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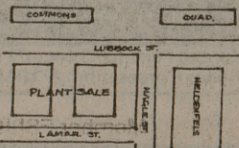
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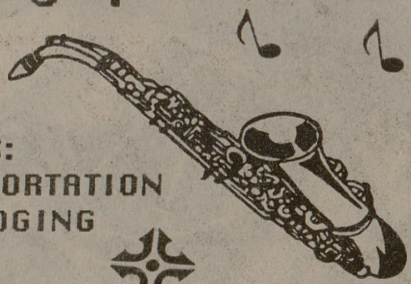
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World and Nation

Shiites seize West German to coerce jailers, report says

BEIRUT, Lebanon (AP) — Seven gunmen seized a West German in Syrian-policed west Beirut on Wednesday. A radio report said a Shiite Moslem militia leader ordered the abduction to pressure West Germany into freeing his two jailed brothers.

The kidnapping occurred as Mohammed Hamadi, accused in a TWA hijacking, took the stand in the Duesseldorf trial of brother Abbas Hamadi, who allegedly abducted two West Germans in Beirut last year in a bid to free him.

The third brother, Abdul-Hadi Hamadi, heads the security apparatus of Hezbollah, the most militant pro-Iranian faction in Lebanon.

Ralph Rudolf Schray, 30, was grabbed as he walked across a sidewalk off the Hamra commercial thoroughfare at 11:05 a.m., said a police spokesman, who by regulation cannot be identified.

Schray works for an engineering company and has lived in Lebanon for most of his life.

"The kidnappers did not state any demands," the police spokesman said, adding that it was not clear who they were.

However, a high-ranking official with Abdul-Hadi Hamadi's militia informed a relative of Schray that Abdul-Hadi ordered the abduction "to put pressure on Bonn so that it would release his two jailed brothers," the Christian-run Voice of Lebanon quoted the relative as saying.

Schray was the first foreigner abducted in Moslem west Beirut since June. His kidnapping brings to 22 the number of foreigners held hostage in Lebanon.

Her eyes brimming with tears, Schray's Lebanese wife, Rana Mounla, told reporters, "I hope he'll be released soon."

"Ralph never considered himself a German. He hardly speaks a few words of German. He always considered himself Lebanese. He didn't panic when various waves of foreigners' abductions hit west Beirut. Others fled, but he insisted on staying."

Schray was born in Beirut in 1957 to a West German father and a Palestinian mother, said a relative who spoke on condition of anonymity. Bonn officials said he has a West German passport.

In West Germany, Mohammed Hamadi, 23, refused to testify at the trial of his 29-year-old brother, Abbas.

Abbas Hamadi is charged with kidnapping West Germans Rudolf Cordes and Alfred Schmidt in Beirut less than a week after his brother's Jan. 13, 1987 arrest at Frankfurt airport.

Schmidt was released in September. Cordes remains a captive.

Senate committee OKs Supreme Court nominee

WASHINGTON (AP) — Anthony M. Kennedy's Supreme Court nomination sailed unanimously through the Senate Judiciary Committee on Wednesday and went to the Senate floor for an expected swift confirmation.

Majority Leader Robert Byrd, D-W.Va., a committee member, said he would be willing to waive procedural requirements to allow a Senate vote Friday or Monday on President Reagan's selection of the federal appellate judge from Sacramento, Calif.

The committee's action was praised by Reagan and Attorney General Edwin Meese III, with the president saying it "gives us considerable confidence that the nation will soon have a full court."

"I look forward to a positive vote soon by the Senate that will bring this distinguished and scholarly legal mind to the court," Reagan said.

Before the 14-0 vote, senators praised the 51-year-old Kennedy as

an open-minded advocate of the constitutional right of privacy, one who respected Supreme Court precedent and a judge with an expansive view of constitutionally protected liberties.

But liberal senators also said Kennedy's former memberships in clubs with few women members and some of his more than 400 decisions showed an insensitivity to women and minorities. These lawmakers expressed hope, however, that Kennedy would change his views on the job.

"We learned that Judge Kennedy is a case-by-case judge," said Sen. Patrick J. Leahy, D-Vt., whose comments summed up the liberal position. "Nor, it appears, does he have an agenda to reverse scores of important Supreme Court decisions. Rather, Judge Kennedy has respect for many of the major rulings that the court has handed down in the last three decades."

Despite the unanimous vote, there were moments of acrimonious debate at the committee meeting — not about Kennedy, but over the defeat of Reagan's first nominee for the high court vacancy, Robert H. Bork.

The most vivid statement came from Sen. Gordon Humphrey, R-N.H., who said he was looking for a reason that Kennedy was cautious during his confirmation hearings, in setting boundaries on the right of privacy.

Humphrey said he concluded Kennedy "was being ultra-careful... with the entreaties of Robert Bork still on the floor" and "still dangling from the chandeliers."

