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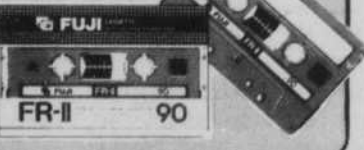
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**inter/national**

From Associated Press reports

**Shiites want Marines out**

GENEVA — Lebanese leaders appeared to be headed for a showdown over the troop withdrawal pact with Israel Wednesday, and a Shiite Moslem leader demanded that U.S. Marines be moved from their garrison in the southern suburbs of Beirut.

Nabih Berri, leader of the Shiite Amal militia and a delegate to the national reconciliation conference, said the Marines should be moved away from Beirut airport because of a "climate of racism" following the Oct. 23 bombing there.

Some U.S. officials believe the attacks were carried out by pro-Iranian Shiite Moslems.

"I ask the Marines to move from that area to say West Beirut or to another place and in their places the Italians or English should be deployed," Berri said. If the Marines refused, he added, they should leave Lebanon.

Berri and the other leaders of Lebanon's warring factions failed to reach agreement on the troop withdrawal pact during a day of often-heated talks marked by a bomb scare, a walkout by one delegate and a brief scene over the searching of another.

**Vote defeats defense cut**

WASHINGTON — The House rejected an attempt Wednesday to cut off money for American peacekeeping troops in Lebanon, a move that would have ordered the Marine force home in four months and defied Pres. Ronald Reagan's Middle East policy.

After an emotional, 90-minute debate, members sided with a call by Democratic Speaker Thomas O'Neill Jr., to support the Republican administration and defeat the measure, a proposed amendment to a \$247.3 billion defense spending bill.

The vote marked the most direct congressional challenge of Reagan's decision to keep the Marines in Lebanon even after a terrorist bombing of their headquarters in Beirut killed 238 servicemen.

The House voted in September to let the Marines stay at their posts in Beirut for up to 18 more months. The 1,600 troops were deployed to the war-torn city in September 1982 as part of a four-nation peacekeeping force.

But members shaken by the Oct. 23 truck-bombing of Marine headquarters say they fear the troops are occupying indefensible

positions that invite further attacks and bloodshed.

The defense bill, about \$14 billion below Reagan's request but \$14 billion more than its fiscal 1983 counterpart, contains funds for virtually every major military program the Pentagon requested, including MX missiles and B-1B bombers.

One exception was Reagan's request for \$124 million to build a new generation of nerve-gas weapons, which both the House and Senate Appropriations committees denied in their drafting sessions.

**Gay issues divide clergy**

ROSEBURG — Following a day of fasting and prayer, clergymen from 20 Protestant churches have released a statement condemning homosexuality as a sin that "is not compatible with Christianity."

But the pastor of the church where the local debate started responded that he felt homosexuality was a human condition and not a sin.

The statement released Tuesday came in the wake of the Roseburg United Methodist Church's decision in September to refuse a request from the predominantly gay Metropolitan Community Church to hold worship services there.

About a dozen Roseburg-area residents attend Metropolitan Community Church services, which are usually held in a private home.

The clergymen who issued the statement said they would be willing to counsel and pray with gay people "who desire to be set free from the sin of homosexuality."

"Homosexuality is sin and, therefore, is not compatible with Christianity," the statement read. "God completely destroyed two cities Sodom and Gomorrah, because of this very sin."

The Rev. Charles Snyder of the Assembly of God Church said the pastors decided on a joint statement after many local people requested their views on the issue.

Unable to reach a consensus in earlier discussions, they called for a day of fasting and prayer last week to consider the issue.

"It is obvious that many of us have sincere differences both in understanding of human sexuality and Biblical interpretation," said the Rev. Ted Hulbert of the Roseburg Methodist Church.

"I continue to find evidence that sexual orientation is part of our nature, not a choice, and therefore not a sin. The Bible speaks to how we use our sexuality and not to the nature of sexual orientation."

**King holiday made official**

WASHINGTON — With Martin Luther King's widow at his side, Pres. Ronald Reagan signed legislation Wednesday he once opposed that honors the slain civil rights leader with a national holiday.

Reagan said King "stirred our nation to the very depths of its soul" in battling racial discrimination.

Congressional leaders and veterans of the civil rights movement, including Jesse Jackson, the Rev. Ralph Abernathy, and Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young, filled the Rose Garden for the signing ceremony.

The proceedings climaxed as the crowd softly sang, "We Shall Overcome" — the anthem of King's nonviolent crusade against segregation.

King's widow, Coretta Scott King, told the crowd, "America is a more democratic nation, a more just nation, a more peaceful nation because Martin Luther King became her preeminent non-violent commander."

While saying the nation had made huge strides in civil rights, Reagan declared that "traces of bigotry still mar America."

He said King's holiday should serve as a reminder to follow the principles that King espoused: "Thou shalt love thy God with all thy heart, and thy shall love thy neighbor as thyself."

The legislation makes the third Monday in January a legal public holiday, beginning in January, 1986.

**This elephant wasn't pink**

ROCHESTER, N.Y. — Judges let their imaginations run wild in the first year of Rochester's community service sentencing program for nonviolent offenders.

One man convicted of drunken driving was ordered to clean the elephant cages at a city zoo.

A shoplifter who was also a singer had to do four concerts at senior citizen homes.

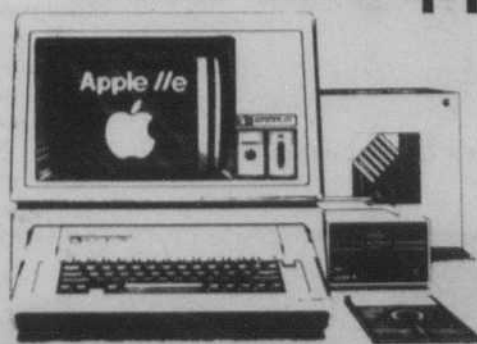
A man who was growing marijuana in his attic had to grow 50 house plants for senior citizens' homes.

A snow plow operator, convicted of several driving charges, had to plow the parking lot of the American Cancer Society.

However, the elephant cage cleaner encountered a little trouble returning home, City Court Judge William Bristol said Tuesday at the program's first birthday party.

"He rode the bus to work, but they wouldn't let him on when he got done. He had to walk home."

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