

World and Nation

Poindexter says he told truth during testimony

WASHINGTON (AP) — With stinging congressional criticism of his actions still in the air, John M. Poindexter wound up his five days as a star witness before the Iran-Contra committees Tuesday by saying he had told the truth and that "I leave this hearing with my head held high."

The former national security adviser's parting words were: "I have done my very best to promote the long-term national security interests of the United States."

But Rep. Lee Hamilton, D-Ind., the chairman of the House committee, said that Poindexter, by withholding information from President Reagan, "denied him the opportunity to make the fateful decision of his presidency."

Hamilton said the testimony showed "excessive secrecy that had serious consequences for the process of government."

The chairman of the Senate committee, Daniel K. Inouye, D-Hawaii,

said Poindexter had given the inquiry "selected recollections."

Inouye said that instead of bragging to the president about what both Poindexter and aide Oliver North called the "neat idea" of using Iranian arms profits to help the Nicaraguan Contras, "you made a decision, you and you alone, to set up a very elaborate scheme of keeping this secret."

"You decided not to tell the president because it would result in a political explosion," the senator said, ticking off a list of others whom Poindexter said he didn't tell: the director of the Central Intelligence Agency, members of the Cabinet, the secretaries of state and defense and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff — the nation's highest military officer.

"With that type of testimony, some of us are justified in asking ourselves, and in this case I will ask you this . . . can you tell us whether

information is being withheld from us today or during the past week?" Inouye asked.

Poindexter replied, "Mr. Chairman, absolutely not. I have not withheld any information from this hearing that I can accurately recall. What I testified, as I swore at the beginning of these hearings, is the solute truth and the whole truth."

Rep. Jack Brooks, D-Texas, referred sarcastically to Poindexter's testimony that the American people vote for a candidate's foreign policy when they vote for president.

"Are you suggesting the millions of Americans were in favor of using weapons to the Ayatollahs in Iran?" he asked.

Poindexter said: "Most Americans didn't think they had enough information to make decisions one way or another. Most Americans feel the kind of tactical decisions should be left to the president."

Poindexter will testify once more but in private, on classified matters.

OSHA deals out record fine to largest U.S. meatpacker

WASHINGTON (AP) — A record \$2.59 million fine was proposed Tuesday by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration against the nation's largest meatpacker, IBP Inc., on charges of failing to report more than 1,000 cases of employee injuries and illnesses.

IBP spokesman Gary Mickelson said the company "will contest the citation and proposed fines." He added: "We believe IBP's safety record is equal to or better than the rest of the meatpacking industry."

The company has 15 working days to take its case to the independent occupational safety and health review commission.

OSHA, a Labor Department agency, proposed the fine following an investigation of IBP's Dakota City, Neb., beef slaughtering and processing plant. IBP, a subsidiary of Occidental Petroleum Co., employs 18,000 people in eight states.

IBP has reported annual sales exceeding \$6 billion, more than its three largest U.S. competitors combined, for each of the last four years.

Until now, the biggest OSHA penalty was \$1.57 million imposed against Chrysler Corp. earlier this year for 811 safety infractions at the company's New Del., plant.

John A. Pendergrass, assistant secretary of labor OSHA, said the IBP case "is the worst example of underreporting injuries and illnesses to workers ever countered by OSHA in its 16-year history."

The agency's inspectors found IBP failed to report 1,038 job-related injuries and illnesses from January 1985 through December 1986, he said in announcing the citation.

These included knife cuts, concussions, burns, sprains and carpal tunnel syndrome, a crippling disease ten caused by repetitive motion, according to the citation.

By underreporting injuries and illness, a company avoid an OSHA inspection because the agency exempts companies from full-scale review if injury and illness rates are below the national average.

OSHA began investigating IBP in January, after United Food and Commercial Workers union filed a complaint charging the company with violating federal job injury reporting requirements.

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Senate defies threat of veto by passing bill

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate defied a bluntly worded presidential veto threat Tuesday and approved 71-27 a sweeping blueprint for retaliation against unfair trade practices and aid to import-battered U.S. industries.

"So far the signs point straight to a veto," President Reagan told senators only hours before the vote on the 1,000-page package that also would repeal the windfall profits tax on oil companies and increase aid to those left jobless by import competition.

The administration condemned the bill in a statement, saying it was a bill that would disrupt world markets and boomerang against American business.

Following the vote, Reagan renewed his criticism in a statement saying that "the Senate trade bill, similar to the House version, contains numerous provisions that are unacceptable. If either bill came to me in present form, I would have no choice except to veto it."

Hours before the vote, Reagan added a partisan tone to the three-week debate, telling senators at the White House: "When all is said and done, it will be up to the Democratic

leadership as to whether or not Congress sends me a bill that I must veto or puts together something I can accept."

Reagan's remarks in the closed-door meeting with Senate leaders were relayed to reporters by presidential spokesman Marlin Fitzwater.

The bill's floor manager, Sen. Lloyd Bentsen, D-Texas, declared that the administration was "playing a dangerous game" by mixing veto threats with partisan oratory.

The Senate Finance Committee chairman said there was a danger that bipartisan cooperation within a House-Senate conference committee in 1984, the last time the Senate approved a major trade bill, could be in jeopardy.

Treasury Secretary James A. Baker III and U.S. Trade Representative Clayton K. Yeutter both met with Republican senators at a luncheon and urged them to vote against the legislation.

The administration's strategy appeared to aimed at sending the bill to a conference committee with only lukewarm support in the Senate and thus put pressure on the panel to reshape the bill substantially.

Mozambique says guerillas murdered 380

MAPUTO, Mozambique (AP) — Official media reports Tuesday that guerrillas fighting the Marxist government massacred as many as 380 people in a town 300 miles north of Maputo, the capital.

Radio Mozambique's station in Inhambane province quoted district administrator, Eduardo Gimo, as saying the massacre occurred Saturday in the town of Homoine and that at least 380 bodies were removed by Sunday.

But AIM, the national liberation agency, said official word raised the death toll to 380.

It said 49 people were wounded and hospitalized near Inhambane City.

AIM's brief report gave specifics, but indicated that townspeople were marched to a road and killed as they walked.

AIM said the slaughter carried out by "South African-backed Mozambique National Resistance bandits." The Mozambique National Resistance is a guerrilla group fighting to overthrow Mozambique's Marxist government.

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