

state/nation/world

Colombian rebels make death threats

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) — A message purporting to come from leftist rebels yesterday said one of their leaders has returned home from Libya with 100 Palestinian guerrillas to help overthrow the government "as a Christmas gift to Colombians." The telephone message said it was from the April 19 Movement, whose guerrillas seized the Palace of Justice two weeks ago and fought the army for two days in a siege that left 55 people dead. Soon after the message was received, groups of soldiers began showing up throughout this city of 6 million people, frisking civilians and hauling those without papers away in trucks. Armored cars armed with machine guns and 20mm cannons cruised the downtown area and other parts of the city. The daily newspaper 5 P.M., owned by Liberal Party politicians, said the statement purporting to come from the April 19 Movement, also known as M-19, was taped and played in a telephone call to its offices. On Nov. 6, M-19 guerrillas assaulted and occupied the Palace of Justice. The army attacked the federal court building and when the fighting was over 28 hours after the siege began, 93 persons were dead, including 11 Supreme Court justices and 53 other judges. All 35 guerrillas were killed. M-19, which professes Cuban ideology, has about 3,000 combatants, military intelligence officers said. It was founded in 1970 and, until seven years ago, had an estimated 300 fighters. Yesterday's message said the Palestinians were brought to Colombia by Rosenberg Fabon, who led an attack on the Dominican Republic Embassy in Bogota six years ago in which 17 ambassadors were taken hostage during a reception. Colombia broke diplomatic relations with Cuba in 1961, claiming Fidel Castro's army had trained and equipped about 130 M-19 field commanders and sent them back to start a revolution. Julio Cesar Turbay Ayala, who was president at the time, heads the Liberal Party group that owns 5 P.M. According to the paper, the rebel statement said M-19 has passed death sentences on the defense minister, Gen. Miguel Vega; Gen. Victor Delgado, head of the national police, and a military officer named Enrique Varon who was not identified by rank or position. The rebels also have pledged to kill Julio Cortes, owner of Sidauto, the country's largest urban bus company. Another Bogota daily, El Espectador, said soldiers and police killed four M-19 guerrillas Tuesday in Medellin, 150 miles northwest of the capital, in a shootout with 40 gunmen trying to hijack a milk truck. A policeman was reported wounded. Rebels often steal the trucks and give the milk to the poor. The April 19 Movement takes its name from the date of a presidential election in 1970 the rebels claim was fraudulent.

Soldiers burn, bury the dead

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) — Rescuers still searched the remains of Armero on yesterday but burial squads also moved in, gouging long trenches in the volcanic mud with backhoes and dumping truckloads of bodies into them. Soldiers acting on orders from health officials slogged through the muck with small cans of gasoline, dousing decaying bodies and setting them afire, shooting animals that had been feeding off the corpses. The men wore masks against the stench. Residents who had fled began returning to Marquita, nine miles to the north, and other towns that escaped major damage from the mud avalanche that flowed into the Andes valley Nov. 13 after the eruption of the Nevado del Ruiz volcano. The burial and burning of bodies was ordered to combat typhoid fever and other diseases. Health officials said yesterday that another problem is the possible spread of gas gangrene, which is highly contagious and often fatal. A few cases have been detected in people taken to hospitals after lying in the slime for days with open wounds.



Awarded for fighting apartheid. Mpho Tutu, daughter of Bishop Desmond Tutu, holds a bust of Robert F. Kennedy, which she accepted for Winnie Mandela, at an awards ceremony in Washington yesterday. Winnie Mandela was given the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award for persistent courage and effectiveness against apartheid. Mandela was not permitted to leave South Africa to accept the prize. Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., is applauding in the background.

Eight Blacks killed in tribal fighting

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (AP) — Two rival tribal groups of about 1,000 men each battled through the night with spears and clubs outside Durban, killing at least eight Blacks and wounding dozens more, police said yesterday. A police spokesman said the fighting between Zulu and Pondo tribesmen was not politically motivated. Police headquarters said Monday's official report of rioting in the small farming center of Queenstown in the eastern Cape Province mistakenly omitted the deaths of five Blacks shot by riot patrols. Including those five deaths, police have reported 16 Blacks killed since Sunday near Queenstown, 400 miles south of Johannesburg, making it one of the bloodiest riot sites in months. Durban Police Capt. Winston Heunis said two men wounded in the tribal fighting at Malagazi, just south of Durban, died in a hospital after police recovered six stabbed bodies. Zulu and Pondo groups clashed after Pondo Chief Malagazi was wounded in a stabbing Tuesday, news reports said. The two groups, who live together in the shanty community of about 20,000, have been at odds for more than a year. Heunis said there appeared to be no political motive in the fighting, and police headquarters in Pretoria did not include the clash in its summary of daily riot incidents. Battles between rival tribes and among factions within the same tribe occur periodically in Natal Province, center of the nation's 6 million Zulus. The Pondos are part of the Xhosa tribe, the nation's second-largest black group, which lives in southern Natal. The white-led government often points to such tribal infighting to bolster its argument that Blacks cannot govern the ethnically and racially divided nation. Anti-apartheid activists contend the government exacerbates tribal distinctions by giving Blacks political rights only in tribal homelands and encouraging tribal bureaucracies.

