

World and Nation

Union meatpackers fired in Texas, Nebraska, Iowa

Associated Press

AUSTIN, Minn. — Hormel fired union meatpackers Monday in Texas, Nebraska and Iowa for refusing to cross picket lines set up by workers who have been on strike against the company's flagship plant for more than five months.

"We have contracts in place at those plants, and we expect our people to honor those contracts," said Chuck Nyberg, senior vice president of Geo. A. Hormel & Co., which is based in Austin.

The president of the union local in Austin said the firings increased the stakes in the dispute that began in August when 1,500 workers went on strike over wages and other issues.

"The fact that the company has fired those people puts us in a position to bargain. The company will

have to bargain with us all," said Jim Guyette, president of Local P-9 of the United Food and Commercial Workers union.

Nyberg said a substantial portion of the 800 union workers at Hormel's Ottumwa, Iowa, plant were fired when they honored Local P-9's picket line.

A few workers were fired at the company's Dallas plant, and about 60 were fired at a plant in Fremont, Nyberg said.

In Austin the Hormel plant was open Monday, but pickets walked outside and National Guardsmen continued to patrol against violence.

Ray Rogers, a strike strategist hired by Local P-9, said pickets will be sent to other plants this week as well as to a stockholders' meeting Tuesday in Houston.

The union also called for a national boycott of Hormel products.

The firings came a day after a neutral fact finder appointed by Gov. Rudy Perpich called on union members to vote a third time on a contract proposal suggested by a mediator.

Arnold Zack, a Boston-based labor attorney, said fears that the mediator's proposal would allow Hormel to spread a 36-hour work week over seven days were unfounded.

The strike began Aug. 17 after Hormel cut wages by 23 percent and dropped the base wage from \$10.69 to \$8.25 an hour.

Union workers at other Hormel plants accepted the concessions and now earn \$10 an hour. Local P-9 members fought the cut and, because of an arbitrator's ruling, were making \$9.25 an hour before the strike. The mediator's proposal would provide a base rate of \$10 an hour at the Austin plant.

Shuttle flight delayed

Broken bolt gives wind time to strengthen

Associated Press

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — The flight of school-teacher Christa McAuliffe on space shuttle Challenger was postponed today because of strong winds that built up during the more than two hours that technicians wrestled with a hatch bolt.

"We are going to scrub for today," said NASA spokesman Hugh Harris, announcing the third postponement for the flight in as many days.

Officials reset the launch for 9:38 a.m. EST Tuesday.

By the time the repairs ended, the winds had strengthened and gusts of 30 mph whipped across the runway where Challenger would land if there were an emergency after liftoff.

Winds of more than 17 mph are considered dangerous for a landing.

Launch director Gene Thomas called off the effort about 12:30 p.m., the third weather postponement for the flight.

The seven astronauts, including 37-year-old McAuliffe, the first private citizen named to a space flight, had grim looks on their faces as they returned to their quarters.

The problems began when microswitches failed to confirm that the shuttle's hatch was closed properly. Technicians put a ring of tape around the circular opening, and an engineer climbed in the cabin to verify that the door would shut.

The workers then were unable to remove a "frozen" bolt that holds a hatch handle that is not needed in flight. They called for a portable drill and a hacksaw, but only a drill was sent, and it took 35 minutes to reach the launch pad.

When the technicians tried to use the drill, they found that its battery was dead. Ten minutes later, the hacksaw and a second drill with a spare battery pack arrived.

But the bolt was too hard and it chewed up the drill bit. The bolt was finally cut away with the hacksaw after two hours of frustrating labor.

U.S. to use satellites to send messages

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Reagan administration plans to use satellites and cable television to get its message across to the non-communist world.

Last April, the United States Information Agency, moving away from what one of its officials calls its "backwater" status, embraced TV technology and started televising two hours a day of programming to European cable television systems. USIA claims it now reaches more than one million Europeans through a number of cable companies.

