

Contras step up attacks with 'humanitarian' aid

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras (AP) — Contra rebels say new U.S. aid enables them to make more resupply flights to units fighting inside neighboring Nicaragua, giving guerrillas the staying power they had lacked.

Western diplomats monitoring the war agree. They say the

flights are so much more frequent that a major Contra air-supply base in Honduras is being moved to a less obvious location.

Contra spokeswoman Adela Icaza said in a recent interview: "We need much more, of course. For instance, we need more

planes, but we have been getting sufficient supplies to do the job."

Mrs. Icaza said DC-3 and DC-6 aircraft are used to drop supplies to the estimated 14,000 rebels now in Nicaragua's isolated mountain jungles.

Regular air drops began in

December, financed by the first installments in \$100 million of new U.S. aid for the Nicaraguan rebels' fight against their homeland's Sandinista government.

Rebels have stepped up their activity as a result, especially in northern and central Nicaragua.

Initial shipments under the

new U.S. aid program were of humanitarian goods, a Contra source said, and "it caused some alarm when they opened the crates and found bedpans instead of bullets, but they are getting what they need now."

Included in those necessities, he said, are rifles, machine

guns, mortars, ammunition, food, medicine, clothing and surface-to-air missiles.

Shipments of U.S.-made Red Eyes, bought on the world market, began in May and the goal is to outfit each unit with them, he said.

Briefs

Swedish navy looks for alien submarine

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — Swedish naval units searched a northern bay Thursday in pursuit of a suspected alien submarine, and a local radio station said they dropped about 10 more depth charges.

There was no official confirmation of the report carried by the northern station Radio Norrbotten, and the Swedish news agency TT quoted defense officials as denying it.

On Wednesday night, a navy helicopter dropped depth charges and fired anti-submarine grenades in Torne Bay, about 20 miles northeast of the port city of Lulea at the northern end of the Bothnian Gulf near the Finnish border.

The military has conducted maneuvers focusing on anti-submarine operations for a week in the area, considered one of Sweden's most sensitive military zones.

Defense staff chief press spokesman Jan Tuninger said Wednesday that observations indicated an unidentified alien submarine had entered the bay.

Security Council seeks end to war

MOSCOW — U.S. envoy Vernon Walters announced after meetings with senior Soviet officials Thursday that he will fly to China to campaign for a U.N. Security Council resolution seeking an end to the Iran-Iraq war.

Walters, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, refused to identify the Soviet officials with whom he met but expressed optimism that a ceasefire resolution would be adopted by the Security Council within the next few weeks.

He said the measure has the support of the five permanent member nations of the Security Council — the United States, Soviet Union, China, France and Britain — and has been presented to other members.

War ravages wildlife in Mozambique

MAPUTO, Mozambique (AP) — The decade-old civil war in this southern African nation has wreaked havoc on wildlife, wiping out some species in Mozambique and threatening others, the capital's leading newspaper said Thursday.

Noticias said animals were being slaughtered for their skins and horns. It blamed the Mozambique National Resistance, which is fighting to oust the Marxist Frelimo party government.

Fighting has closed all of Mozambique's game parks and made it impossible to conduct a wildlife survey, the paper said.

