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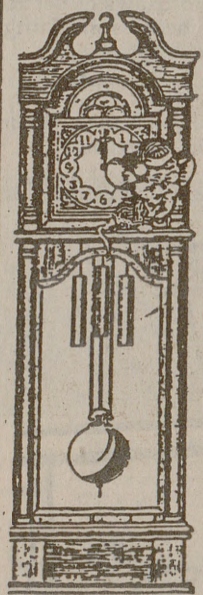


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NEWS BRIEFS

Baker to remain secretary of state

WASHINGTON (AP) — James A. Baker III will remain secretary of state "for some time" and reports that he will step aside to help with President Bush's campaign are nonsense, the State Department's No. 2 official said Sunday.



Baker

"I will wager you that, for some time to come, I will be the deputy secretary of state and Jim Baker will be the secretary," Lawrence Eagleburger said on the ABC-TV program "This Week With David Brinkley."

When a questioner suggested the time period could mean three weeks, approximately the time until the Republican National Convention, Eagleburger shot back, "A lot longer than that."

He said it was "at least highly possible" that Baker would not be moving to the campaign as reported.

"I happen to believe that Jim Baker will stay as secretary of state for some long period of time to come, and the Middle East is one obvious reason for that," Eagleburger said.

"All of this speculation, which Jim has himself tried to put to rest on this trip, I think is a bunch of nonsense," he said.

Bush, asked about Eagleburger's remarks after returning to the White House from a Camp David weekend, said, "I have no comments on that subject."

Baker was returning Sunday night from a trip to the Middle East. Eagleburger was acting secretary in his absence.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is scheduled to visit Washington shortly before the GOP convention, and Eagleburger said there are also meetings on the Middle East

scheduled for late August in Washington.

Bush's campaign press secretary, Torie Clarke, could not be reached for comment on Eagleburger's remarks.

The New York Times reported last week that Baker would resign shortly after the Rabin visit to run the president's re-election campaign. The newspaper quoted Bush administration officials and Republican political strategists.

Bush's son offers campaign advice

WASHINGTON (AP) — He has no campaign title. But his name is George W. Bush and when he talks, people at the Bush-Quayle campaign listen.



Bush

"Nobody blows off anything George Junior says," one Republican official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. But campaign aides are quick to dispel any notion they are merely pandering to the president's eldest son because of who he is.

They say he is a quick study, with astute political instincts that would merit attention anyway.

"He is the No. 1 trouble shooter, the No. 1 political antenna, the No. 1 confidant of his father, the No. 1 problem fixer," said Mary Matalin, a top Bush campaign political strategist who works closely with the younger Bush. "He sits in on whatever he wants to. . . He knows everything we're doing."

Bush's 46-year-old son — not officially a "Junior" because his name is George Walker Bush and his father is George Herbert Walker Bush — is considered his father's "eyes and ears" at the campaign.

Indeed, he was among those who helped to organize his father's re-election team, and

many on the top campaign staff owe their positions at least in part to him.

Beyond that, "Junior," as he is known to the political operatives, is viewed as a strong political strategist in his own right.

"He knows people all over the country. He's got a good sense of what's going on out there. . . He functions just like the others who are the principal strategists," said Bush campaign adviser Charlie Black.

Loophole delays plant inspections

HOUSTON (AP) — Unions and safety observers say a loophole in federal regulations allows manufacturing plants time to fix hazards before the Occupational Safety and Health Administration can even make an initial investigation of the site.

Federal law generally forbids the OSHA from notifying companies of an upcoming inspection. OSHA can give up to 24 hours' notice in unusual circumstances — to ensure the presence of a company representative or schedule an inspection after regular work hours.

But OSHA's day-to-day operating policies permit the agency to delay inspections up to five days while a company summons key employees or while inspectors prepare to take samples, according to OSHA's operating manual. The agency's policy statement does not consider it advance notice unless the delay extends beyond five days.

"No question that anyone who provides advance notice should be shot at sunrise," said Joseph Kinney, executive director of the National Safe Workplace Institute in Chicago, a non-profit group that studies health and safety programs.

"Can you imagine if the DEA (Drug Enforcement Agency) had to wait five days to raid a crack house? Or the FBI had to wait five days to go after kidnapers?" he asked.

