

# World and Nation

## Marine force moves close to Lebanon

WASHINGTON (AP) — A second amphibious force of Marines continued to sail eastward in the Mediterranean toward a flotilla of U.S. warships stationed off the coast of Lebanon on Wednesday as the White House sought to dampen speculation that a military strike was in the offing.

Pentagon officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said 1,900 Marines aboard five ships that left Spain on Tuesday would link up with U.S. forces already in the area by Friday.

The sources also disclosed the Navy force already on station is slightly larger than previously thought — including 21 warships, three Marine amphibious ships and four ammunition and oiler support vessels — and that several smaller warships had moved to within 50 to 100 miles of the Lebanese coast.

The sources said the main aircraft carrier battle groups were maintaining a standard patrol farther out to sea.

At the White House, presidential spokesman Marlin Fitzwater told reporters he could not rule out the possibility of a military strike.

## Iran: U.S. reporter will be expelled, 3 others remain

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) — Iran said *Wall Street Journal* reporter Gerald F. Seib will be expelled Thursday, five days after he was arrested and accused of spying for Israel while visiting the country by government invitation.

Iran's official Islamic Republic News Agency quoted an Information Ministry official Wednesday as saying the decision to free and expel the 30-year-old American came after "a judicial probe into his case ended."

The official, who was not identified by the agency, said Seib was "permanently banned from returning to Iran."

Three other Westerners held by Iran on espionage charges remain in prison. American telecommunications engineer Jon Pattis, Canadian engineer Philip Engs and British journalist-businessman John Cooper were arrested last year.

IRNA gave no details of the Seib investigation or findings, but he apparently was cleared of the allegations. The report did not say where the Thursday flight would take the journalist, who is based in Cairo.

Premier Hussein Mussavi told Tehran radio Wednesday, without elaboration: "After being questioned, the issue has been clarified."

Shortly before the IRNA report, he said Seib would be expelled in two or three days. Asked in a Tehran radio interview why a foreign reporter was detained, Mussavi said he was "engaged in certain investigations and collecting intelligence at the front."

Seib was among 57 foreign correspondents and photographers invited to Iran for a tour of the border battle zone where Iranian forces have pushed into Iraq toward its southern capital, Basra. The Persian Gulf neighbors have been at war since September 1980.

He had been in Iran for 10 days when he was seized Saturday outside his Tehran hotel. The other journalists were allowed to leave.

After Seib's detention, IRNA said a "spy of the Zionist regime" was arrested after entering the country with a false passport in the guise of a journalist.

The newspaper said it was awaiting confirmation of the release and would have no comment.

## Surrogate threatens to kill child rather than give it up

HACKENSACK, N.J. (AP) — A distraught surrogate mother faced with losing the baby she agreed to bear for \$10,000 threatened to kill herself and the child rather than give the child up, according to a tape played in court Wednesday.

The cries of the infant known to the court as Baby M were in the background as Mary Beth Whitehead pleaded last July for forgiveness for changing her mind about the contract under which she agreed to be artificially inseminated with William Stern's sperm.

The taped conversation played in a hushed courtroom demonstrated the bitter tug of war between Whitehead and Stern that has developed into the first court test of surrogate parenting's legality.

"Bill, it's my flesh and blood, just like yours," Whitehead said on the tape, made while she was a fugitive in Florida. "It's mine too, and I would've given her up. I can't do it."

She mentioned harming herself or the child at least three times, in one exchange saying, "I gave her

life, I can take her life away." She also said to Stern: "I'll tell you right now, I'd rather see me and her dead before you get her."

The 40-minute conversation was taped secretly by Stern on July 15 when Whitehead called from a hide-

*"I'll tell you right now, I'd rather see me and her dead before you get her."*  
— Mary Beth Whitehead, surrogate mother

out in Florida, where she fled with the child after disobeying a court order obtained by the Sterns. She was on the run for nearly three months before authorities found her and returned the baby to the Sterns.

A tape of a 10-minute July 16 conversation also was played in court in which Whitehead accuses Stern of sexually abusing her 12-year-old

daughter. Stern called the accusation an "empty threat."

Judge Harvey R. Sorkow is considering the validity of the surrogate contract and whether custody of the 10-month-old baby should go to Stern, a 41-year-old biochemist, and his wife or to Whitehead, 29, a housewife, and her husband.

Out of court Wednesday, Whitehead said she was not serious about the threats made in the tape July 15.

"I was just saying those things because I wanted him to see that it was our baby, not his baby and not just my baby, and that she needed me," Whitehead said.

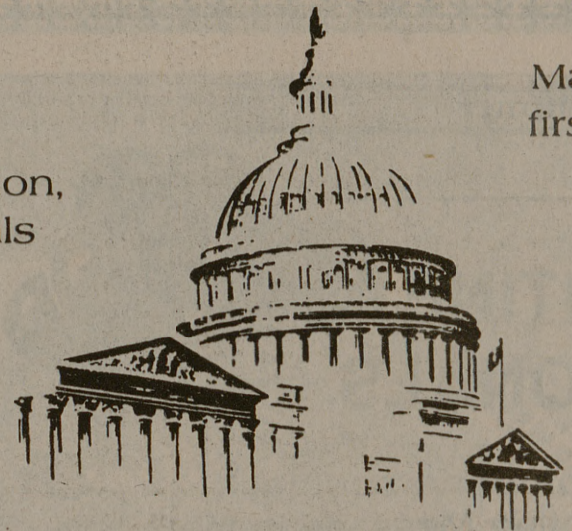
Stern, who didn't know where Whitehead was calling from when he made the July 15 tape, said Wednesday: "I had visions of her being in some rooming house with the baby and taking pills or something. I was frightened."

Both listened to the tape with bowed heads, with Whitehead brushing tears from her eyes at times.

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