From wire service reports

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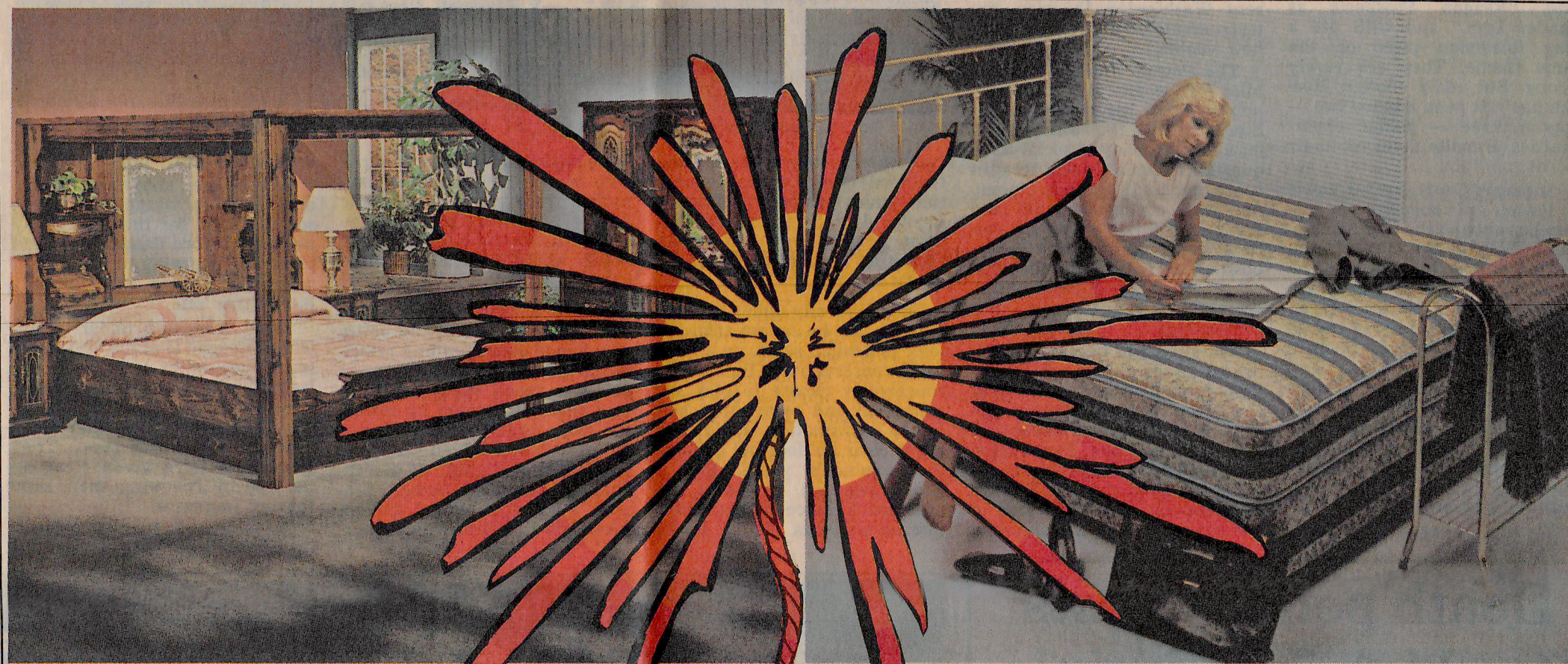
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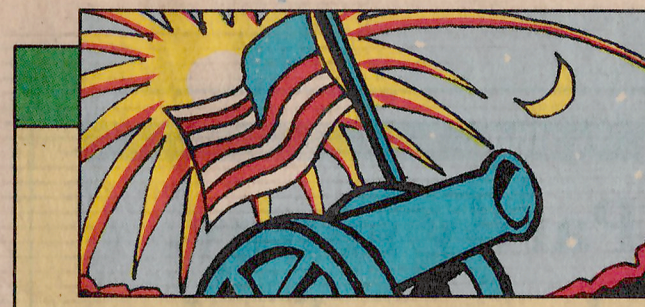
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Weekender

4th of July

Holiday events range from bands to fifes and drums - C1

Sports

Wimbledon rivals

Navratilova beats Evert, moves to finals - D1

Friday
July 3, 1987

Daily Press

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TWENTY-FIVE CENTS

Violations at Tech revealed

Probe uncovers 12 infractions

By DAVID TEEL
Staff Writer

BLACKSBURG — Virginia Tech's lengthy internal probe of its basketball program has uncovered 12 NCAA violations, most of them minor, the university announced Thursday.

According to Tech officials, the most serious violations are: A university professor provided a passing grade to a former player struggling to maintain eligibility before classwork was completed, a "representative of the university's athletic interests" providing automobile financing for the wife of a former player.

Missing tape hampers probe — D1

The six-man panel that wrote a 21-page summary of the investigation said the grade incident was part of the basketball program's gross neglect of academics over the past six years, adding that no basketball players who have entered the school since 1981 have graduated.

Tech said the report was sent to head basketball coach Charlie Moir and his attorney, S.D. Roberts Moore of Roanoke, just prior to the news conference. But as of Thursday evening, Moore said he had not seen the report.

