

Gadhafi promotes Libya's image as 'victim'

ROME (AP) — Col. Moammar Gadhafi has stepped up a campaign to improve Libya's overall foreign image and rebut charges that he is building a chemical-weapons plant. In recent weeks, the Libyan leader purportedly helped free two French girls held hostage in Lebanon, offered to return the body of a U.S. pilot killed in a 1986 attack on Libya, and invited television correspondents to interview him. In addition, he has appealed to international organizations from the United Nations to the Arab League

to defend him, and he has used friendly nations to convey to Washington his contention the plant does not produce chemical weapons. "There is no doubt that the Libyans have launched what has become known as their charm offensive in Europe," a British Foreign Office official said Tuesday, speaking on condition of anonymity. Attention has been focused on Libyan-U.S. relations in recent weeks after President Reagan told an interviewer that a military attack on the plant near the Libyan capital of Tri-

poli was under consideration, although Gadhafi says the facility makes pharmaceuticals. A U.S. carrier group steamed toward the Mediterranean on Tuesday in what the Pentagon said was a normal rotation of forces, but the movement prompted speculation of an impending strike. Italian newspapers and politicians billed the ships as a direct threat to Libya. The U.S. Navy has said the movement of the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier Theodore Roosevelt and 12 other ships in its battle group

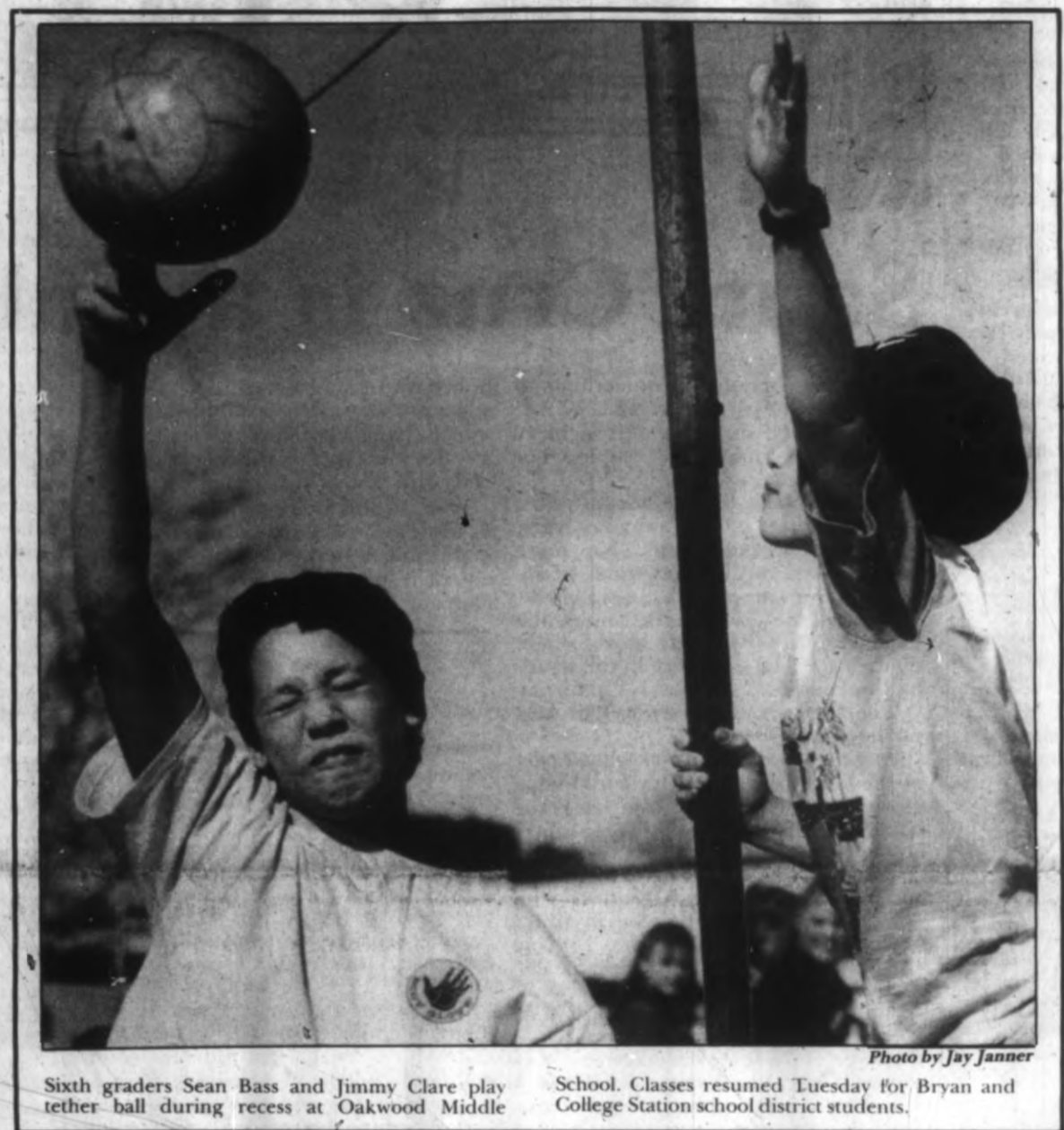
is part of a "previously scheduled, routine deployment to the U.S. Sixth Fleet." A Reagan spokesman on Tuesday declined comment on the reports. Gadhafi's reaction to the U.S. charges is more conciliatory than his response to threats of an attack three years ago. But whether he will succeed in winning allies is unknown. "I think it's pretty clear that he did not believe the U.S. would bomb the country in '86," said Lisa Anderson, a Columbia University professor and a leading U.S. specialist on Libya. "Now, I think he takes threats on

