

Pope recovers from wounds

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope John Paul II was reported making an excellent recovery Thursday from bullet wounds inflicted by a Turkish terrorist, and despite mild depression and the high risk of infection was visited by two aides and a Polish nun in his sterilized hospital room.

Thousands flocked to St. Peter's Basilica to pray for the pontiff, who was reported to have received last rites when he first entered the hospital. Police interrogating his attacker said

he began a hunger strike and claimed he was a Palestinian sympathizer.

Meanwhile, Ann Odre, 58, of Buffalo, N.Y., one of two women wounded in the attack in St. Peter's Square Wednesday, was reported in serious condition after the removal of her spleen. The other woman, Rose Hall, 21, wife of a Protestant minister serving U.S. forces in Wuerzburg, West Germany, was reported in good condition with a severed nerve in the elbow.

Earlier reports had said Hall

was a Jamaican and was wounded in the leg.

A medical bulletin issued at 9 a.m. by Rome's Gemelli Polyclinic Hospital said: "The general conditions of the pope are substantially unchanged. In the 10 successive hours since the first bulletin was issued, his state of consciousness is much better, with a little bit of activity in the room. The post-operative clinical limits are normal for cardiovascular, respiratory and metabolic activities. The prognosis is still guarded."

But Dr. Francesco Crucitti, one of the pope's surgeons at the hospital, said the pontiff was making an "excellent" recovery. He said the pope, who turns 61 Monday, remained under mild sedation, receiving intravenous feeding, and that the main worry was infection over the next few days. "If we can control this one, we may be able to say we are out of the woods," he said.

Italian police identified and charged the suspect arrested after the shooting. They named him as escaped Turkish terrorist Mehmet Ali Agca, who had threatened the pope's life once before.

Convicted in absentia and sentenced to death in April 1980 for murdering a noted Turkish newspaper editor, the 23-year-old suspect was described by interrogators as a "stoic, real quiet type."

Police said Agca was on a hunger strike. "At first, we thought he was just nervous. But he refuses to take anything but water," said a spokesman for Rome's central police headquarters where he has been interrogated by Italy's top magistrates handling terrorist cases.

He was charged with attempted murder of the pope, attempted murder of the two women, illegal possession of arms and carrying false documents. He will be tried in Italy and if convicted, he could be sentenced to life term. The death penalty is banned in Italy.

making the news

From Associated Press Reports

WASHINGTON — House and Senate budget-writers reached private agreement today on a budget plan setting a spending ceiling of about \$695 billion next fiscal year with a deficit of roughly \$37 billion, officials said.

As expected, the non-binding plan leaves room for almost everything Pres. Reagan wants in the way of deep cuts in taxes and spending.

Officials, emerging from two hours of private meetings, said the final numbers remained to be worked out but expressed confidence that could be done by the end of the day.

"It's a fragile thing, but I think we can get it over with," said Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., chairman of the Senate Budget Committee.

Domenici and others said minor differences remained over spending ceilings for education and transportation. But they said that whatever the outcome, there would be only minor changes in the overall spending and deficit figures.

Domenici also said the compromise plan would delete any mention of a Senate-passed recommendation for a three-month delay in 1982 in payment of cost-of-living adjustments to Social Security and other pension recipients.

WASHINGTON — Despite stepped-up lobbying from the administration, members of the Senate Finance Committee are vowing to scale down Pres. Reagan's proposed tax cut and substitute a few features of their own.

"We fear it is inflationary," Sen. Daniel Moynihan, D-N.Y., said after hearing Treasury Secretary Donald Regan extol the benefits of the 30 percent, across-the-board tax cut that Regan says is needed over three years to bring the economy out of the doldrums.

There was no evidence that Regan's testimony had eased the concerns of Finance Committee members, a majority of whom oppose Pres. Reagan's plan.

Only two committee members, Sen. William Roth, R-Del., and Sen. Steven Symms, R-Idaho, formally endorsed the Reagan proposal as hearings opened Wednesday. And Roth co-authored it with Rep. Jack Kemp, R-N.Y.

Sen. Bob Dole, R-Kan., the committee chairman, warned again that Regan did not have enough support on the panel for the proposal.

Gunman vowed to kill pope

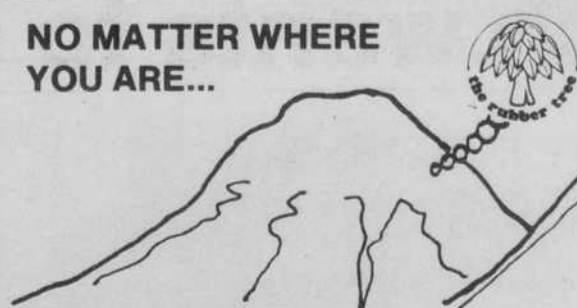
ROME (AP) — Italian magistrates spent the night interrogating the prime suspect in the attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II, apparently the same escaped Turkish assassin who threatened the pope's life once before.

Police said the man claimed he was Turkish, gave his name as Mehmet Ali Agca, and said

repeatedly he "couldn't care less about life."

An investigation is underway to determine whether he is in fact Mehmet Ali Agca, a Turkish terrorist who escaped prison after confessing he assassinated a noted Turkish newspaper editor. Agca was convicted in absentia by a Turkish court and sentenced to death for the editor's murder.

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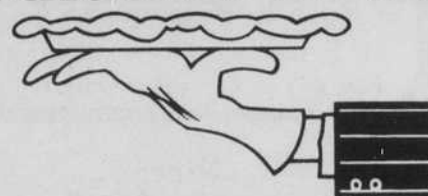
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