Tech President William Lavery and interim Athletic Director Ray Smoot said the status of Moir, the "Hokies" coach for 11 seasons, and his assistants would be determined in later deliberations by the Tech Athletic Council. Moir has two years remaining on his contract.

Neither Moir nor his assistants were available to comment. "We are thankful we did not find any evidence to support some of the more serious allegations," said W.S. White, a member of Tech's Board of Visitors and the chairman of the overseeing panel.

"But the panel found careless and clumsy compliance with

■ See Tech, Page A4



Tornado rampant

A tornado, caused by a thunderstorm Wednesday near Aurora, Colo., churns up dust as it hovers east of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal, northeast of Denver. The tornado didn't cause any damage. See weather story on Page A3.

18 found dead in railroad car

SIERRA BLANCA, Texas (AP) — Eighteen people, apparently illegal aliens, were found dead inside a locked, steel-walled boxcar where temperatures reached a stifling 120-degrees Thursday in what authorities called a botched smuggling effort.

A 19th man survived by using a spike to punch a hole through the floor and breathe through the opening, said Mike Williams, a spokesman for the U.S. Border Patrol in El Paso. Others apparently tried to claw through the wood-lined door.

"They appear to have gotten

excessively hot. Some appeared to have gone into convulsions, evidenced by nasal bleeding in their mouths, and they were dehydrated," said William Harrington, assistant chief patrol agent for the Border Patrol.

"There's blood on the floor," Williams said. "Some of their tongues are chewed, their mouths are chewed. It's a gruesome sight."

The suspected aliens had boarded an eastbound Missouri Pacific freight train late Wednesday afternoon at El Paso, about 90 miles west of Sierra Blanca on the Texas-Mex-

ico border, Williams said. They apparently were making their way to the Dallas-Fort Worth area, he said.

The freight train apparently stayed on a siding Wednesday night and was delayed for some mechanical problem, he said.

Williams said the temperatures in the boxcar probably exceeded 120 degrees and the victims apparently died from the heat.

The bodies were found about 8 a.m. MDT, 6 a.m. EDT, during a routine Border Patrol inspection of boxcars.

■ See Bodies, Page A5

Haiti cancels elections; 4 killed by soldiers

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — The government Thursday night revoked an election decree which triggered a general strike that shut down Haitian cities for the third time this week.

Four people died in clashes with soldiers and at least 17 others were injured, witnesses and hospital officials said. That raised the count since Monday to at least 11 reported killed and scores wounded.

The government announced on television that the June 23 election decree had been revoked and that the independent Provisional Electoral Council is drafting a new law to administer local and national elections.

The government decree had taken control of elections away from the independent board, which was established by a new constitution that was approved overwhelmingly in a March 29 referendum.

That sparked Haiti's worst crisis since the flight of President-for-Life Jean-Claude Duvalier on Feb. 7, 1986, which ended 29 years of Duvalier dictatorship. Duvalier left the country amid growing demonstrations against him.

Thursday's reversal came after a meeting between Lt. Gen. Henri Namphy, leader of the three-man National Governing Council, and the nine-member

■ See Haiti, Page A5

Missing man's truck found in Nags Head

By GEORGE CLIFFORD III
Staff Writer

Police in Nags Head, N.C., on Thursday found the truck of a missing man at whose apartment human organs and a large amount of blood were found last week.

Charles William Brownell, 43, who lived in the Deer Park East Apartment, is still missing.

No body or blood was visible in or near the truck, said Maj. James Ledford of Newport News police. Nags Head police

did not open the vehicle and were waiting for Newport News detectives to arrive before examining the truck.

The truck was found by a city policeman in the parking lot of the Football Palace on Beach Road, said Det. Michael Carver of the Nags Head Police Department.

The green Chevrolet pickup had been sitting in the lot since Sunday, the owner of the amusement arcade told police. It is not unusual for vehicles to remain

parked in the city for several days before being noticed, Carver said. Nobody saw anyone park the truck in the lot, Carver said.

Police have searched for the pickup since the discovery of the organs and blood June 24.

Although they have not officially called Brownell a suspect, police have offered a reward for help in finding him. Neither family nor friends have heard from Brownell since the incident.

Police have said it is unclear if Brownell was the victim of the slaying or if he was involved.

