

Syria withdraws some troops from border

AMMAN, Jordan (AP) — Syria and Jordan agreed on terms easing the tense situation between the two countries Tuesday and Syria immediately withdrew some of its troops from the border.

Jordanian officials, who declined to be identified, said Syria withdrew as a gesture of good faith an unspecified number of troops from the 50,000 it reportedly had deployed at the border. Jordan was reported earlier to have sent 30,000 troops to the border.

The officials said the terms, proposed by Syria, were:

• A written statement by Jordan saying it was not aiding the Moslem Brotherhood, a fanatical group engaged in anti-government activities in Syria.

• Jordan's continued recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole representative of the Palestinian people.

The terms were relayed by Saudi Arabia's deputy premier, Prince Abdullah bin Abdel Aziz, who conferred with Jordan's King Hussein in Amman Tuesday following two days of talks in Damascus with

Syrian President Hafez Assad.

The officials said Hussein had no trouble accepting the terms because he had denied publicly Syrian allegations that he was supporting the Moslem Brotherhood. He also had never withdrawn his recognition of the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people since he accepted it at the 1976 Arab summit in Rabat, they said.

Political observers in Amman saw the submission of the conditions as a face-saving device by the Syrians to facilitate the defusing of the crisis they started last month with a massive troop buildup on the border.

The observers saw Hussein's acceptance as a goodwill gesture toward Syria, since they were merely a restatement of positions he had expressed previously.

Earlier in the day, Syria ratified a 20-year friendship treaty with the Soviet Union that made Syria the closest Soviet ally in the Middle East. The treaty calls for consultation between the two nations if either is threatened and for cooperation to consolidate their

Ratified documents of the accord were exchanged in Damascus by Soviet Vice President Vasily V. Kuznetsov and Syrian Prime Minister Abdul Raouf al-Kassab.

Syria's official newspaper *Tichrin* accused Jordan of seeking to "steal the right of the Palestine Liberation Organization to represent the Palestinians." It also accused Jordan of trying to join with the United States and Israel to find a substitute for the stalemated U.S.-sponsored Camp David process.

The Saudis, whose oil money finances much of Syria's and Jordan's armament budgets to confront Israel, undertook a mediator's role because of the prospect of having their aid recipients turning their guns against each other.

Jordan abuts northern Saudi Arabia. Well-informed Mideast sources said the Saudis also had offered the Jordanian king the use of their air bases, four of which are only 300 miles south of Amman, to shelter his small air force against a possible Syrian attack.

News In Brief

Interest rates spiral upward

NEW YORK (AP) — Major banks nationwide raised their prime lending rates to 18.5 percent Tuesday, adding momentum to an interest-rate spiral that many economists believe may soon plunge the nation into another recession.

Led by Chase Manhattan Bank, the nation's third largest, banks from coast to coast boosted their prime rates from the 17.75 percent level set only last Wednesday.

At 18.5 percent, the prime rate stands at its highest point since early May, when it was beginning to fall from an early April peak of 20 percent. Some economists believe the prime could again break the 20-percent mark by year's end.

Even without further increases, however, the sharp increase in rates over the past month seems likely to slow the nation's recovery from recession. Some economists believe another recession is inevitable as businesses cut production and employment amid rising borrowing costs.

Reagan continues Cabinet search

WASHINGTON (AP) — President-elect Ronald Reagan has offered Cabinet jobs to at least eight people, with Alexander M. Haig Jr. the likely choice for secretary of state and New York banker Walter B. Wriston the top pick for treasury secretary, sources said Tuesday.

Among others said to be in line for top posts are: Caspar Weinberger, budget director under Richard Nixon, for Defense or Treasury; William French Smith, Reagan's personal attorney, for Attorney General; and William Casey, Reagan's campaign manager, Defense or head of the CIA, the sources said.

However, the sources stressed that the list of top officials for the incoming Reagan team was still in doubt because competition continued for some spots and some of the top choices might spurn offers.

