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The Battalion
WORLD & NATION

Wednesday, June 6, 1990

Rebels seize headquarters of rubber plantation

Liberian president tries for peace

MONROVIA, Liberia (AP) — Rebels seized the headquarters of the world's largest rubber plantation on Tuesday, then gathered for action at the adjoining gates of Liberia's international airport, plantation sources said.

President Samuel Doe pursued a last-stand attempt at peaceful negotiations to end a six-month insurgency that has evolved into a tribal war. He met with Christian church officials and Moslem leaders who have offered to act as intermediaries.

In Akron, Ohio, a spokesman for the Bridgestone-Firestone Inc. company that runs the 120,000-acre plantation referred to the rebels as "freedom fighters" and said the company wants to keep the plantation operating — even with rebels.

Insurgents now control every major industrial concern in this West African country of 2.5 million residents, except possibly the Bong iron ore mine, cut off for days from Monrovia and believed behind rebel lines.

Plantation residents said rebels fired mortars and automatic weapons Tuesday as dozens crossed the Farmington River — the last natural barrier before Monrovia — and moved onto the plantation. One shell fell into the garden of an expatriate plantation employee, but no one was hurt, the sources said.

Robertsfield International Airport, 25 miles from Monrovia, was built to serve the plantation. It was effectively closed on Monday.

Off Monrovia, four U.S. warships carrying 2,000 Marines remained ready to evacuate

Americans and other foreigners. State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said Monday in Washington that about 70 U.S. officials and 1,200 private American citizens remained in Liberia.

Most of the rebels belong to Liberia's Gio and Mano tribes and entered Liberia from neighboring Ivory Coast in late December. Doe belongs to

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the Krahn tribe, which is loyal to him, as is the Mandingo tribe.

The rebels accuse Doe's administration of corruption, economic mismanagement and human rights abuses.

Plantation sources said they were told troop reinforcements were en route to the plantation to try to recapture it.

None of the people interviewed by telephone in the Firestone company town of Harbel would agree to have their names published.

A Harbel resident said many people were cele-

brating in the marketplace, welcoming the "freedom fighters" distinguished by their red bandannas.

A receptionist at Robertsfield Hotel, a three-minute walk from the airport, said he saw perhaps 15 soldiers in all guarding the airport. He said sounds of mortars and gunfire in the morning died down by afternoon.

Diplomatic sources in this capital city of about 400,000 people said they had no reports of casualties in fighting Tuesday. They said about 20 soldiers on the plantation briefly returned rebel fire, then fled toward the capital.

Government forces now are believed to number about the same as the rebels — between 3,000 and 4,000.

Monrovia residents were fleeing in fear as some soldiers abandoned key posts before the rebel advance. Doe has asked the United States to help end the civil war convulsing Liberia.

Washington has accused Charles Taylor, leader of the rebel National Patriotic Front of Liberia, of getting support from Libya, but it also has said Marines will not move to support Doe's government.

Bridgestone-Firestone spokesman Trevor Hoskins said in Akron that Americans managing the plantation did not plan to evacuate despite the rebel advance.

The plantation turns out about 100 million pounds of rubber a year.

Descendants of freed U.S. slaves founded Liberia in 1822. In 1847 it became black Africa's first independent country.

Ethicists question suicide device, call invention 'immoral, illegal'

DETROIT (AP) — An Alzheimer's patient committed suicide by triggering a device that released a lethal dose of chemicals, the doctor who assembled the apparatus and watched the woman die said.

Some medical ethicists called the doctor's actions immoral and perhaps illegal. A prosecutor said he would wait for the autopsy results before deciding whether to charge Dr. Jack Kevorkian, and will seek an injunction to prevent the doctor from using the device again.

"Physicians should not be killers, even in cases where the patient requests it and there is a compassionate reason behind the act," Susan Wolf of the Hastings Center for bio-medical research in Briarcliff, N.Y. said. "They take an oath to do no harm, and taking a life is doing harm."

Kevorkian said Janet Adkins of Portland, Ore., traveled to Michigan during the weekend to use his suicide

"Physicians should not be killers, even in cases where the patient requests it and there is a compassionate reason behind the act."

—Susan Wolf, spokeswoman

minutes. He said she was unconscious in 25 seconds, and died in five or six minutes.

"It simulates exactly the judicial executions that we do now with legal executions, except with this device the person does it himself by pushing a button," Kevorkian told the Detroit News on Monday.

"The last thing Janet Adkins said was, 'You just make my case known,'" Kevorkian, a retired pathologist and an outspoken advocate of what he calls doctor-assisted suicide, said.

