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World and Nation

U.S. banks recover from slumpp except in Southwestern region U

WASHINGTON (AP) — Earnings at the nation's commerical banks are rebounding from the worst year since the Depression in every region of the country except the Southwest, the government said

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. said the 13,541 banks it insures collectively earned \$5 billion in the first three months of this year, down somewhat from \$5.3 billion in the same period in 1987.

However, earnings would have hit a new record high if not for the huge \$1.49 billion loss at a single Dallas bank holding company, FDIC Chairman L. William Seidman said.

Banks' first quarter losses in the Southwest totaled \$1.64 billion, 90 percent of that from First Republic-

Bank Corp.

The FDIC has already pumped \$1 billion into First RepublicBank, Texas' largest banking organization, and may have to spend another \$1

hoped to put First RepublicBank back on its feet in the "reasonably near future.'

Last year was the worst year since the Depression for commercial banks: 184 banks failed, a record high, and banks as a whole earned only \$3.6 billion, a record low, as big banks added to their reserves in anticipation of losses on loans to developing countries.

Banks this year are continuing to fail at the 1987 rate. Seventy-five had closed their doors as of last Fri-

But otherwise Seidman painted a generally optimistic picture for 1988.

The number of banks on the FDIC's problem list has dropped below 1,500 for the first time in two years, he said. There were 1,491 such institutions at the end of March, compared with a peak above 1,600 in mid-1987.

The big money-center banks have billion to attract a buyer. written off about 25 percent to 30 Seidman said the FDIC is negotiating with potential investors and and that alone was responsible for

much of last year's depressed earnings. Those reserve levels still look reasonable, he said.

Prospects are also looking up for banks in the Midwest, a region where banks were affected by hard times on the farm. The percentage of Midwest banks reporting losses fell from 13.5 percent in the first quarter a year ago to only 7.6 per-

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"We expect the worst for will be behind us after 1988 said. "The smaller banks in are beginning to show some provement. Nothing large, but are moving in the right direction

Seidman also said he b

World briefs

Soviets air first shuttle flight of '88

MOSCOW (AP) — Two Soviet cosmonauts and a Bulgarian rocketed into space Tuesday on the first manned flight of 1988 aired on live television, courtesy of Mikhail S. Gorbachev and 'glasnost.'

Alexander Alexandrov, 36, from the Bulgarian town of Omurtag, had waited more than nine years for the flight. The Soyuz TM-5 space capsule lifted off at 6:03 p.m. from the Baiko-nur Cosmodrome in Soviet Cen-

The broadcast on state television showed flames spewing from a Vostok rocket booster to lift the capsule into a nearly cloudless blue sky.

"I feel excellent," Alexandrov said from inside the capsule seconds after the launch. The shot, in black and white, showed him cramped quarters.

About two minutes into flight, the first stage of booster dropped away and plu meted toward Earth.

Before Gorbachev becam Soviet leader, with his "glass policy of openness in selected areas, launches customarily web broadcast only when successions

and only on tape, after the fat.

Tuesday's live coverage last
more than an hour, and other media also featured the story.

Tass carried 10 reports on launch and the Soviet man space program. The Soviet pagram thrives, while U.S. manned flights stalled after January 18% explosion of the space shuth Challenger, which killed sevenationality.

Federal regulators try limiting toxins in U.S. workplaces

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal regulators on Tuesday proposed reducing workplace exposure limits for 234 toxic chemicals and bringing 168 others under government regulation in what was called the largest action of its type ever taken.

In making the announcement, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration estimated the proposed regulations would reduce job-re-lated fatalities among some 17 million workers now exposed to the chemicals by 500 a year and illnesses by another 55,000 annually from cancer, respiratory, cardiovascular and liver and kidney diseases.

Approximately 3.6 million workers are now exposed to concentrations of the chemicals above the pro-posed new ceilings, OSHA officials said. They estimated the cost to industry of meeting the new standards at \$900 million a year.

"This is a 20-year technological leap that brings the country's basic occupational health regulations up to date," John A. Pendgergrass, OSHA administrator, said. "The project is the most significant worke exposure action taken by OSHA in its 17-year history.'

The OSHA plan calls for reduced exposure limits for widely used chemicals such as chloroform, carbon monoxide, hydrogen cyanide, ammonia and trichlorethylene.

meet the new standards six months after the final regulations are ap-

OSHA officials said immediate compliance with most of the pro-posed standards could be achieved through the use of personal respirators. However, they added that the agency envisions requiring the adoption of more expensive engineering controls such as ventilation systems within four years.

Pendergrass said approval of the regulations could come as early as next November.

"There's a widespread consensus that many of these chemicals are among the most hazardous," he said. "We expect to have support from management, labor, the health and safety professional communities and our companion agencies in the federal government.

However, Pendergrass acknowledged there is likely to be opposition to many of the changes in hearings that the agency has to conduct on

"We don't do anything with the expectation of being sued," he said. "However, I will admit we have almost a perfect record (at being sued)."

The proposal sets limits on a total of 428 chemicals. It lowers the limits on 234 substances already subject to federal regulation and sets exposure ceilings for the first time on 168

Current exposure limits would be reaffirmed for 25 more chemicals, and a 10-fold increase in the exposure limit would be allowed for one fluorine — based on recent data.

Duarte undergoes cancer surgery

WASHINGTON (AP) - Salvadoran President Jose Napoleon Duarte underwent three hours of cancer surgery Tuesday in which doctors removed tissue from his stomach but left his diseased liver

Dr. Benjamin Interiano, Duarte's personal physician, said the operation determined that the Salvadoran leader's cancer is terminal.