It was not clear which of the candidates for the 15 Cabinet-level jobs had been contacted by Reagan. Those chosen will head 13 Cabinet agencies and the Central Intelligence Agency and Office of Management and Budget.

The sources added that the president-elect was having considerable trouble finding a woman for the Cabinet after Anne Armstrong, former ambassador to Great Britain, withdrew from consideration last week.

Kennedy picks labor committee

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sen. Edward M. Kennedy has decided to serve as the senior minority member of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee in the next Congress, Senate sources said Tuesday.

Kennedy decided to accept that post rather than serve as ranking Democrat on the Judiciary Committee, which he has chaired the past two years.

When Republicans take over in January as the majority party in the Senate, Sen. Strom Thurmond of South Carolina will replace Kennedy as Judiciary Committee chairman. It has been widely assumed Kennedy would take over Thurmond's spot as the ranking minority member of that panel.

But the Massachusetts senator decided instead to concentrate on the labor committee, which will be chaired by Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah.

The labor committee has jurisdiction over employment legislation and other matters that were key issues in Kennedy's unsuccessful campaign for the 1980 Democratic presidential nomination.

Deliberations begin in Abscam trial

NEW YORK (AP) — Jury deliberations began Tuesday in the Abscam bribery-conspiracy trial of Reps. Frank Thompson Jr., D-N.J., and John M. Murphy, D-N.Y., accused of sharing bribes in return for promising to assist federal Arab banks in immigration matters.

A Brooklyn jury of eight men and four women began considering the five-count indictment after U.S. District Judge George C. Pratt issued nearly three hours of instructions.

Christopher explains U.S. reply to Iranian demands

There was no indication how long Christopher would remain here nor of the contents of the message he carried. But in Washington, U.S. officials said it reflected no change in the basic position relayed by Christopher three weeks ago.

"It is an attempt to respond fully to the Iranian request for clarification of certain aspects of our position," said the official, who requested he not be identified.

On Nov. 2, the Iranian Parliament laid down four conditions it demanded the U.S. government meet before the Americans are released: pledging non-interference in Iranian affairs, abrogating all U.S. lawsuits against Iran, releasing \$8 billion in Iranian assets impounded in U.S. banks and returning the wealth of the late Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.

"We cannot commit the next administration to a course of action," said State Department spokesman John Tattler, who added that Reagan had made it clear he approved of the current approach to the crisis.

Reagan has said it would be foolish for the Iranians to think they would get better treatment by waiting until he takes office.

Meanwhile, Hashemi Rafsanjani, speaker of Iran's parliament, reiterated earlier statements from Iranian officials that Tehran did not contemplate a trade of the hostages for military equipment to use in the 72-day-old war with Iraq, Tehran radio reported.

"There is no connection between the release of the 52 hostages and the purchase of American spare parts. The two have nothing to do with each other," the radio quoted him as telling a Western radio reporter in Tehran.

Baker elected Senate majority leader

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republican senators today chose Howard H. Baker Jr. as their leader for the next two years, a decision that automatically will make him top man in the Senate that convenes next January.

Baker, a 14-year Senate veteran from Tennessee with a reputation as a moderate, pledged swiftly to help President-elect Ronald Reagan fulfill the commitments he made during his campaign.

Flanked by other members of the new GOP leadership and his wife, Joy, Baker told a news conference there will be a "high level of something that has not existed since 1954."

He said he had encouraged Reagan to submit his economic programs to Congress promptly, including a new blueprint for federal spending and anticipated tax cut proposals.

Baker said he hoped the Senate would pass fewer laws than it has in recent years and predicted the new, more conservative Senate would take a brand new look at almost every federal activity.

Baker was elected Republican leader without opposition at a private caucus of the holdover and newly elected GOP

senators who will give their party a majority next year for the first time in 26 years.