Ledford said police in Nags Head alerted Newport News authorities after they found the truck at about noon. Homicide detectives left for Nags Head soon after, he said. By 9:30 p.m., a tow-truck had arrived to return the truck to Newport News, Carver said.

A spokesperson for the State Crime Laboratory in Norfolk said Thursday they had not yet

determined if the body parts were those of a male or female, adult or child. Although police have previously referred to "abdominal organs," the spokesperson said only a portion of a single organ had been received.

Several of Brownell's friends have expressed confusion over the circumstances, saying Brownell, a heavy-set and balding man, was generally a well-tempered man with no real enemies and no apparent motivation to injure anyone.

Foreign automakers interested in port

By NANCY COOK
Staff Writer

RICHMOND — Gov. Gerald L. Baliles said Thursday that a plan to develop a common facility where various foreign auto makers could ship their vehicles could produce dramatic increases in the use of the Port of Hampton Roads.

Baliles said he discussed the proposal with European manufacturers during a 12-day trade trip to England, Sweden and Denmark. Baliles returned Wednesday to Virginia.

The governor also said he has not decided whether to reappoint the Virginia Tech board members whose terms expired June 30. He said the members would serve until he made his decision, sometime in the next 10 days.

Nor, he said, has he made a decision on whether to grant a stay of execution for convicted murderer Richard Whitley, who killed a 63-year-old Fairfax County woman in 1981. Whitley is scheduled to die Monday night at the State Penitentiary

here.

Baliles, who supports the death penalty, said he has never suggested the penalty is a deterrent to crimes, but, "There are some crimes so heinous that as a policy matter, that it (the death penalty) should be available for the public to consider."

While in Europe, Baliles said, he met with dozens of corporate executives, including representatives of Volvo, BMW, Fiat and Austin Rover. All currently export automobiles to the United States.

The manufacturers, he said, were interested in a proposal to develop a common facility where several different manufacturers could ship their cars and prepare them for dealers. A Virginia Port Authority spokeswoman said the facility would be located in Portsmouth.

"The automobile executives were impressed with these plans, and said the development of this project could produce a dramatic increase in the use of Virginia's ports," he said.

■ See Baliles, Page A5

Quiet operation is key to subs

Soviet's ill-gotten gains in technology lamented

By PHIL MURRAY
Staff Writer

Noise makes a submariner

cringe. When two subs go head-to-head in wartime, the winner is likely to be the one who hears the other guy first.

So the news that a Japanese company, Toshiba Corp., and a

state-owned Norwegian company had sold the Soviet Union sophisticated Western technology that will help its navy build a quieter submarine propeller prompted a violent reaction on Capitol Hill.

The Senate passed a measure earlier this week that would prohibit the sale of Toshiba prod-

ucts in the United States for at least two years. Some members of Congress showed their displeasure with the company by taking a sledgehammer to a Toshiba cassette recorder on Capitol grounds.

It was a sign, some analysts said, of a growing frustration

■ See Quiet, Page A4

Parachute fails in 2nd exercise of cargo plane

FORT BRAGG, N.C. (AP) — A second drop-zone military exercise failed Thursday, one day after a cargo plane crashed, killing five men and injuring two others before 4,000 spectators.

Military officials defended their decision to go ahead with the exercise.

"It was a question of figuring out how to do it. Our business does not allow us to stand still," said Capt. Brian Irving, a spokesman for Pope Air Force Base.

The same maneuver that ended with Wednesday's crash was attempted again as part of a demonstration, but the tank drop was aborted when a parachute failed to open.

The airplanes successfully dropped about 600 paratroopers and dropped lighter equipment, but not a Sheridan tank.

Air Force officials said a parachute that is supposed to pull the tank from the open rear door of the Lockheed C-130 Hercules plane was cut loose after it failed to open.

Index

Ann Landers ...C10
AstrologyC11
BusinessB15
ClassifiedE2
ComicsC10
EditorialsA10
Entertainment...C5

LocalB1
NationalA3
ObituariesB7
SportsD1
StateB6
TelevisionC5
WeekenderC1

Today's weather

Partly sunny. High in the 90s. Low in the 70s. See details on Page A2.



