

World and Nation

Westward flight causes international traffic jam

From Associated Press reports
SCHIRNDING, West Germany — Thousands of young East German refugees rolled into West Germany at the rate of more than 100 an hour Sunday causing a traffic jam that stretched several miles back into Czechoslovakia.

"The people will keep fleeing as long as they can," said Christian Schreiber, a 23-year-old East German who joined countrymen taking advantage of the new freedom to escape their communist homeland through Czechoslovakia.

Driving their sputtering Trabants and

Wartburgs filled with stereos, luggage and children, the refugees needed to travel only 15 miles from the East German border to reach West Germany.

At least 15,000 East Germans had arrived in West Germany via Czechoslovakia by Sunday, West German border officials said. They came by special trains from Prague or drove their own cars to the border after learning of the new escape route. Schirnding was the closest border crossing for those using the new route.

The refugees ignored pleas by new Communist Party leader Egon Krenz to remain in East Germany and scoffed at his promises of reforms. So far this year, about 170,000 people have left seeking freedom in the West.

"People just don't trust the government," said Schreiber, a dental technician from Staaken outside East Berlin. He and his wife and son had been waiting seven hours in the cold and had a long wait still to go.

"How long will they keep coming? That you have to ask Mr. Krenz!" said Uwe Luethje, the federal border police duty chief Sunday afternoon.

"You can see how patient these people have been," Luethje added. "They learn that from waiting in lines for so long outside shops."

On Friday, Communist officials in East Berlin agreed to allow neighboring Czechoslovakia to open its frontier for East Germans seeking to go West. East Germany on Wednesday lifted its month-old ban on travel to Czechoslovakia, the only country East Germans can visit freely.

Conservative Greek party may lose needed majority

From Associated Press reports
ATHENS, Greece — The conservative New Democracy Party seized the lead in national elections Sunday but tight parliamentary races indicated it might not get the majority needed to rule after eight years of socialist government.

With 66.2 percent of the votes counted, New Democracy led by Constantine Mitsotakis had 46.9 percent.

It was followed by former Premier Andreas Papandreu's Panhellenic Socialist Movement with 40.5 percent and the Coalition of the Left and Progress, led by Communist Harilaos Florakis, with 10.5 percent, according to official returns broadcast by state television. The rest went to small parties.

Civil rights monument unveiled

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — A generation after Medgar Evers and Martin Luther King were killed, the nation's first memorial to martyrs of the civil rights movement was unveiled Sunday as relatives expressed hope that young people will carry on the spirit of that turbulent era.

Several people cried as they touched the cool water that flows across a circular black granite slab engraved with important events of the era, including the names of 40 people who died in the struggle for racial equality.

The memorial is of the same material and by the same architect as the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington.

"I hope this will vitalize the struggle, keep it fresh in the minds ... for the youth," said Ollie Gordon, a Chicago schoolteacher whose cousin, 14-year-old Emmett Till, was shot to death in 1955 by whites angered that he had spoken to a white woman.

"I talk about Martin Luther King and ask why we celebrate his birthday, and many children don't know," Gordon said.

More than 400 law enforcement officers provided security for the dedication ceremony to be held after relatives viewed the monument.

News in Brief

Anti-U.S. rally backfires

TEHRAN, Iran — Radicals' efforts to turn the 10th anniversary of the U.S. Embassy seizure into a show of strength backfired badly, indicating widening support for President Hashemi Rafsanjani.

The 10,000 to 15,000 who turned up for a rally outside the former embassy Saturday is an insignificant number in Iran, where attendance at such protests is usually counted in the hundreds of thousands.

The failure of the rally to develop into a massive anti-U.S. demonstration was all the more telling since it had been preceded by a week of radical exhortations for people to mark the anniversary "more splendidly than ever."

Iranians had been urged to turn the event into "a day of hatred for world arrogance led by the United States" to hail the Nov. 4, 1979 storming of the embassy by militants.

Plans for peace progress

KLEIAT, Lebanon — Lebanese lawmakers Sunday elected a new Christian president and approved a peace plan designed to end 14 years of civil war, despite threats by a Christian general to punish them for "conspiracy."

Parliament elected deputy Rene Mouawad, a 32-year veteran of Lebanese politics and a 64-year-old Maronite Christian. Legislators first stripped the president of some power, giving more authority to Moslem leaders.

Fifty-two of Parliament's 73 surviving lawmakers voted for Mouawad in a second ballot of the special session. Six members abstained.

Lebanon has had no president since Sept. 22, 1988, when President Amin Gemayel's six-year term expired with Parliament unable to decide on a successor.

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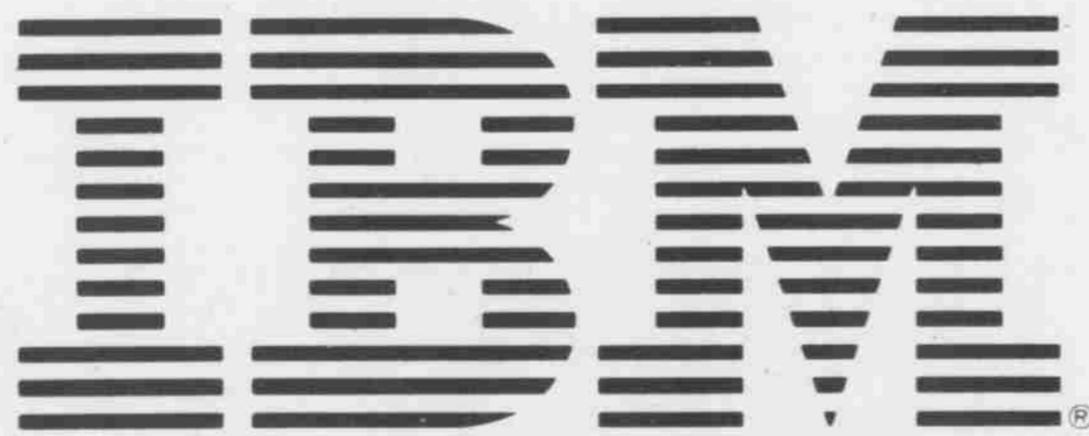
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