

making the news

From Associated Press Reports

WASHINGTON — Ronald Reagan has chosen Bill Brock, Republican National Committee chairman, to be special trade representative, the last Cabinet-level post the president-elect had to fill, sources close to the transition said today.

Brock's formal announcement was expected early next week, the sources said.

Brock, 50, credited with helping rebuild the Republican Party, received the nod from Reagan several days after winning the endorsement of Sen. Paul Laxalt, R-Nev., a conservative and one of Reagan's closest advisers.

Brock had been opposed by several conservative Republicans for a top job in the new administration because of his longtime connections with the moderate wing of the party.

Brock clashed with conservatives, including Laxalt, two years ago when he refused to use the GOP treasury to help finance opposition to the Panama Canal treaties.

A former one-term senator from Tennessee, Brock was defeated for re-election in 1976 by Democratic Sen. James Sasser. Brock took over control of the GOP National Committee in 1977 with support from moderate Republicans.

WARSAW, Poland — Poland's largest independent union on Thursday demanded a five-day work week and some local chapters instructed members to stay home Saturday, raising the specter of a nationwide union-government confrontation.

In another development, Warsaw Television said there were signs of "anarchy" in scattered Polish towns including Wloclawek, Jelenia Gora, Krosno, Olsztyn, Czestochowa and Torun.

It claimed "open pressure" was being exerted on local authorities to force leadership changes and added, "This is simply a display of noisy anarchy hindering the development of public law and order."

Although the national union federation Solidarity vowed during a meeting in Gdansk to defend its demand for free Saturdays, it stopped short of threatening a nationwide strike. The action was taken despite the government's claim that a 40-hour work week would further cripple the nation's economy.

JERUSALEM — Prime Minister Menachem Begin, challenged by his worst government crisis, may resign next week to set the stage for elections as early as this spring, government sources said Thursday.

After weeks of negotiations, Begin said Sunday was the deadline for resolving a split between two key Cabinet ministers over teachers' salaries.

If either Finance Minister Yigal Hurvitz or Education Minister Zevulun Hammer quits, sources say Begin will offer his own resignation or act to dissolve Parliament and hold elections.

Begin has not taken a public position on either the teachers' dispute or the Cabinet crisis. Begin's spokesman said the prime minister had not decided what to do if he failed at Sunday's meeting to force a compromise between Hurvitz and Hammer.

Reagan plans Iran review

WASHINGTON (AP) — President-elect Ronald Reagan said Thursday he would feel free to review all hostage negotiations with Iran and possibly take a different stand than the Carter administration if the American captives are not released before he takes office.

He also refused to declare flatly that he would go along with the terms of a hostage agreement completed before he moves into the White House on Jan. 20.

"I'm quite sure that any agreement would be one that, yes, I could carry out," Reagan declared. "On the other hand I don't think anyone should be asked to sign a blank check, and so I can't give you an unequivocal yes."

"I can tell you I am confident that the president is working toward an agreement that does preserve the honor of our country and is aimed at trying to get those people home which we all hope he'll be successful in doing."

In a statement issued Sept. 13, during the presidential campaign, Reagan said of efforts to free the hostages: "I will not make those negotiation a partisan issue in the campaign. I also pledge that if elected, I will observe the terms of an agreement" reached by the Carter administration.

Reagan spoke with reporters briefly Thursday as he concluded his final pre-inaugural visit to Washington and headed back to California. He will return to the capital on Jan. 14, six days before he is inaugurated as the nation's 40th president.

Standing in the lobby of the State Department, where he held his first business meeting with his designated Cabinet secretaries, Reagan said he and his staff are not receiving day-to-day briefings on negotiations for the hostages' release.

He said they have not sought the information because "I worry about the possibility of anything that could possibly throw a monkey wrench in there or reveal something that shouldn't be revealed."

Asked if he would feel free to review the negotiations and take some different stand if the hostage stalemate remains unresolved when he takes office Jan. 20, Reagan replied, "That's right, yes."

The president-elect also clarified that the Defense Department budget would be spared from his efforts to slash federal spending in hopes of balancing the budget.