Kevorkian said in March that he expected to be prosecuted after the first use of the drug-injecting device. He also said he would not charge patients and that he might use it to take his own life some day.

Kevorkian could not be reached by the Associated Press. The phone at his suburban Detroit office was repeatedly busy.

After Adkins died, Kevorkian notified police.

Kevorkian said Adkins came to Michigan with her husband, Ron, and a friend but they left before she died. In Oregon, providing the means to commit suicide is a felony, but Michigan has no law against suicide assisted by a physician.

According to the American Medical Association, passive euthanasia is ethical, Reinhard Priester of the Center for Biomedical Ethics at the University of Minnesota said.

Kevorkian said the Adkinses contacted him in October after learning about his device, and he recommended treatment with an experimental drug at a Seattle hospital. He said it failed and that Adkins told him she planned to commit suicide by overdosing on pills.

The device itself — an aluminum frame with three suspended bottles and a small electric motor — is not illegal, Gerald Poisson, assistant Oakland County prosecutor, said.

device. He drove the 54-year-old woman in his van to a park in northern Oakland County on Monday afternoon.

According to Kevorkian, he and one of his relatives attached Adkins to a heart monitor, then put an intravenous tube in her arm.

The tube first delivered a saline solution. Kevorkian said Adkins then pressed a button that injected thio-pental, a coma-inducing drug, followed moments later by potassium chloride, which stops the heart within

Gorbachev returns from US to ethnic bloodshed

MOSCOW (AP) — Mikhail S. Gorbachev returned from the United States on Tuesday triumphantly bearing trade and arms deals but facing ethnic bloodshed in Central Asia, an impasse with the Baltic republics and trouble in the Kremlin.

In Gorbachev's absence, his neme-

sis Boris N. Yeltsin was elected president of Russia, the largest Soviet republic. Yeltsin immediately called for the resignation of the Soviet Cabinet and a new constitution that would vastly reduce the powers of the central government.

In the distant reaches of Soviet Central Asia, two Turkic groups

clashed Tuesday for the second day along the border between Uzbekistan and Kirghizia. Authorities declared a state of emergency and said 11 people were killed.

Along the Baltic coast, Prime Minister Kazimiera Prunskiene of the secessionist republic of Lithuania reassured her compatriots that American sympathizers would try to

block Congress from endorsing U.S.-Soviet trade deal signed at the summit.

And within the ancient red brick walls of the Kremlin, the Supreme Soviet legislature unexpectedly postponed consideration of the emigration law that President Bush set as a precondition for implementing the trade pact.

DWI

(Continued from page 1)

there have been at least 77 arrests in College Station alone since New Year's Day.

One of the many organizations trying to put a stop to DWI in the local area is Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

Anita Friedman, administrative assistant of MADD's Brazos County Chapter, said the chapter is not against alcohol — they are against drinking and driving.

"Going to jail for a month or two or even a year will not solve the problem," Friedman said. "The

problem repeats itself and we're after the rehabilitation. We feel that is a better way to do it."

Another supporter of the alcohol rehabilitation process is Dr. Maurice Dennis, safety education coordinator at Texas A&M.

"When you combine lack of experience as a drinker and the party risk-taking atmosphere, DWI is higher among college-age people," Dennis said. "In the state of Texas if you want to avoid losing your license and going to jail, you must successfully complete an alcohol-education program as one part of probation."

He said the statistics for 1989 indicate that in Texas alone there were 103,008 arrests and 33,061 alcohol-related deaths.

Dr. Dennis Reardon, coordinator of A&M's Center for Drug Prevention and Education said DWI offenders most often are men, but women are not immune to the problem.

He said alcohol abuse is the main reason for the DWI problem. Reardon sees about 400 students a year and five to six students a week regarding alcohol problems.

In Brazos County a first-time DWI offense includes fines of \$100 to \$2,000, plus 72 hours to two years in jail. A second-time offender gets a fine of \$300 to \$2,000, plus additional costs and up to two years in jail.

A third DWI offense is a felony, punishable with a \$500 to \$2,000 fine, 30 days to two years in jail or 60

days to five years in prison. The offender's drivers license can be suspended for one year and if he or she is placed on probation, \$40 per month must be paid, plus community service.

These are only court costs and fines. Car insurance of DWI offenders most likely will more than double for five years depending on car age and offender's age. Also, the offender's car is towed immediately after his or her arrest.

Joe said signs drivers see along side of the road that state, "Do You Can't Afford It," are correct.

"I almost lost my car, my license and my girlfriend because of a mistake," he said. "Don't let it happen to you."

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