

The Battalion VORLD & NATION

Wednesday, August 15, 1990

Syria joins defense of Saudi Arabia

Associated Press

Syrian troops planted their flag beside the American in the defense of Saudi Arabia on Tuesday, and Arab harbormasters in the Persian Gulf kept embargoed Iraqi freighters at bay, turning up the heat in the simmering showdown with Baghdad

In Washington, the United States and the Soviet Union conferred on putting a United Nations umbrella over any anti-Iraq naval blockade. The new middleman of the Mid-

dle East, Jordan's King Hussein, headed for the United States and a meeting with President Bush, carrying with him a private message from Iraq's Saddam Hussein - reportedly the offer of a deal. But Bush said he

MONROVIA, Liberia (AP) — Rivals said Tuesday

they had killed Prince Johnson, who leads one of two

rebel factions fighting the government, but he met with journalists hours later and laughed at the claims.

Charles Taylor, Johnson's rival in the yearlong battle to oust President Samuel Doe, claimed Tuesday morn-ing his fighters had killed Johnson in an ambush.

Before Johnson turned up, a man identifying him-self as the rebel leader called the British Broadcasting

Corp. in London by radiotelephone and shouted, "Tay

Taylor's spokesman and defense minister, Tom Woewiyu, announced Johnson's death and said the body would be exhibited. It was not.

At the State Department's daily briefing in Washing-

ton, spokeswoman Margaret Tutweiler said, "We have a reliable source this morning that told us they have seen

lor's a liar! I am alive!"

him today ... alive

leged ambush.

sees no short-term hope for a diplomatic solution to the gulf crisis.

As peace efforts and economic pressures were stepped up, U.S. mil-itary forces continued to pour across a 7,000-mile air bridge into the Arabian desert. It was the seventh day of "Desert Shield," the operation de-signed to face down an Iraqi army that seized Kuwait and could threaten Saudi Arabia.

Out in the sand wastes, paratroop ers of the U.S. Army's 82nd Air-borne Division found friendly Saudis and tastes of home like delivery of fast-food burgers, according to reports from journalists in a U.S. media pool.

Liberian rebel declares death

of rival; Johnson denies claim

warfare with Iraq. Said one GI, "We're trained and ready.

North across the desert, hundreds of other Americans remained trapped in Kuwait and Iraq.

One Iraqi spokesman, the ambassador to Greece, told reporters in Athens the Americans and thousands of other foreigners stranded when Iraq invaded Kuwait could leave "as soon as the threats from the United States and its allies are eliminated.

The takeover of Kuwait gave Iraq control of 20 percent of the world's oil reserves, and the crisis has driven up world oil prices sharply.

But the young Americans also had to deal with 115-degree summer heat and the potential for chemical bled upper gulf, cautioned the

trapped Americans — an estimated 2,500 in Kuwait and 500-600 in Irad - not to try to flee across the Kuwai border into Saudi Arabia, "due u the danger involved.

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"The desert is full of people try-ing to find their way," said a Dut journalist who escaped from Kuwa into Saudi Arabia on Tuesday.

Under all the pressure, Iraq sounded unyielding. In Baghdad, the state newspaper Al-Jumhuriya said Iraq knows how to "foil" U.S. measures. If it is at-tacked, the paper said, Iraq can "move the battlefield to where (the

dan Hussein United States) does not want or ex-Nestern nat ials about t pect it to be. raq and Ku

Iraq said it launched its lightning strike Aug. 2 against Kuwait becaus of disputes over oil and money.

U.S. troops

face snags

with desert

NEW YORK (AP) - Try moving

a medium-sized city 7,000 mile

across an ocean within days to a de-

sert where thousands of people need to eat, sleep, bathe and defend themselves against a million-man

That's what the Pentagon is up against in Operation Desert Shield, its largest military operation and most taxing logistical problem since

'You have two things against you

geography and time. And as soon

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Vietnam.

