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news briefs

Middle East talks planned

WASHINGTON (UPI) — The foreign ministers of Israel, Syria, Egypt and Jordan will come to Washington next month for a resumption of the Middle East talks, diplomatic sources said Monday, with the White House taking direct part in attempts to break the deadlock over reconvening the Geneva Middle East conference.

Concorde flight delayed

NEW YORK (UPI) — Test flights of the Concorde supersonic jetliner at Kennedy Airport, expected to begin early next month, were put off Monday until late September at the earliest.

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Staff photo by Joseph Thomas

Yevgeny Vertlib, UNC instructor and Soviet dissident, discusses Russian literature with friend Barbara Cowles.

Vertlib

The dissident movement in the Soviet Union actually dates back to the 1920s when different opposition groups were struggling against the bureaucratic tendencies led by Stalin. After the followers of the Communist militants such as Trotsky were wiped out by Stalin, the dissident movement did not resurface until the mid-1950s, when Krushchev made his famous speech denouncing the crimes of Stalin.

Vertlib reflected on that period. "I was a very little boy when Stalin died in 1953. Everybody cried at that time, everybody. In the generation after Lenin there were far fewer skeptics than now in the Soviet Union. Patriotism was still strong. Stalin was a symbol of the country and the party, and everyone was still for the party. Also, Stalin lowered prices on many things after the war, which was very popular."

"With the public denunciation of Stalin,

the Russian people thought this to be a sign of better times and liberalization. But they were deceived and it all got turned around eventually. But before that, Krushchev gave Solzhenitsyn access to the public archives on the Stalin period."

Kruschev, Vertlib said, "was a stock character — typical of many to be found in the Soviet bureaucracy, and in Russian literature, for that matter."

Access to diverse sources of information is obviously restricted within the Soviet Union, even for dissidents, through many proscribed works are circulated secretly, in samizdat. Thus it seems to some people that dissidents have been much more concerned with internal conditions of the Soviet Union than with events in the world at large, even when they analyze such external events.

Vertlib disagreed with this point of view: "No. They are concerned with all humanity, with problems all over the world. For example with Chile, the Soviet people were concerned with Allende's government being overthrown. They were very much against the post-Allende government of Pinochet, because they were told that it represents fascism.... I don't know whether it represents fascism or not. That's not my business."

I asked Vertlib if he thought the majority of the Soviet people supported the existing system. He took a swallow of beer and mulled over the problem.

"Well, not really. They put up with it more or less, but the difference comes when there's a major crisis like war or an invasion when it's necessary to defend the homeland — then, it doesn't matter. Dissidents, party members, everybody, they go to fight the enemy. They do follow the government if Russia is threatened. There is one big Russian heart, and everybody has a Russian heart."

Nietzsche said something to the effect that war is the hygiene of mankind — it clears out the weak, the crippled, the deadwood, etc. Dissidence is acceptable in peacetime, but in time of war it becomes a threat, a weakness, and so it disappears during the way and resurfaces later in peace."

We concluded the interview and I prepared to take Vertlib back to his dorm room. As we drove back, Vertlib's religious inclination reappeared. He asked me if I believed in a Supreme Being, and I replied in the negative. "But you believe in something, don't you?" he persisted.

"Yes, of course," I said. He seemed satisfied. "That's good. Everyone needs to believe in something."

Crowded office, lack of money don't deter enthusiasm, success of UNC speech team

By MARY GARDNER

Staff Writer

Up on the second floor of Bingham, there's a room about the size of a walk-in closet. A deflated inner tube hangs from the coat rack behind the door. A box on a shelf inside reads "bitchbitchbitchbitchbitchbitch."

A sign on the door implores "wipe your

feet, this room is neat," and another sign admits that the room belongs to the UNC Individual Events Speech Team.

The team, commonly known as the I.E. Team, reflects the hodgepodge of the office. It consists of about 30 undergrads from various majors who have a common interest in speechmaking. But only three or four members last year were speech majors, said David Hopkins, a sophomore member, and

joining the team requires no previous experience. "I did individual events in high school, but a lot of our people have no experience prior to competing in college," Hopkins said.

"Individual events" refers to the various categories that a member may compete in during a tournament. These categories include oral interpretation of prose or poetry, impromptu speeches, persuasive speeches, informative speeches, extemporaneous speeches and after-dinner speeches, said Ralph Thompson, another I.E. Team member.

Team members are coached by graduate assistants, speech professors and other members. Director of Forensics Bill Balthrop said: Last year, the team attended six tournaments. At the nationals, held at George Mason University in Washington, D.C., four UNC students qualified for the finals.

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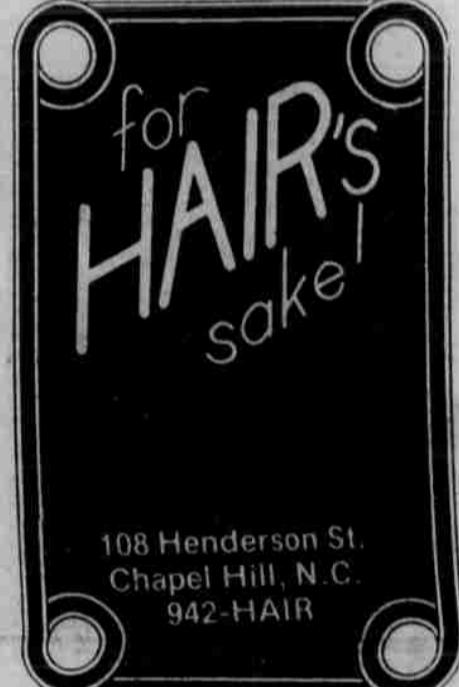
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