By the end of next year, USIA will extend the service to Latin America, Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

USIA calls its TV service "Worldnet." The centerpiece is a daily 30-minute magazine show called "America Today," a combination of news, features and interviews.

A weekly "Science World" show offers documentaries produced by USIA with the help of American corporations.

Chrysler Corp. cooperated in one of them, showing off its computerized auto assembly line. On another, TRW told how it was able to capture an errant satellite and put it on its proper path.

The Soviet Union is not pleased by the celestial broadcasting operation. A Moscow commentator said

last year Worldnet is being "used by Washington to impose its foreign policy line upon other countries."

The trans-oceanic experiment began in November 1983 when the administration, stung by foreign criticism of the U.S.-led invasion of Grenada the previous month, arranged a satellite interview featuring top U.S. officials and 40 journalists based at five U.S. embassies in Europe.

A month later USIA achieved another breakthrough when it arranged an extraterrestrial news conference with the crew of the shuttle Challenger.

Nixon gets hospitalized with flu

Associated Press

MIAMI BEACH — Former President Richard Nixon was hospitalized Monday after coming down with the flu during a Bahamas vacation.

"We don't anticipate any problems. He should be fine," Dr. Louis Elias said, who admitted Nixon to the Miami Heart Institute on Monday afternoon after examining him at the request of a mutual friend, restaurateur Cye Mandell.

Nixon, 73, was suffering from mild dehydration, a temperature 1 degree above normal, fatigue and lethargy, Elias said. His patient was receiving glucose, a saline solution and antibiotics intravenously, Elias said.

There were no cardiovascular or

neurological difficulties involved, Elias said. He said he expected to keep Nixon in the VIP suite here for about three days.

His wife, Patricia, was with him.

"We don't anticipate any problems. He should be fine."

— Dr. Louis Elias of Miami Heart Institute.

hospital officials said.

Nixon had been visiting his friend Bebe Rebozo on exclusive Cat Cay in the Bahamas when he became ill Friday, Elias said.

Nixon flew here aboard a private helicopter early Monday and had planned to fly on to New York after his examination, Elias said.

"I just felt he wasn't quite up to make a trip to New York," Elias said. "He was in such a hurry to get back to New York that we thought we could treat this faster at the hospital than as an outpatient."

Elias said Nixon was in good physical condition and reported walking three miles a day and playing a strong game of golf.

Nixon had been vacationing in the Bahamas since Thursday, according to a statement read by Dolores Dynes of the former president's New York office.

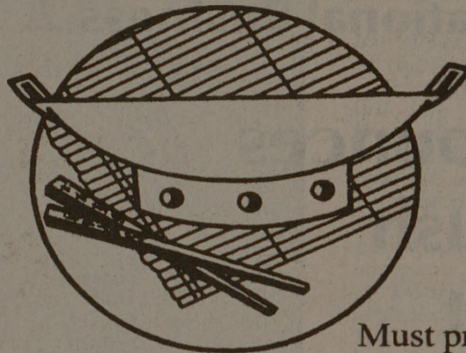
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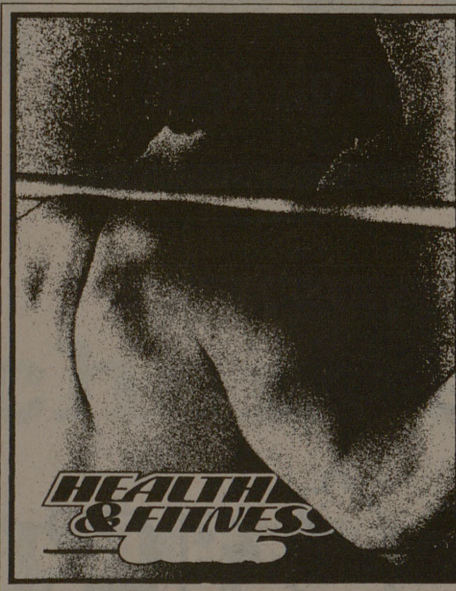
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