Regan's remark about women misinterpreted, president says

GENEVA (AP) — President Reagan came to the defense of his chief of staff yesterday, saying Donald Regan's remark that most women don't understand serious issues had been misinterpreted. The Reagan administration's long-standing feud with women's groups took on an international dimension after the Washington Post, in a story Monday about first lady Nancy Reagan's schedule at the summit, quoted Regan as saying of women: "They're not going to understand (missile) throw-weights or what is happening in Afghanistan or what is happening in human rights. Some women will, but most women — believe me, your readers for the most part if you took a poll — would rather read the human interest stuff of what happened." Feminists demanded an apology, calling Regan's comments unbelievable but typical of the administration's attitude toward women. The New York Times criticized Regan in an editorial, saying that "by reaching to pat the little woman on the head, Mr. Regan reveals himself to be a very little man." The traveling White House declined to comment, and Regan, through an aide, refused an opportunity to amplify or clarify his remarks in the Post. But Regan, asked by reporters about the remark, said, "I don't think he meant for it to be interpreted in that way at all. He was simply adding to that interest, that they also had an interest in children and a human touch. I think that I know his views on the entire subject better than most." Nancy Reagan said she hadn't seen the Post story. But asked whether women concerned themselves with substantive issues, she replied, "I'm sure they do." Feminist Bella Abzug, a former New York congresswoman, said Regan's remark was an insult to all women and was based on men's fear of sharing power with the other sex. "It's not true that women don't care and don't know. Women know a lot more than men want to concede," she said.

state news briefs

NASA test colors Pennsylvania skies NORFOLK, Va. (AP) — A NASA rocket experiment yesterday painted the dawn sky with green and red chemical clouds seen by early risers in Pennsylvania. "Our dog was really scared of it and wanted to come back into the house," said Barbara Rineer of Millersville, Pa. The rocket was sent up from the NASA Wallops Island Flight Center on Virginia's Eastern Shore. Joyce Milliner, a spokeswoman for the center, said scientists tracked the release of the chemicals to photograph the earth's magnetic field. "It makes an invisible phenomenon visible," she said. The experiment had to be done under clear skies at dawn or dusk when the moon was dark, she said. "Most of the calls I received were from radio and TV stations," she said. "They had received a lot of calls from the public." In Pittsburgh, several callers contacted the Buhl Planetarium for an explanation. "Our best description was that it 'started as a pinpoint in the eastern sky, exploding to a red ball like fireworks, five times the diameter of the moon, leaving two trails glowing 40 degrees off the horizon,'" said Paul Oles, director of the planetarium.