the part of the U.S. — and even floating ideas in op-ed pieces by people who are not part of the (Reagan) administration — extremely seriously." Shortly before the April 15, 1986, strike on Tripoli and Benghazi, Gadhafi threatened a campaign of subversion in the United States. Earlier that year, he defied U.S. forces to cross his "line of death" in the Gulf of Sidra off Libya. But since the U.S. State Department alleged in September that Libya was on the verge of making chemical weapons, Gadhafi has por-

trayed himself as the victim of U.S. aggression. In a November interview on French TV, Gadhafi stood in the rubble of his headquarters destroyed in the 1986 raid and said he was "making an appeal to all our allies to expect full American aggression." After the United States said it was talking with allies about a possible raid on the factory, Gadhafi called Dec. 24 for the release of hostages, particularly two French girls held in Lebanon by a Libyan-backed Palestinian group for a year.

Officials say mystery ship never existed

GALVESTON (AP) — U.S. Coast Guard officials said Tuesday that a ship they searched for after a report it was burning and sinking with 21 men aboard never existed. Officials searching records for a ship bearing the name Genu K determined that no such ship exists, even though a distress call for the vessel came in at 2 a.m. Monday. The distress call prompted a 15-hour air and water search for the vessel Monday. "As far as we can determine, there's no boat registered under that name in the Lloyd's registry or in any of the U.S. systems," Lt. Mike Tekesky of New Orleans said. The Coast Guard records search was conducted there. A man called the Galveston station on an emergency radio frequency but did not initially report trouble. After switching to a non-emergency frequency, the caller began to "act panicky" and report that his 210-meter ship was ablaze and sinking. Petty Officer Madison Thompson said. Despite the caller's vague report, Thompson said, he quickly repeated key phrases during an approximate 20-minute conversation, suggesting he "knew exactly what he wanted to say." The man who radioed the distress call said he was about 21 nautical miles south-southeast of Galveston, but would not specify what Galveston point he was using as a reference, nor give a latitude and longitude. There are three widely spread reference points — a jetty and two buoys — along the island. Tekesky said false reports occur occasionally, but seldom do they involve claims of sizable vessels.



Sixth graders Sean Bass and Jimmy Clare play tether ball during recess at Oakwood Middle School. Classes resumed Tuesday for Bryan and College Station school district students.

Dukakis bows out of governor's race

BOSTON (AP) — Michael S. Dukakis announced Tuesday that he would not seek an unprecedented fourth term as governor of Massachusetts in 1990, but he did not rule out another run for the presidency in 1992. The unexpected announcement broke a political logjam in Massachusetts politics and touched off immediate speculation about the new landscape in the Democratic Party both here and in Washington. "This will be my last term as governor of Massachusetts," Dukakis, 55, told a crowded news conference. "I've loved this office, and I still do." Dukakis, who was the unsuccessful standard-bearer for the Democratic Party in the Nov. 8 election, also touched off speculation that he may seek a rematch against President-elect George Bush without the political hindrances that he learned can plague a sitting governor. "This decision is one that has nothing to do with national office," Dukakis insisted. He acknowledged he has not ruled out another attempt to win the White House and said he had discovered that "it is very difficult to run for the presidency as an incumbent governor." "I've learned — occasionally painfully — never to say 'never' in politics," he said when asked whether he intends to run for president in 1992. In 1988, Dukakis tried to become the first sitting governor since Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932 to win the White House. His status as governor was generally seen as a strength during the long primary season but quickly became a liability in the general election as the Bush team kept him on the defensive about his record on crime and other issues. Asked for a hint to his future, the governor would say only, "Public policy and public service is what I'm all about, it's what I love." Political analyst William Schneider of the American Enterprise In-

