

Weather scrubs landing

WHITE SANDS MISSILE RANGE, N.M. (AP) — Columbia, diverted from landing and still in orbit, will try again Tuesday in a suspenseful third-flight finale that could force the shuttle to bypass sandblown Northrup Strip and return non-stop to Florida.

The runway in Florida: 15,000 feet of concrete surrounded by a moat.

Columbia has never made a paved-runway landing, but the alternative is another try at wind-whipped Northrup, and NASA officials were pessimistic that conditions would improve.

In space, 141 miles above Earth, astronauts Jack Lousma and Gordon Fullerton were in fine fettle with plenty of food, fuel and power.

"Sorry about that," Mission Control said

about the scrub.

"That's the breaks of space, I guess," Lousma said.

It was the first time in 20 years of space flight that a landing was scrubbed. Kennedy Space Center, at Cape Canaveral, is NASA's third choice for Flight 3. The main runway in California is waterlogged and out of service.

Equipment at Northrup Strip, hastily assembled to handle a shuttle landing, may have suffered some damage from the winds but the gusts still were too strong to make an assessment at midday.

Columbia was less than an hour and a half from its landing when the decision was made.

Salvadoran parties negotiate for power after pluralistic vote

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador (AP) — The centrist Christian Democrats and their extreme-right challengers, both falling short of a majority in El Salvador's election, scrambled for coalition partners Monday to govern the war-weary country.

The U.S. ambassador called together leaders of all six parties that took part in Sunday's election, in an apparent bid to build harmony for a common front against leftist guerrillas.

The insurgents pressed their bloody siege of the city of Usulután, 70 miles southeast of here, in one of the biggest attacks of the 2½-year-old civil war in this Central American nation. At least four soldiers were reported killed Monday.

In Washington, the Reagan administration sent a new signal on negotiations to end the conflict. Secretary of State Alexander Haig said the constituent assembly elected Sunday should "hold out the hand of conciliation" to guerrillas who are ready to join in the democratic process.

The left boycotted the election, saying its candidates would have been risking assassination by El Salvador's right-wing "death squads."

As returns continued to come in Monday, the major parties' shares of the vote held steady. The Christian Democrats of Jose Napoleon Duarte, president of the current U.S.-backed civilian-military junta, had 41 percent of the nationwide tally, and the ultra-rightist Republican Nationalist Alliance (ARENA) of former army Maj. Roberto d'Aubuisson had 29 percent.

Each of the two parties predicted it would form a majority coalition with one or more of the smaller conservative groups in the 60-member assembly, which is to name an interim government and write a new constitution leading to general elections, probably next year.

With about one-fifth of the 4,600 voting stations reporting the count of about 260,000 ballots, the Central Election Commission announced vote tallies and percentages. Percentages were Christian Democrats, 40.8 percent; ARENA, 28.9 percent; National Conciliation Party, 16.4 percent; Democratic Action Party, 9.4 percent; Popular Salvadoran Party, 3.2 percent, and Popular Orientation Party, 1.2 percent.

This did not necessarily indicate how many seats each party would win. Each of El Salvador's 14 provinces had a number of assembly seats assigned to it, to be distributed to the parties proportional to their vote in each province.

Salvadorans used their police-issued identification cards to vote, and it was estimated that more than one million of the approximately 1.5 million eligible voters turned out.

The Reagan administration and the Salvadoran government and military had promoted the election as a democratic means of moving toward peace by strengthening the legitimacy of the Salvadoran leadership.

Christian Democrat leader Guillermo Guevara said Monday that coalition talks were under way with Democratic Action, the most moderate opposition group.

D'Aubuisson claimed his party could control the assembly with help from National Conciliation, the party that ruled El Salvador from 1961 until October 1979, when a military coup put the current junta in power.

Guerrillas of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front say they are fighting for a share of power in a broad coalition government. Their spokesmen said they wanted to negotiate with the junta before any election.