nation news briefs

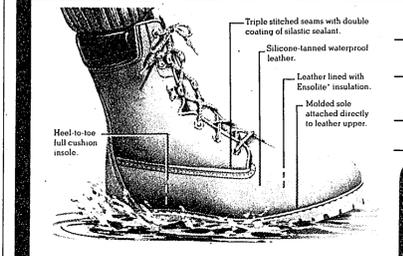
Whereabouts of senator unknown COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — A 23-year veteran of the state Senate hasn't been seen in public since July, and when she failed to show up for this week's legislative sessions some of her friends at the Ohio Statehouse got worried. Sen. Margie Valquette "has been missing from the Senate, and I haven't seen her for months," said state Sen. Oliver Ocasak. "She's a very dear friend of mine and I wish she would come back. I don't have any leads, and I'm getting a little bit concerned." Even the Toledo Democrat's secretary, Shari Josephs, claims not to know Valquette's whereabouts. Josephs told The Blade of Toledo that she has no telephone number for the senator and does not know where she lives. Valquette, 61, has no legislative aides. "I really can't tell you anything," Josephs said yesterday. Asked if she thought Valquette was all right, she said, "I don't know that, but I'm sure she is." Police in Columbus and Toledo said Valquette had not been reported missing, but colleagues say they have not seen her in Columbus since July, when the General Assembly broke for the summer. Her last public appearance in Toledo was in May 1984, when she attended a dinner for a local union official. State Rep. Barney Quilter said Valquette called him Sept. 19 to say she would miss an event in Toledo which he had said she would attend. Because Republicans have a three-vote majority in the 33-member Senate, Valquette's absence has not affected any bills in the fifth day. Tom Smith, an aide to the state Senate's Democratic caucus, said Valquette was present for 95 percent of the votes in the Senate last year, making her about average among state senators. The senate clerk's office has no home telephone number for Valquette and lists only a post office box as her Toledo address. Democratic leaders of the Senate also do not know how to reach her. "We never knew in Columbus where she did live," Ocasak said. "She had different places, different homes. She would never tell us." Valquette lived in Toledo with her mother for many years before her mother died in 1980, colleagues say. Since then, she has spent most of her time in Columbus. The county now is trying to foreclose on the Toledo home because of \$1,921 in unpaid taxes. Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicle records show Valquette's address in Toledo as the home of a longtime friend and campaign worker, Mary Jane Gill. Gill told the Toledo newspaper she did not know where Valquette was.

Gulf Coast prepares for Kate PENSACOLA, Fla. (AP) — Storm-wary residents of the Upper Gulf Coast braced yesterday for Hurricane Kate, which battered Cuba for 16 hours with its 115 mph wind and blacked out much of the Florida Keys as it charged northward into the Gulf of Mexico. Forecasters said a Gulf weather buoy buffeted by the storm yesterday recorded 135 mph gusts. Gov. Bob Graham declared a state of emergency in 12 counties along Florida's northern Gulf Coast, including eight coastal counties in the panhandle, where Graham recommended the evacuation of residents in low-lying areas. The storm killed up to 10 people in Cuba. "It's a here-we-go-again kind of a deal," said Joe Hunt, an Okaloosa County Civil Defense spokesman at Shalimar on Florida's Panhandle. Low-lying areas of the Peninsula were evacuated twice when Elena approached in September and residents were prepared to evacuate again last month before Juan veered into Louisiana. "We just wonder if somebody isn't picking on us," said Plaquemines Sheriff's Deputy Eddie Nolan in southeast Louisiana, where people were still recovering from high water and damages left by Juan, that state's third hurricane this year. Forecasters at the National Hurricane Center in Coral Gables, near Miami, said Kate could be near the coast by late today.

world news briefs

MIA searchers find pieces of planes YEN THUONG, Vietnam (AP) — U.S. and Vietnamese workers yesterday found more pieces of a U.S. airplane the government says is a B-52 that crashed in a rural garden 13 years ago. Human bone fragments were found earlier, but it has not been determined whether they are the remains of American airmen. The pieces of metal and fabric-like material put the joint excavation team closer to confirming the Vietnamese report that an American bomber with four airmen aboard crashed after it was struck by missiles in December 1972. However, U.S. military experts at the site nine miles from Hanoi said they could not yet draw any firm conclusions from the bone fragments nor determine if the plane was a B-52. Sgt. Randall Nash of the Army's Central Identification Laboratory said the wreckage included wire, aluminum and pieces of the lining of fuel tanks. Stencilled on one piece was the English word "fuel." But he said it was too early to say what kind of aircraft it was because the items are common to many different kinds of aircraft. Col. Joe Harvey, head of the U.S. team, said he had inspected the bone fragments found Tuesday and determined they were human remains, but "we can't (conclude) anything more about them so far." U.S. experts said yesterday they had collected about 18 bone fragments, but added they could be Vietnamese and not American. The excavation by 10 Vietnamese and 12 Americans is the first joint effort to account for the 1,797 Americans listed as missing in action from the Vietnam War. Maj. Johnie Webb of the Army laboratory said he did not know if the excavation at this agricultural commune of 500 people would be completed by Nov. 30 as scheduled. "We think we're making good progress," he said. The excavation began Tuesday with workers using a 7.5-ton tractor flown in by the Americans to dig in the garden of 60-year-old Nguyen Thi Tho, who says her husband and son were killed when the bomber crashed. The Americans said they may have to take down Nguyen's brick house since many pieces of wreckage were found under the corner of the garden next to it. One house used as a kitchen was demolished earlier to get the tractor into the garden.

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