Accused Nazi war criminal Karl Linnaas dies. See Page A13.

Inside stories

National

CARRABASSET VALLEY, Maine — A tycoon and a balloonist broke a distance record as they attempted the first Atlantic crossing in a hot-air balloon.

Page A8

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon is delaying plans to send helicopters to Kuwait while Saudi Arabia tries to organize regional forces for removal of at least 11 mines.

Page A9

International

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras — Contra rebels say new U.S. aid enables them to make more resupply flights to units fighting inside neighboring Nicaragua.

Page A12

MOSCOW — To judge from the "Information USA" exhibit now attracting crowds in the Soviet capital, the average American drives a Plymouth van, among other things.

Page A14

Local

RICHMOND — A sparsely attended meeting of a special General Assembly subcommittee studying hate and violence in the state discussed steps to protect rights.

Page B1

NEWPORT NEWS — A license plate number apparently copied down by one of two stabbing victims led detectives to Joseph Ronald Gore, police testified Thursday.

Page B1

Mary Wakefield Buxton, who has spent six months trying to join the local men's-only Rotary Club, has found out the club doesn't want her.

Page B1

Sports

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — Davey Allison (right) won the pole position for Sunday's Firecracker 400 NASCAR race as Ford's took the top three spots in Thursday's qualifying round. Bill Elliott took second place, Ken Schrader was third.

Page D1

BERLIN — Nico Verhoeven of The Netherlands won the opening stage of the 74th Tour de France, but Lech Piasecki of Poland took the overall lead.

Page D5

Business

CHICAGO — A federal court jury on Thursday found a former accounting firm for Continental Illinois National Bank innocent of failing to warn of bad loans.

Page B15

Weekender

There's not one moment where someone isn't pretending to be someone else in "Much Ado About Nothing," the opening play in the 1987 Virginia Shakespeare Festival.

Page C1

On the lighter side

Promoters line up snookers to snare U.S. viewers

LONDON (AP) — Britain's highest-paid sportsman wears a black bow tie and vest for big games. One of his rivals wears upside-down glasses, and the referee sports regal white gloves.

The game is snooker, a dapper version of pool, once confined to smoky bars and backstreet clubs, it has become Britain's second most popular pastime. (In case you're wondering what's first, it's long-distance walking.)

Snooker tournaments are the most-watched sports events on British television. This year, its world championship attracted a peak audience of 13 million.

Now, promoters are pitching snooker to the rest of the world, with the United States mainly in their sights.

Starting tonight, England's Steve Davis, the world snooker champion, will challenge a leading American pool player, Steve Mizerak, in a three-day, \$80,000 challenge at the Palace Hotel in St. Moritz, Switzerland. The contest, which will include both snooker and pool games, will be televised across Europe and North Amer-

TV producer

"Our primary aim is to get on the air and attract a following in the States."

ica and in Hong Kong, Japan and Australia to a potential audience of 250 million people.

In the United States, the contest will be shown on the all-sports cable television channel ESPN on July 4, 5 and 12.

"There's no question that our primary aim is to get on the air and attract a following in the States," said William S. Smith, a producer with Trans World International Inc., the television subsidiary of Mark McCormack's sports empire, which arranged the television deal.

Proficiency at snooker, like pool, used to be a sure sign of a mispent youth and is still dogged by the occasional drug and

sex scandal. To clean up snooker's image, its professional governing body requires drug tests and formal attire and imposes heavy fines for improper conduct.

Snooker is played with a cue stick and 22 balls — 15 reds, a white cue ball and one each of six different colors. The pockets are smaller, the table bigger and the rules more intricate than pool.

The game's governing body estimates that 7.5 million Britons play snooker regularly, compared with 6 million in 1985 and about 4 million a decade ago.

Snooker has a colorful cast. Alex "Hurricane" Higgins, the "bad boy" people's champion whose off-court antics have included headbutting an official, earned his sobriquet with a whirlwind style of play in winning his first world title in 1972.

His Northern Irish compatriot, Dennis Taylor, is the 1985 world champion whose trademark is his glasses. He used to wear them upside down when he had trouble focusing, but has since had a special enlarged pair designed that reach half way up his brow.

Almanac

Today is Friday, July 3, the 184th day of 1987. There are 181 days left in the year.