"That is going to end the life of President Duarte," Interiano said, referring to the spread of cancer to the liver. He said the average life expectancy for someone in Duarte's condition is six months. Doctors at Walter Reed Army

Medical Center said the surgical team which performed the exploratory laparotomy, as the op-

eration is known, excised the dieased portion of Duarte "There was metastatic disease present in both lobes of the live

statement said. Following Duarte's recuper-tion from surgery, "this diseaven will probably be treated with the motherapy," the statement said. Duarte, 62, "tolerated the surgery well," the statement said. The Salvadoran leader with the salvadoran leader with the salvadoran leader.

and this was not removed," t

The Salvadoran leader, who was hospitalized May 31, will re main in intensive care for a fe days before returning to his regular hospital room for convals Duarte, one of the United

States' staunchest allies in Lati America, is in the final year of

Soviet, Israel leaders plan meeting

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir of Israel will hold his first meeting with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze on Thursday, an Israeli spokesman said.

Genine Stauber said no exact time and place for the meeting had been set.

The Soviet Union broke diplomatic relations after the 1967 Middle East war but appears to be departing from its policy of not restoring them until the Israelis give up Arab territories occupied in the war.

Kremlin leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev has indicated in several recent speeches that the Soviet Union might resume normal relations after an international peace conference on the Middle East is

Shamir leads the right-wing Likud bloc and opposes trading oc-

cupied territory for peace. also rejects proposals for an intentional conference including five permanent members of U.N. Security Council — the viet Union, United States, Chim Britain and France. Those two points are the bas

of a U.S. peace plan for the Middle East, which Secretary deorge P. Shultz has been promoting in the region.
On Monday, Shamir said Israel

will not offer political concession for resumption of diplomatic relations with Moscow.

"The Soviets keep hinting to they will renew diplomatic relations tions with us if we agree to the proposal" for an international conference, Shamir said. "I don't believe we should pay for the result of the resul sumption of diplomatic relation They broke them and the should renew them.'

STOCKHOLM, Sweden (AP) The navy exploded a mine and a depth charge Monday night southeast of Stockholm as part of an intensified effort to stop underwater intrusions by suspected enemy mini-submarines, officials

The use of the weapons was ordered to commence after indications that a foreign submarine operated between Orno and Uto islands. These two islands are located in the vicinity off of Sweden's main east coast naval base at Musko. Musko is close to 19 miles

The only comment that the

cerning the explosions was the the search continued.

The navy has exploded mine depth charges and anti-sub greates on a half-dozen occasion during the past week, both on the east coast and in the archipelay off Goteborg on the west coast. Numerous dead fish were

only tangible effects of the firm that were reported.

Navy spokesmen on Mondi
denied news reports that a dar
aged minisub was suspected to

hiding near Donso island

Goteborg.

A military staff spokesman Thomas Guer, said naval subhunters are acting under not government directives. These rectives, which permit firing at truders without warning, are lowed in the inner archip and sometimes in waters farth

Navy uses mines in anti-sub hunt

southeast of Stockholm.

A mine was exploded in the same area a week ago for the same reasons. Since the first mine was exploded, military preparedness has been high.

Swedish navy would make con-

the 400-page proposal. other chemicals.

Employers would be required to

Pathologist: Fear killed Navy recruit

PENSACOLA, Fla. (AP) — A Navy recruit who a pathologist said died of "sheer terror" after being forced into a swimming pool had been found psychologically unfit for rescue swimmer training, it was re-

vealed Monday.

But a psychiatrist at the Naval
Aerospace Medical Institute later reversed the finding, giving qualified permission for Airman Recruit Lee Mirecki to resume training, said Chief Petty Officer Kevin Branni-

gan, a hospital corpsman. Brannigan testified at a hearing to determine whether five instructors and their commanding officer at the Rescue Swimmer School should be court-martialed in the death of Mirecki on March 2.

Mirecki, 19, of Appleton, Wis., died after instructors allegedly forced him back into the pool when he tried to quit the course during a

Lt. Cmdr. Dave Shivley, a Navy flight surgeon, originally found Mirecki unqualified, saying in a report introduced as evidence that the recruit had a phobia about being dragged under water.

In a follow-up psychiatric examination, Lt. Cmdr. Laszlo I. Navradszky reversed Shivley and wrote on medical records that Mirecki's problem was occupational rather

than a mental illness, Brannigan But Navradszky also wrote that if

Mirecki had further difficulties, he would be disqualified from further rescue training, Brannigan said. "I didn't realize, just like the doctor didn't realize, that a student

would be made to continue training

after he asked to quit," Brannigan

If they had, Brannigan said he was sure Navradszky would not have allowed Mirecki to resume training. Earlier testimony indicated it was the school's policy to require a student to complete a drill if he tried to drop

out during the exercise.

Earlier, Capt. Delroy Hire, who performed the autopsy on Mirecki and declared the death to be a homicide, testified it was a major breach of procedure to send the sailor back to training. Instructors at the school were not told of the report about Mirecki's phobia, records showed.

"I do not believe, under the circumstances, he should have been put back in the water," Hire said.

Also Monday, a Navy spokesman denied an NBC News report, citing Pentagon records, that one of the accused, Petty Officer 2nd Class John W. Zelenock, had failed to meet instructor qualifications because of a below-minimum evaluation and a disciplinary problem.