

WORLD AND NATION

Funky Winkerbean

by Tom Batiuk **Kidnapped Briton freed in Lebanon**



Associated Press
 BEIRUT, Lebanon — Geoffrey Nash, the first of nine foreigners who disappeared in Lebanon in a two-week series of abductions, was released unharmed Wednesday near his home in west Beirut.
 Nadia Nash, daughter of the Briton, said the men who kidnapped her father told him they had thought he was an American.
 She said they let him out of a car in the Hamra district near their home in the mostly Moslem sector of the capital, and he walked up to the door shortly after midnight.
 A message from an unknown group that belatedly claimed responsibility for some of the kidnappings said another abducted Briton and a kidnapped French woman might be freed "very soon."

Nash, a 60-year-old metallurgist, was the first of nine Westerners kidnapped or reported missing in Lebanon since March 14. The others are two more Britons, four French citizens, a Dutch Roman Catholic priest and American journalist Terry A. Anderson, chief Middle East correspondent of The Associated Press.

Nash told his family there were "hours of driving" before his release, and his captors blindfolded him before they started out, his daughter said.

She quoted him as saying the kidnapers questioned him at length during the 14 days he was held, but did him no harm and gave him the necessary medication for a heart ailment. She said he did not know where he was held.

"He was shaking, I guess from the after-effects of the kidnapping," she said. "They asked him questions and said they thought he was American. He told them he was British and did not work for the American Embassy. I guess they were satisfied he was not a spy."

Responsibility for most of the recent abductions was claimed initially by Islamic Holy War, whose members are believed to be Shiite Moslem extremists with ties to Iran.

A rival claim was made Tuesday by a previously unknown group calling itself the Khaibar Brigade. It said it was holding Nash and businessman Brian Levick, another Briton, and three French diplomats — Vice Consul Marcel Fontaine, embassy protocol officer Marcel Carton and his daughter, Danielle Perez, a secretary at the embassy.

An anonymous caller told a Western news agency that "after our investigation," it had been decided to release Nash, Levick and the French woman "very soon."

The British ambassador, David Miers, said the kidnapers instructed Nash to deliver a document to the French consul, and "he fulfilled his promise at 9 a.m. this morning." He said the document was a copy of the statement issued Tuesday by the Khaibar Brigade.

Court limits police right to shoot fleeing felons

Associated Press
 WASHINGTON — Police may not shoot unarmed, fleeing criminal suspects who pose no apparent threat to the officers or the public, the Supreme Court ruled Wednesday.
 By a 6-3 vote, the court said a Tennessee law that allowed unrestrained use of deadly force violated the constitutional rights of suspects.
 "It is not better that all felony suspects die than that they escape," said Justice Byron R. White for the court.
 Tennessee's "fleeing felon" law was similar to those in nearly half the states. But in many of those states, local police departments for years have banned shooting of fleeing suspects who are not considered dangerous.
 Wednesday's ruling means the city of Memphis may be forced to pay the father of a 15-year-old suspected burglar killed by police 11 years ago.
 Tennessee State Rep. Joe Kent, a Memphis police lieutenant, said it is "a black day for law enforcement."
 He said states may still authorize police to shoot to kill "if the suspect threatens the officer with a weapon or there is probable cause to believe that he has committed a crime involving the infliction or threatened infliction of serious physical harm."
 In such cases, the officer should give a warning before firing, White added.
 The ruling suggests that someone known to have committed a violent crime in the past may be considered dangerous even though he may be fleeing from a non-violent crime such as a burglary.
 In a dissenting opinion, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor said the decision creates a constitutional right that will allow burglary suspects "to flee unimpeded from a police officer ... who has no means short of firing his weapon to prevent escape."
 She was joined by Chief Justice Warren E. Burger and Justice William H. Rehnquist.

Dallas police official says policy complies with ruling

Associated Press
 DALLAS — The Dallas Police Department, criticized in the past by black and Hispanic groups for its use of deadly force, is in compliance with a Supreme Court ruling Wednesday on the use of lethal force, a spokesman said.
 The court said police may not shoot unarmed suspects fleeing from crimes when there is no apparent threat of harm to police officers or others.
 Dallas police spokesman Ed Spencer said Wednesday that a revised deadly force policy adopted in October puts Dallas in line with the court's ruling.
 "Basically the new policy is that officers can only use lethal force to protect life," he said. "We're in compliance (with the Supreme Court). We're not going to have to scramble like some others."
 The policy was more than a year in the making and came out of a study sparked by heated protests from minorities about the record number of police shootings in Dallas, Spencer said.
 The city led the nation per capita in 1983 in police shootings of citizens.
 By a 6-3 vote, the court struck down a Tennessee law that authorized police to shoot at fleeing felons, a statute said to be similar to those in about half the states.
 Last August, just two days before the start of the Republican National Convention, Dallas police Sgt. Jack Ross fatally shot a fleeing suspect in the back.
 Police Chief Billy Prince fired Ross for violations of the code of conduct regarding the use of excessive force and placing citizens in greater danger, Spencer said.
 The unarmed suspect, Juan Reyes, was fleeing from a fight and had climbed a fence in a dark alley at night. Ross shot through the fence after ordering the man to stop, officials said.
 In Dallas, Spencer said, "for about 10 years it has been the practice to shoot only in defense of life." That was not actually incorporated into written policy until October, he said.
 Ross, however, was fired for violating the provisions of an administrative directive dealing with the use of excessive force, he said.

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