Today's highlight in history: On July 3, 1863, the three-day Civil War Battle of Gettysburg, Pa., ended in a major victory for the North with the retreat of Confederate troops. President Abraham Lincoln dedicated a national cemetery on the battlefield the following November.

On this date: In 1608, the city of Quebec was founded

by Samuel de Champlain. In 1775, General George Washington took command of the Continental Army at Cambridge, Mass.

In 1890, Idaho became the 43rd state of the Union. In 1898, the U.S. Navy defeated a Spanish fleet in the harbor at Santiago, Cuba, during the Spanish-American War.

In 1950, American and North Korean forces clashed for the first time in the Korean War. In 1962, Algeria became independent

after 132 years of French rule. In 1976, Israel launched its daring mission to rescue about a hundred passengers and Air France crew members who were being held at Entebbe Airport in Uganda by pro-Palestinian hijackers.

In 1984, the Supreme Court ruled that the Jaycees may be forced by state laws to admit women as full members with the same status as men.

In 1985, CBS announced it would buy back 21 percent of its own stock in order to thwart a takeover bid by Ted Turner.

Weather

Partly sunny, chance of rain

Partly sunny today with a 30 percent chance of showers or thunderstorms. High in the low 90s. Southwest winds will be between 15 and 25 mph.

Partly cloudy tonight with 40 percent chance of showers. Low in the mid-70s. Southwest winds 15-25 mph.

Partly cloudy on Saturday with a 40 percent chance of showers. High around 90. Southwest winds 15-20 mph.

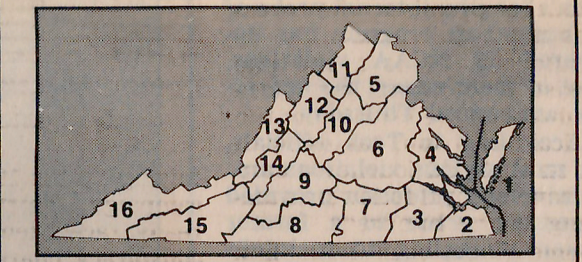
Partly cloudy Sunday. High in the 80s. The highest temperature recorded Thursday at the National Weather Service in Norfolk was 94. The low was 77.

Nationally, strong thunderstorms linked to a slow-moving cold front brought flooding, high winds and hail to parts of a wide area from the mid-Atlantic states to Texas.

Flash-flood warnings and flood warnings were posted in central Ohio, where rainfall this week has topped 5 inches in places, and along the Cuyahoga River in northeastern Ohio. The rains forced the evacuation of more than 500 people.

The National Weather Service broadcasts forecasts and warnings for the Hampton Roads area 24 hours a day on VHF FM 162.55 MHz. Sunrise is at 5:50. Sunset is at 8:28.

Virginia zones



Zones 1, 2 — Partly sunny today with a 30 percent chance of a shower or thunderstorm. Highs in the low 90s and winds southwest 10 to 15 mph. Partly cloudy tonight with a 40 percent chance of showers. Lows in the mid-70s and winds southwest around 10 mph. Partly cloudy Saturday with a 40 percent chance of a shower. Highs around 90.

Zones 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 — Partly sunny today with a 30 percent chance of a shower or thunderstorm. Highs in the low 90s and winds southwest 10 to 15 mph. Partly cloudy tonight with a 40 percent chance of showers. Lows 70 to 75 and winds southwest around 10 mph. Partly cloudy Saturday with a 40 percent chance of a shower. Highs around 90.

Zones 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 — Partly sunny today with a 30 percent chance of a shower or thunderstorm. Highs 85 to 90 and winds southwest 10 to 15 mph. Partly cloudy tonight with a 30 percent chance of showers. Lows 70 to 75 and winds southwest around 10 mph. Partly sunny Saturday.

If you need to call us

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Reagan gets 2 or 3 more chances to salvage 'lame-duck' presidency

WASHINGTON — On the eve of the Fourth, let us make a unilateral Declaration of Independence from the conventional wisdom of Washington. While "everyone knows" that Ronald Reagan is all washed up, let us consider the seemingly remote possibility that he has an opening for another of the remarkable recoveries which have marked his career.