Earlier, asked what he would do about the \$60 billion deficit he is expected to inherit, Reagan said "We're going to start whittlin' at it ... across the board."

Reagan's economic advisers, in a briefing Wednesday, told him economic conditions are worse than they had expected.

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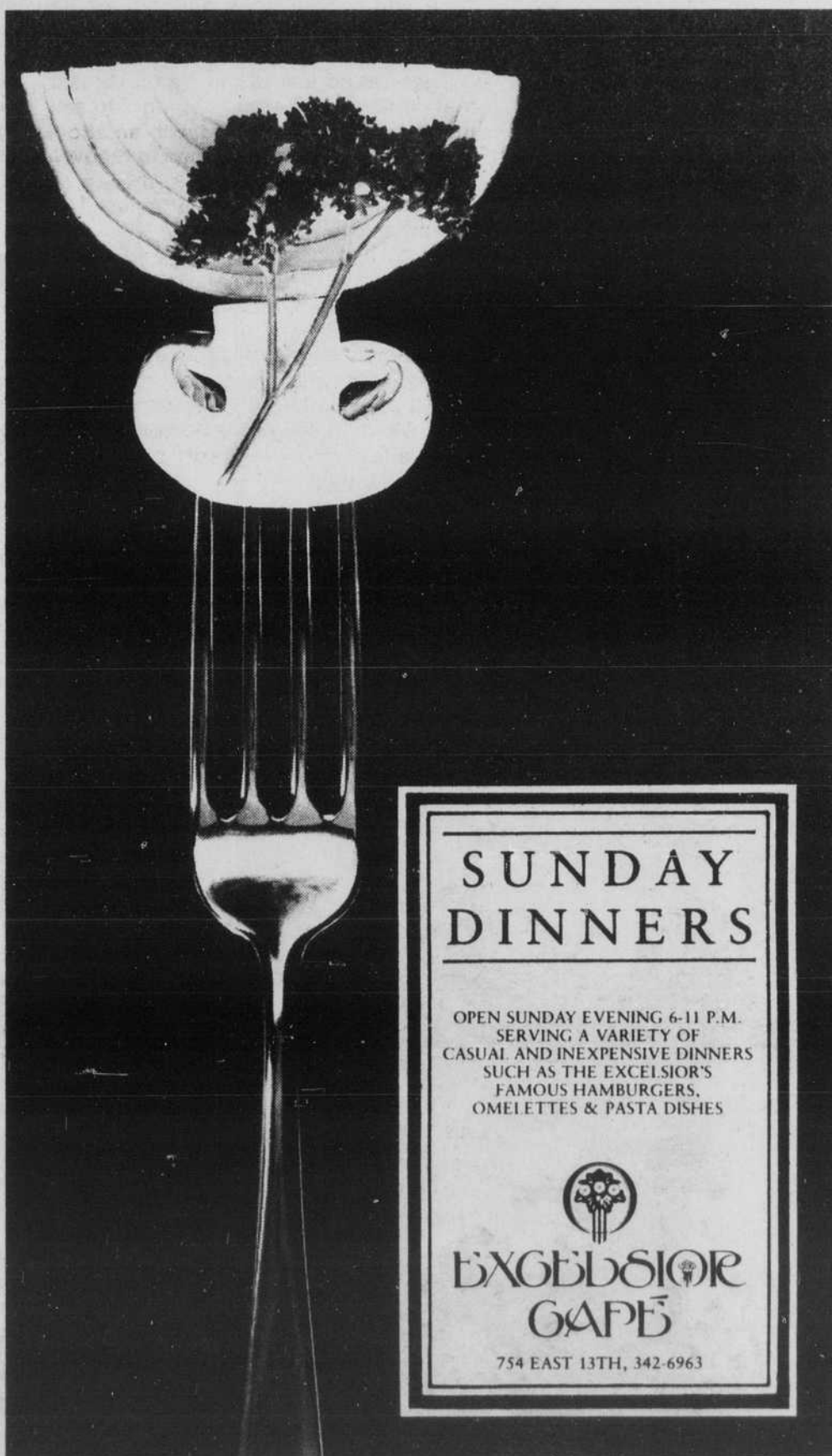
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