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Coleman's appearance when she

liners

Ex-Cowboy faces new verdict

in second trial for 1987 murder

saw him a few hours earlier. In the first trial, prosecutors argued that Coleman might have been high on cocaine the morn-

Shipman, who described Tay-lor as a "very dear friend of mine," said she saw Taylor and Coleman leave the club together. "They were both being very se-cretive about something, or Ralph Coleman was being secretive and Ron was being more anx-

After the call to the BBC, Woewiyu was asked about it during an interview and said anyone who spoke with Johnson was "talking with a corpse." About the State Department report, he said, "They must have a different Johnson." Rebel officers at Taylor headquarters on the Fire-stone Rubber plantation 37 miles southeast of Monro-via said a commander named Oliver Varney led the aland Gambia have gathered in neighboring Sierra Leone, but there was no sign of an early departure. Woewiyu said Taylor would fly to Banjul, Gambia, this week to talk with President Sir Dawda Jawara, head

of the African mediation committee trying to end the civil war, which began Dec. 24. That seemed likely to delay arrival of the peacekeepers.

Intervention without the approval of the National Patriotic Front "would be a mistake," Woewiyu told the Associated Press. "We will meet it with all our might

Johnson, 31, was among original rebels who invaded Liberia from Ivory Coast before Christmas, say rebel

Government still sends checks to deceased vets

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Department of Veterans Affairs has paid benefits to more than 1,200 deceased veterans, including about 100 dead a decade or more, the General Accounting Office says. The agency pegs the potential annual loss due

port death to VA in a timely manner, substantial erroneous payments can result."

The agency said the department has relied on voluntary reporting of deaths as a basis for ending benefits. But investigators said the Social further, receiving reports of deaths from many sources and buying death certificate information from states

GREENVILLE, S.C. (AP) - A jury is once again preparing to deliberate on whether former Dallas Cowboys linebacker Ralph Donnell Coleman is guilty of

murder. The prosecution and defense finished presenting their cases Tuesday afternoon. Both are scheduled to make closing arguments Wednesday before the jury begins its deliberations. Coleman, 39, was originally tried, found guilty of murder and sentenced to life in prison in March 1988 for the June 1987 beating death of a Greenville nightclub bouncer, Ronald Morgan Taylor. The verdict was overturned by the state Supreme Court, which ruled that the trial judge erred in allowing certain testimony and that a portion of the prosecutor's closing argument unfairly preju-diced Coleman's right to a fair trial

as it gets there, you have to resuppl right away," said Duane Cassidy, retired four-star general who unt last year commanded the United States Transportation Command, the logistical arm of the military.

"This operation is something n one else in the world can do. Nobod else knows how to do it or practice it," said Cassidy, now a vice presi-dent for CSX Corp., a transport-tion company in Richmond, Va.

The Pentagon refused to specif which air carriers are involved. But Cassidy estimated 90 percent of the troops and 50 percent of the cargo are being flown on commercial air-

aylor's a liar! I am alive!" - Prince Johnson, Liberian rebel

their campaign against Doe. Since then, each has threatened to kill the other.

an attack from a swamp north of the city several weeks ago that caught Doe's troops by surprise. They took

over the port area and several residential districts

Johnson's men have held Monrovia since launching

An African peacekeeping force appeared Tuesday to

be meeting further delays. Troops from Ghana, Nigeria, Guinea, Sierra Leone

Ivory Coast, by telephone that Johnson was killed on Bushrod Island while trying to leave Monrovia. He said Johnson's body had been taken to Taylor headquarters and would be shown to reporters. and force Taylor and Johnson fell out three months ago in sources and his friends.

via said a commander named Oliver Varney led the al-Woewiyu, who speaks for Taylor's National Patriotic Front, told reporters in Abidjan, capital of neighboring

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Auditors for the congressional investigating agency said the department could have reduced the erroneous payments by matching VA benefit payment files with death information maintained by the Social

Security Administration. the GAO's findings, said it now in-**Professional Computing**

\$5.7 million.

tends to follow that procedure. "We found that in April 1989 VA paid compensation or benefit payments for 1,212 veterans whom Social Security Administration records reported had died at least four months earlier," the GAO said in a report to the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee

"About 100 had been dead 10 years or more.

The Veterans Affairs Department pays out more than \$14.7 billion a year in disability compensation and pension benefits to more than 2.8 million veterans and nearly 1 million the states. surviving spouses and other dependents

The GAO said that while benefits should be ended when a beneficiary dies, "if surviving relatives or other knowledgeable persons do not reFederal agencies such as the VA are authorized to obtain this information, the GAO said.