It's risky to go down this road. On Sunday, The New York Times had a front-page headline, "Reagan Prospects as Leader Dim," and CBS did a long television piece on the same theme. They are rarely wrong. But oddly enough, Reagan has just been handed two — maybe three — golden opportunities to make them eat their words.

Supreme Court Justice Lewis F. Powell Jr.'s surprise resignation has opened the way for Reagan to reshape the long-term direction of the high court. The Democratic Congress has passed a budget which invites Reagan to mount his white horse and go into battle against his favorite targets, the tax-raisers. And Mikhail Gorbachev has launched a huge domestic economic gamble which increases the odds for an interim nuclear arms-control agreement and reduces the risk of Soviet foreign military adventures.

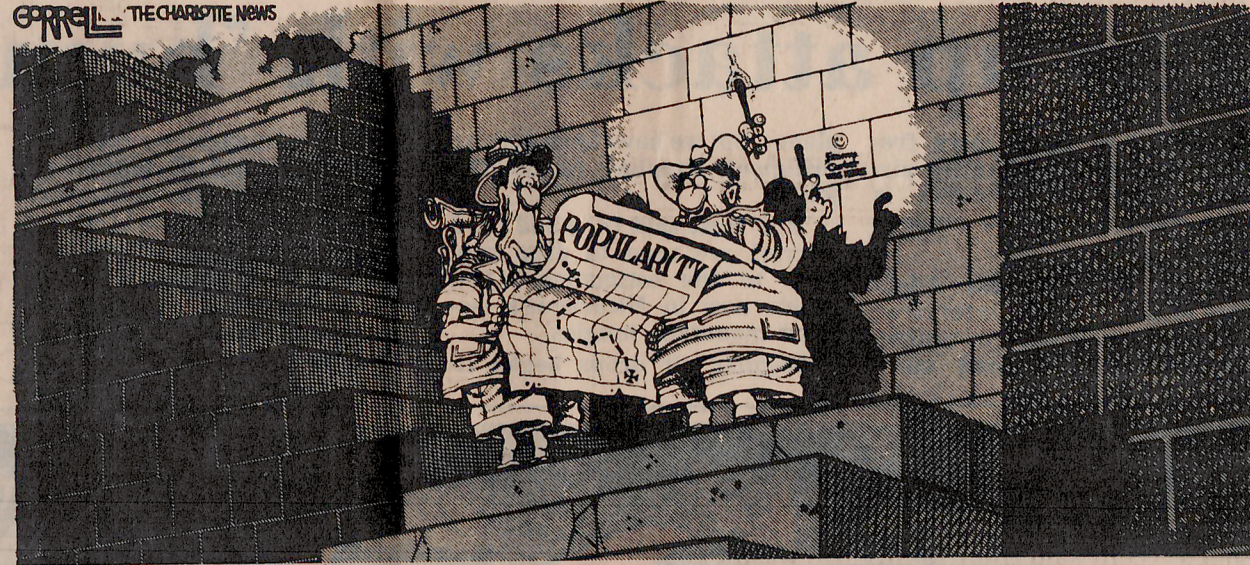
Clearly, Reagan's standing

David Broder

has been badly damaged by the Iran-Contra affair and he remains at risk until Oliver North and John Poindexter have said their pieces. But investigating Democratic senators such as Oklahoma's David Boren will tell you that their constituents still are pulling for Reagan to finish his term with his head high. And, contrary to the current Washington theories, the instruments of his recovery are now visible.

The Powell vacancy is sheer bliss for Reagan. The third appointment of his tenure allows him to replace the "swing man" on a whole series of social-issue questions crucial to the Reagan constituency. If he finds a nominee with strong personal and legal credentials, as he certainly can — he can force the opposition to fight on the ideological ground where Reagan has always felt strongest and most comfortable.

The lines will be very clearly drawn during the Judiciary Committee hearings, with two of the Democratic presidential candidates — Chairman Joseph R. Biden Jr., and Sen. Paul Simon — plus Senate Majority Leader Robert C. Byrd and Sen. Edward M. Kennedy all on one side of the committee table, along with



I THINK WE'RE IN TROUBLE.... IT SAYS "JIMMY CARTER WAS HERE!"

two other northern liberals and two moderates. On the Republican side, Deputy Minority Leader Alan Simpson will lead what should be a near-solid lineup in support of the president's choice.