Usulután, a city of 60,000 people on the Pacific coastal highway, took the brunt of the guerrillas' election weekend attacks.

Rebels seized the port of Puerto Parada last week and marched north into Usulután Saturday, seizing a Roman Catholic church about 400 yards south of the military garrison and main square, and forcing cancellation of the election there.

The Defense Ministry said guerrillas staged election-eve and election-day attacks in at least 12 other cities and towns.

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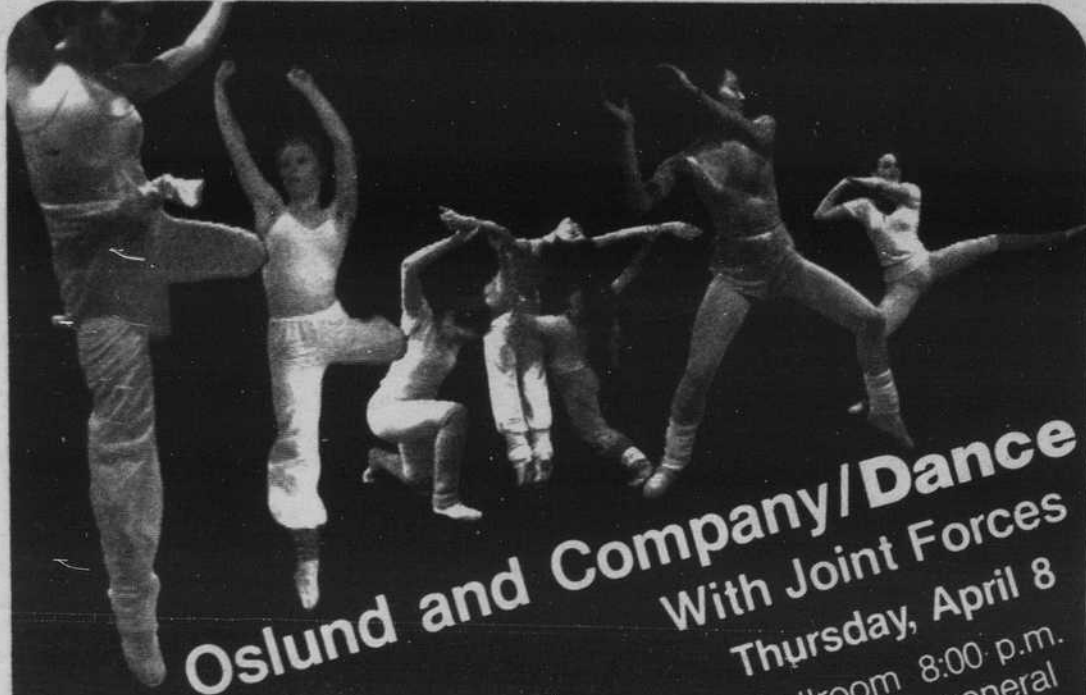


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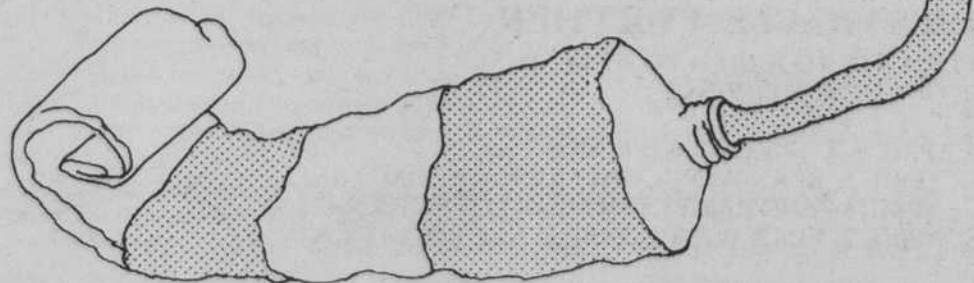
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