

Irish prisoner dies

BELFAST, Northern Ireland (AP) — IRA prisoner Francis Hughes, 25, died in Maze prison Tuesday after 59 days without food, the second hunger striker in a week to die in a campaign to win political status from Britain for imprisoned Irish nationalists.

Hughes died a week after fellow IRA prisoner Bobby Sands, 27, succumbed in the 66th day of his fast. Three other Irish nationalist prisoners are on hunger strike.

The two, and three other prisoners still fasting at the Maze, were trying to force the British government to grant imprisoned IRA guerrillas privileges that would give them political prisoner

status. Britain said it would not concede because to do so would give legitimacy to the IRA terrorist campaign to end British rule here.

The IRA wants to unite this predominantly Protestant British province with the mostly Roman Catholic Republic of Ireland.

The Northern Ireland office said, "Francis Hughes, a prisoner in Her Majesty's prison Maze, died today at 17:43 p.m. He took his own life by refusing food and medical attention for 59 days."

Earlier, spokesmen for Protestant and Roman Catholic militants said the all-out sectarian warfare that was predicted — but did not develop — after Sands' death last week in the event of Hughes' death.

making the news

From Associated Press Reports

ATLANTA — William Barrett, a 17-year-old black youth whose body was found early today just hours after he disappeared, died of asphyxiation like 15 of Atlanta's 26 other slain young blacks, authorities said.

DeKalb County Public Safety Director Dick Hand said an autopsy showed the cause of death was asphyxiation "consistent with ligature strangulation."

"There was minimal evidence of a struggle," Hand said.

Barrett's body was found in a wooded area of suburban DeKalb County between 1 a.m. and 2 a.m. EDT, about the same time he was reported missing by his mother, said DeKalb police spokesman Chuck Johnson. Police said Barrett was last seen late Monday afternoon.

Johnson said he expected the case to be turned over to a special Atlanta police task force investigating the deaths of the 26 other young blacks, but Atlanta police spokeswoman Beverly Harvard said Barrett's name had not been added to the task force list by Tuesday afternoon.

LOS ANGELES — A judge ruled Tuesday that the \$1.6 million awarded by a jury to comedian Carol Burnett in her libel suit against the National Enquirer was "clearly excessive" and reduced the compensation to \$800,000.

Burnett's lawyers said they would accept the reduced award, and Superior Court Judge Peter Smith denied a motion by the Enquirer for a new trial. The Enquirer was expected to appeal.

Smith, in a stinging denunciation of the tabloid, said the Enquirer was guilty of a "form of legalized pandering" and called its actions "reprehensible" in printing the gossip item that prompted Burnett's suit.

The judge said the 1976 item, which said the entertainer had engaged in rowdy behavior in a posh Washington restaurant, clearly implied that she was drunk at the time.

Committee passes bill favoring Vietnam vets

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House Veterans Affairs Committee approved a bill Tuesday directing the Veterans Administration to give priority medical treatment to veterans who believe their ailments spring from exposure to Agent Orange in Vietnam. The Reagan administration opposes the legislation.

Because the government has established no link between the herbicide and any ailment, VA hospitals treat veterans complaining of diseases which they attribute to Agent Orange as though their health problems did not originate during their military service. Such com-

plaints are given outpatient attention on a lower priority than service-connected ailments.

The measure also would keep in operation for three more years 91 storefront readjustment counseling centers for Vietnam veterans.

The Reagan administration had proposed that the centers be closed on Oct. 1, for a saving of \$31 million a year, but that proposal ran into a wall of opposition.

Veterans groups said the centers were helping thousands of veterans who would not normally turn to VA psychiatrists for advice.

Senate ready to approve Reagan plan

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate, ready to give President Reagan his second major legislative victory in less than a week, lined up Tuesday to approve a \$699.1-billion budget guideline for 1982 made to order for his tax and spending cuts.

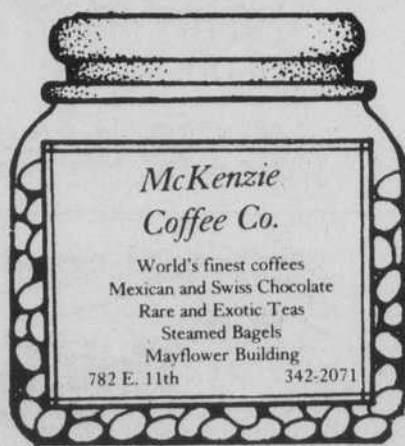
With Senate leaders pushing for a final vote by the early evening on the non-binding plan, the issue in doubt was a margin of victory.

Almost all Republicans and many Democrats voiced support for the plan, with the loudest objections coming from outnumbered liberals.

Sen. Alan Cranston of California, the Democratic whip, said he would oppose the measure, declaring that Reagan's budget "is badly out of balance. And I'm convinced his economic plan will fail to provide a balanced budget even by 1984," he said.

Sen. Lowell Weicker, R-Conn., also said he would oppose the plan, criticizing Reagan for deep cuts in social programs while calling for large increases in defense spending.

The blueprint for the 1982 fiscal year is similar to the spending guideline the Democratic-controlled House voted last week in a remarkable victory for the president. The relatively minor differences in the two plans will be resolved by negotiators for the two houses, possibly as early as this week.



Syrian missiles bomb Israeli jets

JERUSALEM (AP) — Syria fired surface-to-air missiles at Israeli jets over eastern Lebanon Tuesday and Syrian MiGs were reported patrolling the skies over northern Lebanon in a major escalation of the Middle East crisis that the Reagan administration was trying desperately to keep from erupting into war.

Prime Minister Menachem Begin told Parliament after meeting with President Reagan's envoy, Philip Habib, that Israel would exhaust every diplomatic means, but if none succeeded, "military means will be used." Parliament backed Begin by a vote of 51-39 but failed to give him bipartisan support.

The missile firing was announced by the Israeli military command, which said, "A

number of Syrian surface-to-air missiles were fired at noon today, Tuesday, at Israel air force planes on a routine reconnaissance flight in the Bekaa Valley region in Lebanon. The missiles apparently were fired from a Syrian missile base located inside Syria close to the Lebanese border near the Bekaa Valley. The air force planes were not hit and returned safely to their base."

In Damascus, a Syrian military spokesman claimed one Israeli reconnaissance jet was brought down by Syrian "air defenses in the Bekaa" Tuesday morning. The Syrian announcement did not specify that missiles were used and witnesses in the Bekaa Valley denied that any planes were downed.



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