"Judge Kennedy didn't want his guts ripped out by the senators on this committee — senators, some of whom in the debate over the Bork nomination, wittingly or unwittingly, functioned as front men for powerful lobbying groups opposed to Robert Bork," Humphrey said.

Report says soldiers beating Arabs were following orders

JERUSALEM (AP) — Newspapers published reports Wednesday of soldiers beating Palestinians and one quoted a trooper as saying he was ordered to club Arabs at random, not just rioters as Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin has declared.

Soldiers in the occupied Gaza Strip hit and kicked members of a CBS-TV crew who filmed other troopers arresting and striking a Palestinian. The army apologized.

In an Arab neighborhood of Jerusalem, police armed with assault rifles and clubs fired tear gas and rubber bullets at about 75 young Arab protesters.

"Somebody there will get his head smashed," Associated Press reporter Sergei Shargorodsky heard a policeman say. "We'll break their bones." The officers entered only the edge of the neighborhood and the protest ended without casualties.

Palestinians began rioting Dec. 8 in the West Bank and Gaza Strip,

which Israel captured from Jordan and Egypt in the 1967 Middle East War. Israeli gunfire has killed 38 Arabs, according to U.N. figures, and Rabin said the policy of beating rather than shooting took effect Jan. 5.

The daily tabloid *Hadashot* published an interview with a soldier in Gaza whose description of his orders contradicted Rabin's statement that beatings were not used as punishment, but only to quell riots.

"In order to make people in the camps aware of the army's presence during curfews, we were given orders to knock on doors, enter inside and take the men out," reporter Menachem Shizaf quoted the soldier as saying. "We entered almost every other house. We stood the men outside with their faces against a wall, and while questioning them, the soldiers beat them with clubs. The men screamed in pain."

"This whole business caused serious arguments among soldiers. Over time, the number who opposed the beatings grew, but no one refused an order."

An army spokesman said a response was difficult because neither the soldier nor his unit was identified.

"It's not true that there are such orders," the spokesman said, but added: "Here and there, we know there are exceptions," meaning random beatings contrary to orders.

Haaretz quoted military sources in Gaza it did not identify as saying soldiers vied for the "privilege" of leading detainees into a detention camp. The liberal daily said the opportunity was used to beat Arabs despite orders that forbid beatings after a protest has ended or an arrest made.

Rabin announced the beating policy last week, saying blows were more humane than bullets in stopping riots. Officials also have said Israel must toughen its image to deter further violence.

Tank spill fouls water in 4 states

JEFFERSON, Pa. (AP) — A rare steel fracture that could have been prevented caused a 40-foot-high fuel tank to rip open in less than a second, unleashing a wave of oil that fouled water in four states, a federal official said Tuesday.

"Good design in tanks is that they should leak before they break," said Richard N. Wright, director for the Center For Building Technology of the National Bureau of Standards.

"A crack opened the tank," he said. "It probably split the whole height of the tank in something like one-tenth-thousandth of a second. It was hardly a leak."

Wright testified before the U.S. House Subcommittee on Transportation, Tourism and Hazardous Materials in a hall about 3 miles north of the Ashland Oil Inc. tank that collapsed Jan. 2. It spilled about 3.7 million gallons of fuel.

Wright said it will take months to determine what led to the steel fracture, which he described as a brittle fracture that occurs when a metal structure is flawed and under stress.

A small flaw in steel can initiate a brittle fracture in cold weather, Wright said.

The 40-year-old tank collapsed during freezing temperatures as it was being filled with oil to the top for the first time since it had been dismantled in Cleveland and reconstructed at Floreffe.

Good design, materials, inspection and testing prevent such fractures, Wright said. He said in one testing method, the tank is filled to the top with water before being filled with oil. Ashland has acknowledged that it failed to conduct such a test.

When the tank, 27 miles upstream of Pittsburgh, collapsed, it sent an estimated 750,000 gallons of fuel into the Monongahela River, a tributary of the Ohio.

The pollution temporarily cut off drinking water for 23,000 suburban Pittsburgh residents and forced hundreds of thousands in Pennsylvania to conserve water until the oil passed river intakes.

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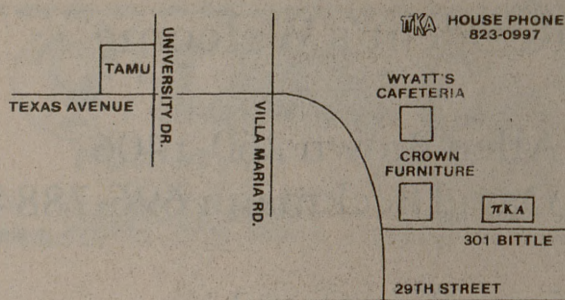
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