The congressional agency said The department, agreeing with that by matching VA's benefit pay-e GAO's findings, said it now in- ment file with Social Security files containing information on 39 mil-lion deaths "we identified 1,212 veterans who were reported dead as of December 1988.

The GAO said it first found 1,065 veterans that Social Security data showed were dead but who were still receiving VA benefits.

"Erroneous payments to these veterans' accounts could amount to \$5.1 million annually," it said.

The GAO said it then matched the VA payment file with a Social Sec curity file containing about 450,000 death certificates purchased from

That search added an additional 147 deceased veterans whose bank accounts were continuing to receive payments. The GAO said it estimated these erroneous payments at \$638,000

At the time, Solicitor Joe Wat-son called Coleman's "the most circumstantial case I've ever had.'

Monday, a customer at The Pits lounge the night Taylor was killed testified that Coleman was with the bouncer just before the 5 a.m. closing time.

"He was sweating profusely, his eyes were wide open, and he was gritting and grinding his teeth back and forth," testified Teresa Shipman, as she described ious than anything," she said. As the two men walked out, Taylor was saying, "Come on, show me,' or 'Let me see it,' " she said.

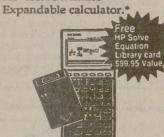
A pathologist testified Monday that Taylor, 44, suffered "massive brain trauma" from several blows to the head.

His body was found on the side of the street behind the lounge about 6 a.m. His wallet was missing and his pockets had been turned inside out, Sgt. Frank C. Ward testified.

Prosecutors in the first trial emphasized Coleman's large size and athletic prowess, claiming he used a softball bat to kill Taylor.

Partee has argued that the two were close friends and Coleman had no motive for killing him.

During the first trial, Coleman was acquitted of an armed robbery charge and he cannot be retried for that.



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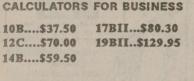
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Philadelphia faces economic problems

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The nation's fifth-largest city faces a cash crunch that could add another junkbond rating to its debt, hold up city employees' paychecks and force an emergency tax hike.

The administration of Mayor W. Wilson Goode is preparing to bor-row as much as \$450 million in temporary loan notes, but critics say that won't ensure it can meet payroll through May 1991.

Without major corrections, the \$2.1 billion general fund budget could have a \$200 million deficit by June 30, the end of the fiscal year, City Controller Jonathan A. Saidel said

Asked if the city could wind up in default, he said, "If everything stays the same and no one cares and we

don't as a city face the tough deci-sions ves. I refuse to allow that to Moody's Investor Services Inc.

happen." City Councilman John F. Street, chairman of the council's Appropriations Committee, said he also doubted the city would end up in default.

"I think it will all get straightened out before the end of May," he said. "But I don't think it would ever get straightened out unless you had at least the threat of a crisis."

Standard & Poor's Corp. placed the city's \$1.3 billion outstanding debt on "credit watch" Monday, meaning it could drop below invest-ment-grade level. The rating agency in lune reduced the city's bords to in June reduced the city's bonds to the lowest level recommended to investors and the lowest of any major

lowered the city's rating to junk-bond level in June. The ratings million from an illegal 1988 real-er mean the city must pay higher interest to attract investors

Goode stonewalled reporters' questions on the fiscal dilemma uesday. His spokeswoman, Karen Warrington, said the mayor would comment when a report on the notes has been prepared by bond underwriters. It is expected no earlier than Thursday.

Street said an emergency sales tax increase could be considered if Wall Street refused to buy the \$450 million in temporary notes. But he said he was optimistic the notes could be sold and an emergency tax averted.

Tax revenues have been sluggish, for Standard and Poor's.

police last week won a \$20 million pay and benefits increase and courts tate transfer tax.

The city of 1.6 million also has contended it pays too much for state-mandated services to children the mentally ill and retarded. Law suits and political opposition have stymied attempts to raise taxes and make the state pay for local courts.

"It's a legitimate argument, bu they have to deal with the fact that they're not getting what they believ they should get from the state an federal governments," said Hyma C. Grossman, a managing directo

Dianne C holds Ger