stitute, a Democratic think tank in Washington, said Dukakis' decision was consistent with another run for the White House. "But it is regarded with some dismay, among Democrats, because the conventional wisdom is that he was a poor candidate who ran a poor campaign," Schneider said. "He's got to change that perception, to let people know that he has changed, that he learned something." Elaine Kamarck, a Democratic Party activist living in New York City, said there is an undercurrent of anger within the party. "There is some feeling this could have been a Democratic year and he blew it," she said. "If he runs again, I don't know how he copes with that." Dukakis said the campaign had little impact on his decision not to seek a fourth term. If he completes his current term, he would pass Revolutionary War patriot John Hancock as the longest serving governor in state history. Hancock, famous for his bold signature on the Declaration of Independence, held the office 11 years, although not continuously. Dukakis has served 10 years non-continuously. Dukakis said he would miss the governorship, but had no regrets. "There's a certain sadness. I've loved this job." The governor kept his decision a secret until meeting with his Cabinet and senior staff Tuesday morning. Dukakis now faces a restive Legislature concerned over a shortfall of at least \$636 million in the state's \$11.6 billion budget. The state House and Senate convene the 1989 session Wednesday with members bracing for a battle over taxes. Dukakis said he intended to spend the rest of his term fulfilling his responsibilities, wrapping up his programs and working to make certain he is succeeded by a "progressive" Democrat. But he declined to specifically endorse Lt. Gov. Evelyn Murphy, who was standing nearby.

Debate over proposed pay raise livens up first day of Congress

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Democratic-controlled 101st Congress staged opening ceremonies on Tuesday filled with pomp and pageantry and spiced by controversy over a recommendation for a large pay raise for lawmakers. On a day given over largely to swearing-in ceremonies and receptions, Democrats pledged cooperation with the incoming Bush administration. Leaders of both parties laughed off a question about higher taxes. President-elect Bush administered the oath of office to new and newly re-elected senators in groups of four. A few hundred feet across the Capitol, Speaker Jim Wright swore in House members. Wright, D-Texas, in a speech marking his election to a second term as speaker, vowed to use the next two years to attack "the budget deficit, the trade deficit and the social deficit caused by the widening gap between rich and poor."

He offered Bush "unstinting cooperation" toward a bipartisan foreign policy and said Democrats were eager to help him improve education, child care, housing and environmental programs. Democratic Sen. George Mitchell of Maine officially took up his duties as majority leader, the most powerful position in the Senate. Custom required that Mitchell, Wright and other legislative leaders place a telephone call to President Reagan notifying him that Congress was in session. This they did, and when asked by reporters about the possibility of higher taxes, the lawmakers laughed in unison. Bush has said he will fight any proposal to reduce the deficit through new taxes, but many Democrats and some Republicans believe he will have to change his mind to win agreement on a comprehensive deficit-fighting plan. If no one wanted to talk about taxes, Rep. Tom Tauke, R-Iowa, was

eager to begin a debate over Reagan's expected recommendation for a hefty pay raise for members of the House and Senate. "Congressional pay adjustments have become a perpetual source of debate, controversy and embarrassment," he said, in calling for a two-year delay in any increase and requiring a roll call vote in both houses before salary hikes take effect. Reagan is expected to call for a substantial pay raise next week for members of Congress to take effect March 1 unless rejected before then by both houses. An advisory commission has recommended a 50 percent boost for lawmakers, federal judges and top executive branch officials, with members of Congress giving up lucrative honorariums in exchange. Current congressional pay is \$89,500 a year, and the commission's proposal would raise it to \$135,000. The Senate bore a new blue pat-

terned carpet for the occasion, as well as new scarlet benches in the corners for staff aides to view the proceedings. The galleries were packed with spectators as Bush swore in 32 elected senators and Dan Coats, R-Ind., appointed to replace Vice President-elect Dan Quayle. The pomp was nowhere better on display than in the Senate, where outgoing majority leader Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia was named president pro tempore, the post that goes to the longest-serving senator of the majority party. First a resolution was passed appointing Byrd. Then, as he took the presiding officer's chair, a resolution was approved notifying the House of his appointment. Finally, a resolution was approved congratulating him for attaining his new position. The atmosphere was less staid in the House, where many lawmakers were accompanied to the opening-day session by spouses or young children.