Biden is really under the gun, facing a test he cannot afford to lose. If Reagan sends up a first-rate conservative, Biden can conceivably choose to play the statesman and escort that person to confirmation, while making it clear he does not endorse the nominee's views. But if Biden sets out to defeat the president's choice, he had better line up his votes. He has drawn

some criticism for inept generalship on the 1986 Manion nomination. To have a Democratic Senate confirm a Supreme Court justice he had vowed to defeat would leave Biden hanging out to dry.

That's a fight the president will enjoy, as he will the battle now joined over spending priorities and taxes. Today, Reagan is going to reach back to a 1984 idea that was floated by one of his early braintrusts, Martin Anderson, and unveil an "Economic Bill of Rights." It will include a reformed budget process, a balanced-budget amendment and line-item veto author-

ity for the president.

These are showman ideas dressed up in wrapping Anderson designed for the 1984 campaign — before Reagan decided to do the "morning in America" schmalz instead of talking issues that fall.

What Anderson understands is that Reagan is at his best talking issues — as long as those issues embody the simple verities he has preached for years, like the virtues of smaller government and lower taxes. The Democrats have given Reagan his cue by renewing their call for tax increases.

Republican Party leaders

meeting last week in New Orleans were enthusiastically offering the view that Reagan has the winning side of the debate.

The vagueness of the Democrats' tax plans allow Republicans to tell every group of voters they may be the ones who have to pay. That tactic worked very well for Margaret Thatcher in reversing a Labor Party surge in the final week of last month's British election campaign and Republicans believe that Reagan can make it work here.

As for the Gorbachev opening, the Soviet leader is backed on a high-risk economic counterrevolution in Russia at least as bold as the Chinese communists are attempting in their land.

At the very least, developments in the two communist nations allow Reagan to claim that his market-oriented, individual-enterprise ideas are the wave of the international future.

At best, these developments could usher in a period of peace and international cooperation which would permit Reagan to crown his presidency with significant arms-control and trade agreements.

That's a long way from being a lame duck.

David Broder is a columnist with The Washington Post.

Death penalty costs too high for Virginia

By B.J. BROWN DEVLIN

RICHMOND — A typical capital murder case in Virginia, including sentencing, mandatory state review and subsequent state and federal appeals, lasts about five years.

While no research has been performed to determine what this costs the Old Dominion, a California study found that the expense of a death sentence far exceeds the cost of life imprisonment.

A 1982 study by the New York State Defenders Association put the total legal expenses to that state for each death penalty case at \$1.8 million.

Thirty-two men presently await execution behind the heavy bars and electronically locked doors of Virginia's death row. At \$1.8 million each it would take \$57.6 million to carry out the death sentence on all of them.

In contrast, the Virginia Department of Corrections spent a total of \$290 million last year. The agency has calculated that it costs \$14,859 to incarcerate each of the 11,000 inmates in the state's prisons in 1985. Thus, the expense of the average execution in Virginia is about the same as 121 years behind bars.

The U.S. Supreme Court has indicated a certain unwillingness to speed up the legal process, rejecting mandatory death penalties for particular crimes and reviewing the justice of death sentences only on a case-by-case basis.

The reality is that expediting executions can only add to the ranks of the 343 mistaken capital sentences and 25 executions of innocents between 1900 and 1985 documented by Professors Hugo Adam Bedau of Tufts University and Michael L. Radelet of the University of Florida in a study published in 1985.

The factors that determine a death penalty have less to do with the crimes than with social class, economic resources and race. What's the mood of the local community or local district attorney? There are many points in the legal process when the attorney, absent public pressure, may decide not to press for the death penalty.

Can a capital defendant afford to hire a lawyer experienced in this particular facet of criminal law? The odds are in favor of the very few who can.

The Virginia State Supreme Court will not grant relief on trial errors that the defense attorney failed to recognize and object to at the time they occurred.

Is the defendant black or white? Nearly half of Virginia's death row inmates are four of the five men executed since capital punishment returned to the Old Dominion in 1982 were black, compared with 20 percent of Virginia's population as a whole. Was the victim black or white?

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