Astronauts plan to try out satellite

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — Seven astronauts due to leave Earth on Friday will follow in the kite-flying footsteps of Benjamin Franklin by testing a satellite on string — 12 miles of electricity conducting string.

The satellite will be unreeled from the space shuttle Atlantis and fly overhead for 30 hours. The cord between the half-ton satellite and 100-ton shuttle — just one-tenth of an inch in diameter — expected to generate 5,000 volts of electricity as the craft hurtles through Earth's magnetic field.

NASA said the 12-mile formation, traveling at nearly 5 miles per second, will be the longest structure ever flown in space.

"This is all one big physics experiment, and we're in the middle of it," said astronaut Jeffrey Hoffman, the payload commander.

"I'm practicing with kites so I can learn as much as I can about having something flying up in space above us kept up by a tether," said crewman Franco Malerba, who will be the first Italian to fly in space.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration flight director consider the seven-day mission to be the most complex in shuttle history.

Nevertheless, they insist the experiment is safe and that the satellite won't crash into the shuttle like a wrecking ball.

Among the possibilities, if the experiment works: using tethers one day to build a space elevator between Earth and a station 22,300 miles up like the one in the science fiction novel "The Fontaines of Paradise" by Arthur C. Clarke's "2001" fame.

"I figure with all of his other successes in predictions, if Arthur Clarke wrote it, probably someday it's going to happen," Hoffman said. "It's really exciting here we are making the first flight on the way to doing all this."

The countdown begins Tuesday for a 9:56 a.m. EDT Friday liftoff.

NASA plans to retrieve the satellite, called Eureka, during shuttle mission next spring.

Conservative party continues to rule in Japan

TOKYO (AP) — The conservatives who have governed Japan since the 1950s trounced the opposition once again Sunday in a nationwide parliamentary election, but jaded voters stayed away in record numbers.

Results compiled by television networks showed Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa's Liberal Democrat Party winning a majority of the 127 seats up for election in Parliament's 252-seat upper house.

Only 44 percent of Japan's 93.7 million eligible voters had cast ballots by 5:30 p.m., a half-hour before polling ended, the government reported. The public Japan Broadcasting Corp. predicted the final turnout would be 48 percent, down from the previous low of 57 percent set in 1983.

Some pundits blamed the muggy, 90-degree weather. Others blamed summer vacation travel and the opening ceremony of the Olympics. But many voters also apparently stayed away out of disgust with the scandal-plagued political system, or out of conviction that the governing party remains invincible.

Those who did vote chose overwhelmingly to stay with the Liberal Democrats.

Political analysts said the shaky economy would benefit the Liberal Democrats because voters don't want untested opposition parties to lead the country during hard times.

"Whenever there is (economic) instability, people will vote for a party that can rule," said Ichiro Ozawa, a top Liberal Democrat lawmaker.

Japan's stock and real estate markets are sagging, and many companies have announced dips in profits. Few expect the government to reach its goal of 3.5 percent growth this year.

Final official election results were not expected until Monday. By 11 p.m., the Japan Broadcasting Corp. said the Liberal Democrats won 67 of the 119 seats for which it had declared results. Other networks carried similar results.



Miyazawa

WORLD BRIEFS

Legislators elect president in India

NEW DELHI, India (AP) — Shankar Dayal Sharma, a veteran member of the governing Congress Party, on Saturday took office as president, a largely ceremonial post that becomes important in times of political uncertainty.

Sharma, 74, is widely regarded as an even-handed leader, a quality that will be tested by India's testy and fragmented political scene. The Congress Party of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao is governing without a majority in Parliament.

The president has the power to appoint a prime minister if the incumbent loses a vote of confidence in Parliament. The president also can dismiss state governments and veto legislation — although he must sign a bill if the Parliament passes it a second time.

Sharma took the oath of office at the Parliament House. Soldiers fired a 21-gun salute.

Sharma was vice president until being elected president by state and federal legislators this month. He also has been a legislator and governor of three states.

He studied at Harvard and Cambridge, where he earned a doctorate in constitutional law. He also mastered the Hindu scriptures in Sanskrit, which he speaks fluently.

