rival Moslem and Christian militias agreed Monday to refrain from grabbing territory vacated by departing French peace-keepers, and France was reported ready to deploy cease-fire observers in Beirut.

Earlier in the day, Jumblatt handed captured Mourabitoun positions to police and the Lebanese army's 6th Brigade, which had remained neutral in the February fighting between the Druze and the army.

Druze and Shiite Moslem fighters, who together drove the army out of Moslem West Beirut Feb. 6, last week smashed a militia called the Mourabitoun made up of fighters from the Sunni branch of Islam.

The attacks on the Mourabitoun came amid charges that it was swelling its ranks with Palestinian guerrillas, who were chased of Beirut after Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

A return of Palestinian guerrillas to Beirut would be likely to invite new Israeli attacks.

The threat against Jumblatt, raising fears of even greater chaos in Beirut, coincided with the withdrawal of French peace-keepers from the battle-scarred capital.

The French Defense Ministry has announced the 1,250 French troops in Beirut will pull out by Saturday — about a month after American, Italian and British forces departed because of the virtual collapse of the Lebanese army.

The French troops hold positions along the Green Line and are responsible for keeping open the only road now linking the Christian and Moslem sectors of Beirut.

Meeting under French protection in a building on the Green Line, a committee of four men representing Lebanon's main warring factions agreed the rival groups would refrain from grabbing land being vacated by the French.

Beirut Radio said the committee agreed Lebanon's Internal Security Forces, a paramilitary police unit, would take up the French positions so that the road between East and West Beirut can remain open.

by Paul Dirmeyer



864th Brigade lands in Honduras for U.S.-led military maneuvers

United Press International
WASHINGTON — The first of 1,000 fresh U.S. troops arrived in Honduras Monday to take part in another round of U.S.-led military maneuvers called Grenadier I, a U.S. military official said.

In Nicaragua, the Sandinista army said U.S.-funded rebels had killed 30 government troops in a three-day attack on a northern town.

Col. James Strachan, spokesman for the U.S. military presence in Honduras, said 100 to 200 troops of the 864th Brigade are arriving in the northern town of San Pedro Sula from Fort Louis, Wash.

Strachan said the maneuvers, which will begin April 1 and

end June 30, will involve 1,000 U.S. troops in the construction of two airstrips and counter-insurgency exercises.

The rest are expected to arrive by the end of the week to join 1,700 U.S. servicemen already in Honduras carrying out reconnaissance missions.

Strachan said the maneuvers are to train the Honduran army and "demonstrate the interest the United States has in this part of Central America."

Honduran military sources have not specified how many Hondurans will participate.

Strachan told United Press International he had no information about the reported participation of Panamanian and

Salvadoran troops.

Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega, chief of Panama's National Defense Force, said in El Salvador last week that 250 Panamanian troops would participate in Grenadier I along with an undetermined number of Salvadoran troops.

On Sunday, some 750 Honduran troops and 250 U.S. troops of the 82nd Airborne Division based in Fort Bragg, S.C., staged a mock invasion of Honduras in an operation coded "Lightning I."

Also in Honduras, the Popular Liberation Movement, a guerrilla group that was last heard from more than a year ago, claimed responsibility for

exploding four bombs — two in the capital and two in San Pedro Sula — that killed a guard.

One bomb exploded just after midnight Sunday outside the Supreme Court in Tegucigalpa, and the other outside a military cadet school. The guard at the court, Maximiliano Banegas, was killed in the explosion, which shook nearby buildings and knocked out windows.

In other fighting, U.S.-funded rebels of the Honduras-based Nicaraguan Democratic Force attacked the town of San Rafael del Norte, 36 miles north of Managua, setting off a three-day battle that left 30 government soldiers dead.

Repentant spy receives award

United Press International
WASHINGTON — President Reagan bestowed the nation's highest civilian award Monday on Whittaker Chambers, a repentant Communist spy who helped to inspire Reagan's own conversion to political conservatism.

Chambers, who died in 1961, and 13 other luminaries were honored at the White House as recipients of the prestigious Presidential Medal of Freedom.

For Reagan, the ceremony held a special poignancy because the recipients included actor James Cagney, a longtime Hollywood friend and onetime mentor.

Senate Republican leader Howard Baker, who is retiring from the Senate this year, also was among the medal winners. Posthumous awards were given to assassinated Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and baseball great Jackie Robinson, the first black in professional sports.

Cagney, 84, sat in a wheelchair during the awards luncheon. Reagan lauded the actor, whose first made-for-television movie was to be broadcast Tuesday night, as "a giant in the world of entertainment."

"Could I add something else?" Reagan interjected as the applause subsided. "As a great star at the same studio where I started, he was never too busy to hold out a hand to a young fellow just trying to get under way."

Cagney, his eyes filled with tears, clasped hands with the 73-year-old president as he was handed the medal. Mrs. Reagan kissed him on the cheek.

Since 1945, the Medal of Freedom has been presented to more than 220 individuals for distinguished government service, humanitarian work and other achievements.

Chambers almost simultaneously eschewed communism and atheism and, in 1948, told Congress he was part of an "elite cell" of Soviet agents whose mission was to infiltrate the U.S. establishment. He singled out Alger Hiss as an accomplice, saying Hiss gave him

secret State Department documents to be passed on to the Soviets.

Hiss eventually was convicted of perjury — for lying about his espionage activities — and sent to jail. He repeatedly has appealed his conviction. His latest appeal to the Supreme Court was rejected just last fall.

Reagan said Chambers, a senior editor of Time magazine when he appeared before the

House Un-American Activities Committee in 1948, "stood alone against the brooding terrors of our age."

"Consummate intellectual, writer of moving, majestic prose and witness to the truth, he became the focus of a momentous controversy in American history that symbolized our country's epic struggle between freedom and totalitarianism,"

Reagan said — "a controversy in which the solitary figure of Whittaker Chambers personified the mystery of human redemption in the face of evil and suffering."

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