Human rights summit gets OK from Shultz

WASHINGTON (AP) — Secretary of State George P. Shultz, impressed with the wholesale release of Soviet political prisoners and rising emigration figures, has recommended that President Reagan accept a Soviet proposal to hold a human rights conference in Moscow in 1991, a U.S. official said Tuesday. If Reagan takes Shultz's advice, the stage also will be set for a new round of East-West negotiations to reduce conventional troops, tanks and artillery in Europe. The start of talks between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Warsaw Pact had been waiting completion of a 35-nation review in Vienna of human rights in the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe. Apparently, the Reagan administration has found enough progress in the Soviet record to close the conference in Vienna and move on. "It's not a perfect scorecard, but they've done a lot," said the U.S. official, who spoke on condition of anonymity. "They've come amazingly far." He said Reagan had not taken a decision yet, although it seemed imminent. Shultz is due to see Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard A. Shevardnadze in Paris on Sunday. They will be attending a conference on the spread of chemical weapons. The State Department last Friday credited the Soviets with "significant progress" in its treatment of political prisoners and Jewish refuseniks. The Soviets have released more than 600 political prisoners in the last two years, including all the monitors of the 1975 Helsinki

agreement, which held out the promise of an improvement in the human rights situation, Phyllis Oakley, the State Department spokesman, said Friday. All prisoners charged with violating political or religious constraints are now free, and less than a dozen of 120 cases of Soviet citizens denied permission to join family members abroad remain unresolved, Oakley said. She said jamming of U.S.-sponsored radio broadcasts has ceased and that Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev in his speech Dec. 7 to the U.N. General Assembly pledged that laws bearing on human rights would be changed. Meanwhile, the National Conference on Soviet Jewry reported on Monday that 3,652 Jews left the Soviet Union in December, the highest monthly total since December 1979. The exodus for 1988 totaled 19,287, the highest for any year since 1980 when 21,471 Jews left. Jewish emigration is one of the yardsticks used by the United States to measure Soviet performance on human rights. The Soviets recently turned over to the State Department a list of about 50 refuseniks, mostly from the Leningrad area, to be given exit permits. This was one of the moves that prompted Shultz to recommend U.S. approval of a human rights conference in Moscow. Another problem that appears to be easing concerns the imprisonment of some 30 Soviet citizens on criminal charges. In at least some cases, the State Department suspects political motives.

Salinas: Economy is top priority

MEXICO CITY (AP) — President Carlos Salinas de Gortari said his administration's No. 1 priority is to resume economic growth and Mexico's creditors should now do their part to help the nation reduce payments on its \$106 billion foreign debt. "We are serious and will continue to be serious" about making payments on the debt, Salinas said in a New Year's speech to armed forces chiefs delivered Monday. "We prefer firm negotiation to confrontation," he said. "But let me emphasize that for me, the interests of Mexico are more important than the interests of the creditors." He said Mexico has made an enormous sacrifice to correct its deficiencies, and now it's up to the creditors to do their part. Since he took power on Dec. 1, Salinas has maintained that the priority is no longer to keep paying, but to start growing again. Mexico faces total payments this year of about \$16 billion. Salinas maintains that Mexico cannot continue to make such high payments if it wants to grow because it needs the money to invest. Venezuelan President-elect Carlos Andres Perez, who will be inaugurated Feb. 2, is due to arrive Tuesday for a one-day visit. His meeting with Salinas comes in the wake of Venezuelan president Jaime Lusinchi's decision to suspend debt principal payments.

Salinas said 1989 will be a year of "transition between a period of unstable inflation and one of low inflation, transition between stagnation and sustained recovery, transition towards a better standard of living for all Mexicans." "The rhythm of transition will depend on the conditions of debt renegotiation," Salinas said. "We have to take excessive debt service charges off the backs of Mexicans." Salinas called for unity in the forthcoming "battle of the debt," so that "foreign pressures will not weaken us and we can negotiate with strength, authority and firmness." The government, which has made frequent calls for unity in the face of

debt negotiations, has faced unrest from labor and strong criticism of government programs by opposition parties. Labor sectors are angry over an economic pact that gave workers an eight percent raise. A previous pact reduced inflation from 159 percent in 1987 to 50 percent in 1988, but workers say they are continuing to fall behind. Private sector industrialists have said it will be impossible to avoid a general rise in costs and prices, but they hope to hold it to between 10 and 18 percent. The government is already raising some taxes and planning to charge more for electricity, telephones and gas.