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World and Nation

U.S. cancels 7-nation talk on terrorism

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States, rebuffed by France and two other close allies, was forced Thursday to abandon plans for a seven-nation meeting in Rome on countering the rising tide of terrorism.

Although State Department officials said military steps were not on the agenda, the reluctant allies did not wish to participate in a conference held in the shadows of a U.S. military buildup in the eastern Mediterranean.

With eight Americans held hostage in Lebanon, there was apprehension that the United States might strike out in retaliation, as it did last April against Li-

France, which initiated the boycott, and Britain and West Germany, which also declined invitations to attend, all have hostages in Lebanon.

The question of military action was not on the agenda," spokesman Charles E. Redman said in announcing the abrupt cancellation.

He said Italy had agreed to a U.S. request to host the meeting of the seven largest industrialized democracies but that "some of the summit group did not feel it would be propitious at this time." Redman said the United States

had hoped for an exchange of information on the "recent spate of hostage-takings. The spokesman refused to say

which countries objected to the Rome meeting or to give their reasons

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Officials say U.S. journalist free from Iran, on way home

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) — Air-port officials in Tehran said early today that American journalist Gerald F. Seib had left the Iranian capital en route to West Germany.

Seib, a 30-year-old Cairo-based correspondent for the Wall Street Journal, was arrested during a gov-

ernment-sponsored press tour and had been accused of spying. Officials at the Tehran airport told the Associated Press in a tele-phone interview that Seib was aboard Lufthansa airline Flight 601 that left the airport at about 6 a.m. (9:30 p.m. EST Thursday). In Ottawa, Canada's Foreign of-

fice said it had been advised that Philip Engs, a Canadian engineer arrested Dec. 2 on espionage charges, also would be "released soon." An American telecommunications spe-cialist and a British businessman also

are imprisoned in Iran on similar day that Seib had been turned over charges Seib was in a group of 57 foreign

journalists invited to visit the southern front in the 6¹/₂-year-old war with Iraq. An official of Iran's Information

Ministry had said of Seib: "He has still not left, but will leave within the next 24 hours." The official spoke on condition of anonymity and would not elaborate, except to say:

"No one can give you more infor-mation, so don't show any more cu-riosity. When it happens (Seib's de-parture), you will definitely find out about it.

The Swiss Embassy in Tehran, which handles U.S. interests, had refused comment on Seib's whereabouts. Iran's ambassador to the United Nations, Said Rajai-Khoras-sani, said in New York late Wednesto the embassy.

An announcement Wednesday by the Information Ministry said au-thorities decided to expel Seib the next day after "a judicial probe into his case ended. The official Islamic Republic

News Agency, which reported the announcement, gave no details of the investigation, but Seib apparently was cleared of the allegations.

He had been in Iran 10 days when he was detained Saturday and accused of spying for Israel. The Iranian news agency said a "spy of the Zionist regime" was arrested after entering the country with a false passport, disguised as a journalist.

Wednesday's announcement by the Information Ministry said Seib was "permanently banned from returning to Iran."

Official: Intelligence agencies must recover trust of Congress

WASHINGTON (AP) — The chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee said Thursday the Iran-Committee said Thursday the Iran-Contra uproar shows the need to re-store trust between Congress and the spy agencies, while Reagan ad-ministration officials appealed to Congress to continue the flow of U.S. aid to the Nicaraguan rebels. Sen. David Boren, D-Okla., pre-dicted there will be some proposals to tighten procedures for informing Congress of undercover activities.

He said that while he would endorse some changes in that respect, think the most important thing is attitude. You have to rebuild trust." The senator said he expected rela-tions between Congress and the in-

following the resignation of William J. Casey as CIA director. "Better chemistry" exists between Congress and Robert M. Gates, the man nominated by President Reagan to succeed Casey, Boren said.

Earlier, Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that Nicaragua's Contra rebels can achieve a political victory against the leftist Sandinista government in Ma-nagua if military aid from the United States continues.

Abrams' testimony came as the committee began weighing legis-lation which would pull the plug on all U.S. aid to the Contras.

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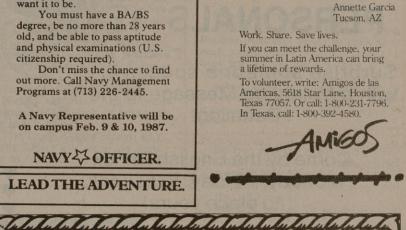
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