

World and Nation

Union Carbide's settlement for India disaster 'too low'

Associated Press
NEW DELHI, India — The government said Monday a \$350 million out-of-court settlement between Union Carbide and private lawyers for victims of the Bhopal chemical plant disaster is too low and "totally unacceptable."
 A statement issued by the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers said "Union Carbide is taking every step to ensure that the case is settled for a very low amount. The government has not endorsed any settlement on the lines reported in the press."
 "The amount of settlement is inadequate and has always been so and is therefore totally unacceptable."
 It issued the statement in response to a news report, confirmed by Union Carbide on Sunday, that the company had reached an agreement with some private lawyers for survivors of the gas leak in

December 1984, which is considered to be the world's worst industrial disaster.

The ministry statement said only the Indian government could legally represent all the gas victims. It said the government must be involved in any settlement, and the amount must "fully and fairly compensate all the victims."

No indication was given of what action the government would take. A Foreign Ministry spokesman declined comment.

Edwin Meese III, the U.S. attorney general, refused comment on the settlement or the Indian government reaction. He spoke at a news conference at the end of a three-day visit to discuss ways of controlling international drug traffic and terrorism.

A Carbide spokesman in Danbury, Conn., confirmed the out-of-court settlement, which first was reported by The New York Times and was described as subject to court approval.

According to Harvey Cobert, the company's media relations manager, the \$350-million agreement was "worked out with some of the most prominent of the plaintiffs' lawyers in the United States."

"In light of the government of India's desire to have a settlement based on U.S. standards, it would appear that these objectives can now be achieved," Cobert said.

He said the \$350 million, paid over a period of time, would produce a victims' relief fund of \$500 million to \$600 million.

Reagan pushes Senate for aid to Nicaragua

Associated Press
WASHINGTON — President Reagan turned his powers of persuasion on the Senate Monday, lobbying for a strong vote endorsing his \$100 million aid package for Nicaragua's anti-government rebels.

As the president telephoned Senate leaders, an official at the White House told reporters of preliminary and unconfirmed reports that the Sandinista regime in Managua has sent more than 1,000 troops across the Honduran border, apparently to search out their Contra foes.

The official said reports indicate the apparent Nicaraguan attack was larger in scale than any of the more than 100 previous attacks.

Senate Democratic leader Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia said Reagan called him Monday morning and "made a pitch for his proposal."

"We didn't see eye to eye on a second vote," Byrd said and quoted the president as saying such an arrangement would ease pressure on the Sandinista regime to negotiate.

"I told him I look at it from the other side," Byrd said.

Byrd said he could support some money for the guerrillas now, coupled with a cease-fire, bilateral U.S.-Nicaraguan negotiations and "a second vote."

Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, R-Kan., told reporters he believes the president has a persuasive case for the aid money.

Dole said he hopes 70 to 80 senators will back the proposal to send a message to the Sandinista regime that Reagan has strong bipartisan support.

Committee keeps bonds tax-free

WASHINGTON — In a vote portrayed by Chairman Bob Packwood as an unwarranted victory for the very rich, the Senate Finance Committee agreed Monday that municipal bonds now in the hands of investors should remain free of federal tax.

The committee, without taking a vote or considering any amendments, tentatively decided to retain all present-law special tax breaks for the oil and gas, timber, farming and mining industries. The House, in passing its version of tax overhaul last December, had increased taxes on those industries by about \$8.8 billion over five years.

Several senators said they will offer amendments later affecting those tax provisions, which include the oil depletion allowance, immediate deductibility of timber-growing costs, and quick write-off of fertilizer and land-clearing costs.

Action on the bonds provision, taken by voice vote without dissent, helped to quiet fears that had unsettled the market for municipal bonds, a term for any security

issued by state and local governments. The committee will decide later whether to tax bonds issued in the future, but by a 19-0 vote the panel agreed that not even that change — if it is approved — would take effect before 1987.

Packwood said, "We are not talking about taxing the poor... not even the upper-middle incomes. We are talking about taxing the rich — the very rich."

His proposal would have applied only to a few hundred thousand people whose incomes and deductions are so high that they are subject to a minimum tax.

Colleagues argued it would be unfair to impose a tax retroactively.

The bonds issue was the first to face the committee as it began work on a bill fashioned by Packwood that would produce the biggest changes in the federal income tax system in more than 30 years.

Afterwards, the panel began analyzing Packwood's provisions affecting the farm, timber, mining and oil and gas industries but made no decisions.

'Out of Africa' sweeps Oscars with 7 awards

Associated Press
LOS ANGELES — "Out of Africa," the tale of Danish writer Isak Dinesen's romantic sorrows as a young woman, dominated the 58th Academy Awards Monday, winning seven Oscars including best picture and best direction by Sydney Pollack.

Top acting honors went to William Hurt, as the homosexual prisoner in "Kiss of the Spider Woman," and seven-time loser Geraldine Page, as the ailing widow determined to return to her childhood home in "The Trip to Bountiful."

Sentimental favorite Don Ameche was named best supporting actor as the retiree made young again with the help of visitors from outer space in "Cocoon."

Anjelica Huston, the vengeful Mafia princess in "Prizzi's Honor," won as best supporting actress, but her father, John Huston, who directed her, lost a bid for them to take home father-daughter awards.

No picture had been expected to dominate the awards, but "Out of Africa," adapted from Dinesen's writings, also won for Kurt Luedtke's screenplay, John Barry's score, art direction, sound and cinematography.

In a stunning rejection by voters, "The Color Purple" which had tied "Out of Africa" with 11 nominations, failed to win a single award. The industry had already aroused controversy by failing to nominate director Steven Spielberg.

The Oscar for best song went to

Lionel Richie's "Say You, Say Me" from "White Nights."

Best foreign film was Argentina's "The Official Story," a drama of a woman who learns her adopted daughter was stolen by the government from a political prisoner.

"Witness" picked up awards for original screenplay and film editing, while "Cocoon" was named for visual effects. "Back to the Future," the science-fiction comedy, was honored for sound effects editing, and "Mask," the story of a horribly deformed youth and his mother, won the Oscar for makeup. "Ran," the Japanese epic directed by the great Akira Kurosawa, won for costume design. "Broken Rainbow," was named best documentary feature.

The honorary awards provided more sentiment as Paul Newman, cited for his series of distinguished performances and devotion to his craft, spoke from Chicago, where he is filming a sequel to "The Hustler."

Three of Monday night's awards were announced well in advance of the show. The Academy Board of Governors voted an honorary Oscar to Alex North for his "brilliant artistry" in creating film scores.

Charles "Buddy" Rogers, who starred in the first best-picture winner, "Wings," was named for the Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award for his philanthropic work and "his unselfish efforts in helping others." He is the widower of Mary Pickford, an Academy founder.



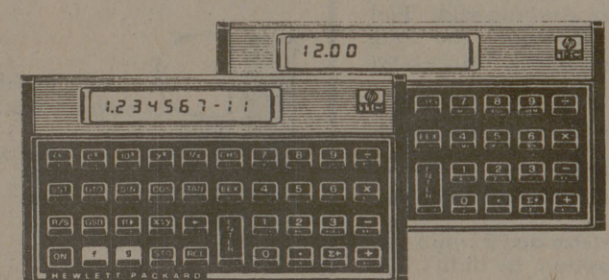
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