Like many veteran Indian politicians, he was jailed by the British during the independence movement against the colonial rulers.

Castro cancels public celebrations

HAVANA (AP) — For the first time in 33 years, Fidel Castro has disappointed the faithful by planning no public festivities Sunday to celebrate the anniversary of the start of his revolution that ousted a right-wing dictatorship.



Castro

Castro had little choice but to cancel the annual

July 26 festivities, several political analysts say. And a dissident accused his government of trying to hide from rising popular discontent.

Cuba is suffering its worst economic problems since the 1959 revolution, struggling to raise hard currency to make up for subsidies lost from its former main trading partners in the crumbled Soviet bloc.

Castro has been forced to backtrack ideologically, allowing a new constitution that guarantees private foreign investment and overseeing a "dual economy" — one in pesos, and one with better stores and food for dollar-bearing tourists.

Back home, committed Communists said they will miss the annual pilgrimage to Havana's Plaza of the Revolution, where as many as a million people have gathered each year to hear Castro's address on the state of Cuba.

100,000 may starve in Sudan, U.N. says

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — The United Nations said Saturday that more than 100,000 people displaced by drought and war in southern Sudan are in danger of starving to death.

The U.N.'s Operation Lifeline Sudan appealed for food, and called on Sudan's warring parties to grant aid workers safe passage to the 110,000 people in need.

The 9-year-old civil war pits the Sudan People's Liberation Army, which is seeking more autonomy for the predominantly Christian and animist south, against forces of the traditionally Muslim-dominated government.

The hardships suffered by people fleeing wars have been worsened by a drought that is plaguing much of eastern Africa.

The U.N. statement said most of the displaced people are scattered in a 125-mile-long zone between the regional capital Juba and Yirol, a government-controlled town to the northwest.

Questions surround drug lord's escape

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) — The brother of fugitive drug lord Pablo Escobar has given a different account of their escape from prison than the official

version, and some observers question whether the cartel leader was even in jail at the time.

Also Saturday, the army chief said military officials and a small number of soldiers were detained on suspicion of helping Escobar escape, underlying the reach of the drug dealer's corrupting influence.

Escobar, who is accused of directing hundreds of murders on the way to building a fortune in drug money, dealt a major blow to the government with his escape. Colombian officials have been unable to counter the cocaine cartels, which are accused of shipping much of their product to the United States.

In an interview published Saturday, Roberto Escobar said he and his brother, along with eight other Medellín cartel members, feared for their lives when several hundred soldiers surrounded their mountaintop prison Tuesday.

Observing "very strange movements" around the Envisado jail, he told the Medellín newspaper, El Colombiano, they feared police — possibly in the pay of the rival Cali cocaine cartel — intended to kill them.

The Escobars requested the troops send in their commander, or the priest who had negotiated their initial surrender a year before. But no one would meet with them except the vice justice minister and the prison director, whom they took as hostages in hopes of securing their own safety, Escobar said.

He refused to say how the Escobars and their gang members escaped, except to confirm there were no tunnels.

In the interview, Roberto Escobar said that when Pablo Escobar called a radio station to falsely claim they were holed up in a tunnel, the army began bombing the jail.

On Saturday, Colombian army chief Gen. Manuel Murillo said a "sub-official and a small number of soldiers" were detained on suspicion of helping Escobar escape.

Murillo said caches of weapons have been found at the jail that apparently belonged to the escaped prisoners.

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Vol. 91 No. 18

Iraq

Bush ad

WASHINGTON is sending Patriot craft carrier to senior Pentagon following a war that Saddam comply with all the USS John off a five-day Thomas and is ward the Medit the official, who tion of anonymi sile battery — wi and "dozens" c left Germany for "They have s

Gulf Hussein

WICHITA (A people in this h community, the euphoria that followed the Persian Gulf War has frustrated reality that Saddam Hussein remains in power. "We didn't finish the job" is a common retrain.

The threat of renewed military Iraq left many pe munity uneasy. That's what we ne Van Huss, owner store.

That possibil Sunday when Sa ment agreed to pe tions inspection o ministry suspecte information on miss ological and nuc But even with th U.S. officials conti the threat of fore official, speaking anonymously, said lot of soul-search next few weeks o

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