Sen. Ted Stevens of Alaska won another term as Republican whip, the No. 2 job in the party hierarchy, also without opposition. Sen. John Tower of Texas won a new term as head of the GOP policy committee and Sen. Jake Garn of Utah was re-elected secretary of the caucus.

Sen. Strom Thurmond of South Carolina was designated to become Senate president pro tempore, replacing retiring Sen. Warren G. Magnuson, D-Wash.

Sen. Robert Packwood of Oregon was picked unanimously to head the GOP Senatorial Campaign Committee after Sen. Bob Dole of Kansas withdrew at the last minute.

In the only contested race, Sen. James A. McClure, a conservative from Idaho, defeated moderate Sen. John Heinz of Pennsylvania, 33-20, for the right to lead the Republican conference, or caucus, for the next two years. Both McClure and Baker said ideology played no part in the election.

The Republicans held their private meeting in an ornate chamber that served as the Senate meeting place from 1810 to 1859 and is restored to its appearance during the 1850s.

Leash

Although most dog owners speaking at the Nov. 24 hearing agreed the town needed to be able to issue citations for problem dogs, they, and UNC students with dogs on campus surveyed later, disagreed with the leash requirement.

Riley Wilson, who amused council members at the hearing with his anecdotes about his daughter's dog, President Carter, said, "I support everything said tonight about better enforcement of the laws we already have, but I'm opposed to the leash part of the ordinance. I think it limits my freedom to own a dog."

Students interviewed Tuesday also worried about hardships that might be imposed if they were required to restrain their "quad dogs" while they were in class.

Of her waist-high, 95-pound, part-Boxer "puppy," UNC senior Phyllis Elliott said, "I can leave him outside in the quad during class and when I come out I just whistle and he comes. He doesn't bother people."

Another student, who had her smaller dog on a leash, said she felt requiring restraint for all dogs was unnecessary.

UNC senior Greg Ingram also stopped to talk about his high-spirited black

Labrador in the pit Tuesday afternoon.

"This (new ordinance) is just because a few people got really irate about a few dogs. All dogs, the good dogs, shouldn't have to be held responsible for a few bad ones."

At that moment, Zeus dashed off to chase and bark at a food service employee returning from a coffee break. As she backed up against the new library site, Ingram called sharply and the dog returned.

"He has a thing about people in uniform," Ingram said, somewhat sheepishly. "He just barks, though; he doesn't bite."

"Citizens of all ages have the right to walk the streets," said E. Willis Brooks, who complained of constant harassment by dogs when he jogs in his Landerwood Lane neighborhood. "I've called the police, but the officer I spoke to told me just to avoid the areas where dogs are threatening. Then he joked that the particular dog I complained about was better known than many Chapel Hill citizens. This shouldn't be allowed to happen."

Vote on the proposed new leash law is tentatively scheduled for next Monday's council agenda.

Law signed protecting the Alaskan wilderness

WASHINGTON (AP) — With a call for renewed commitment to protecting the nation's natural resources, President Carter signed into law Tuesday legislation protecting more than 100 million acres of Alaska's forests, mountains and tundra.

The president called the Alaska measure one of the most important pieces of conservation legislation in the history of the country.

"With this bill we are acknowledging that Alaska's wilderness areas are truly this country's crown jewels, and that Alaska's resources are treasures of another sort. How to tap those resources is a challenge we can now face in the decade ahead," he said.

A major dispute over the bill involved access to Alaska's oil and gas, and Carter said financial pressures and the need for energy resources must not be allowed to "interfere with these efforts to enhance the quality of our lives."

"Every time we dig out minerals or drill wells or ignore erosion or destroy sand dunes and dam a wild river or dump garbage or create pollution, we are changing the living Earth," he said.

"We cannot afford to look at the immediate financial profits and ignore the long-term costs of misusing the environment."

Reporters were not allowed to approach the villa and neither delegation made any comment on the talks. Algeria has been acting as a go-between at the request of Tehran, which has repeatedly refused direct talks with the United States.

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