IN BRIEF

Guilty Plea Entered In Howard Beach Case

■ NEW YORK (AP) — One of the seven remaining defendants in the Howard Beach case pleaded guilty to felony riot charges Tuesday before jury selection resumed in the second trial stemming from what is alleged to have been a racial attack.

Salvatore DeSimone, 20, also pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor charge of criminal facilitation for driving members of a white gang on Dec. 20, 1986. DeSimone entered his plea before state Supreme Court Justice Thomas Demakos.

DeSimone's attorney, Augustus Agate, said that as part of the plea, his client would not be required to testify against the other defendants in the case. He also said that DeSimone would get youthful offender status and would avoid a jail term at his sentencing June 27.

While entering his plea, DeSimone contradicted statements attributed to him in a police report about the incident, which left Michael Griffith, 23, dead after he was struck and killed by a car on a nearby highway.

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Dominican Republic Replaces Two Officials

■ SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic (AP) — President Joaquin Balaguer has fired the heads of the national police and air force.



Balaguer

Balaguer took the action Monday without any warning or official explanation.

Presidential decrees designated Col. Nelson Jose Morillo Rodriguez as the new chief of police and Col. Fausto Miguel Cruz Ramirez as head of the air force. Both were promoted to major general.

No explanation was given for why Gen. Fernando Aristides Sanchez Aybar was dismissed as police chief or why Gen. Hector Miguel Roman Torres was removed as head of the air force. Neither man was given a new assignment.

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Soviet Scientists Visit Chemical Arms Factory

■ PORTON, England (AP) — The first Soviets to visit a chemical warfare plant in Western Europe watched Tuesday as British soldiers ripped off their helmets, donned gas masks and injected themselves with antidote against a simulated nerve gas attack.

Armed with cameras and notebooks, the 13 Soviet scientists and military experts responded by expressing hope that their three-day visit would help promote progress on negotiations for a global ban on chemical weapons.

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Pentagon Doubts Story

Militia Fighting Heats Up In Be

Compiled From News Services

BEIRUT, Lebanon — Fighters loyal to Iran assaulted the last pocket held by pro-Syrian militiamen in the Shiite Moslem slums Tuesday, increasing pressure on Syria's army to move in and stop the 19-day-old war.

Police said 17 people had been killed and 49 wounded in house-to-house fighting in south Beirut, a warren of narrow alleys, tin-roofed huts and concrete-block apartments. The area covers 16 square miles next to the Beirut airport.

That raised the casualty total kept by police to 296 killed and 1,000 wounded since fighting began May 6 between Hezbollah, the radical group allied with Iran, and Amal, the mainline militia supported by Syria.

In addition, three Syrian soldiers were killed and two wounded on Tuesday when a stray shell hit their post on the edge of Beirut's southern suburbs, security sources reported.

They said a mortar shell had crashed into a Syrian checkpoint.

Fighting was also reported in east Beirut, the city's Christian sector. The right-wing Phalange of President Amin Gemayel clashed Monday night with the Lebanese Forces, the main Christian militia. The militias are rivals for control of east Beirut.

One person was killed and four were wounded, police said. Police say the fight started after Lebanese Forces gunmen wounded Nabil Kahhaleh, Phalange commander in the Sin el-Fil district.

Hezbollah is in control of 95 percent of south Beirut; where most of the 18 foreigners missing in Lebanon are believed to be held by Shiite factions linked to the militia. Nine Americans are among the captives.

A police spokesman said Hezbollah fighters "stormed through Amal positions" in the Ghobeiry neighborhood behind a fierce howitzer and mortar barrage.

Amal withdrew into the Shiyah district on the northern edge of the slums, he said. "Hezbollah now controls the southern and western flanks of Shiyah and its gunners are pounding Amal's supply lines on the northern edge," said the spokesman, whose name cannot be used because of regulations.

Syria's soldiers patrol west Beirut.

Syria deployed 7,500 soldiers, 100 tanks and 400 armored vehicles on the southern, western and northern edges of the slums May 15 after Hezbollah seized most of the slums.

Salim Hoss, a Sunni Moslem who is Lebanon's acting prime minister, has called on Syria to act "without delay" to end the fighting.

Amal conceded defeat in Ghobeiry and claimed that Palestinian guerrillas from Fatah, the mai
Yasser Arafat's Palestine
Organization, were
Hezbollah.

The PLO controls Bour
neh, a refugee enclave in
slums.

An Amal statement saic
lah has managed to ach
gains in Ghobeiry."

The statement said that
by Hezbollah had been c
by senior officers of the
Fatah and Iranian Rev
Guards sent from their ba
ern Lebanon. Fatah deni
Hezbollah.

T-54 tanks and truck
rocket launchers manned
fighters poured fire from
Hezbollah territory.

No clear word on the
hostages has emerged sinc
for the Shiite slums began.

Airliner Loses Power, Lands At Old Airstrip

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — A jet making an approach in bad weather lost power Tuesday in both engines and made an emergency landing six miles short of the airport where it was trying to land, authorities said.

The plane, a Taca International Airlines Boeing 737, landed near an abandoned World War II airstrip.

The plane was on its way from San Salvador, El Salvador, and had made a stop at Belize.

All 36 passengers and nine crew members scrambled unharmed from the plane to a nearby levee as a driving rainstorm started.

An official for Taca, Peter Messina, said that the cause of the engine trouble was unknown and that the aircraft was only three weeks old. He said the jet apparently had suffered no damage when it landed.

The plane put down on a narrow strip of grass with a drainage canal on one side and a levee on the other.

Crew members brushed past reporters without talking and passengers were given little opportunity to talk as they were escorted away by police and Customs officials. But when they did speak they heaped praise on the pilot, identified by Messina as Carlos Dardano, 35, of El Salvador. Dardano has been with Taca for about five years, Messina said.

The airline is based in El Salvador but has its main office in New Orleans.

"It was a very smooth landing," said July Mora, a travel agent from New Orleans who was on the flight. "I thought we were at the airport. I was surprised to learn we had landed on a levee."

The Rev. Leo Humphrey, 52, a Baptist missionary returning to New Orleans from El Salvador, said, "As the pilot said, 'By the grace of God, I got this sucker on the ground.' "

The pilot radioed shortly after noon that he had lost power in both engines of the plane, said Paul Bourg, an area supervisor at the control tower at New Orleans International Airport.

"Control was in the process of trying to direct him to Lakefront Airport, which is
port, a little sr
it," Bourg said

"About five
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New Jersey Acts T Control Of City's S

TRENTON, N.J. (AP) — New Jersey officials began legal action Tuesday to take control of the troubled Jersey City schools system.

In doing so, they said local administrators repeatedly failed to improve education for the district's 32,000 students.

The action, under the state's take-

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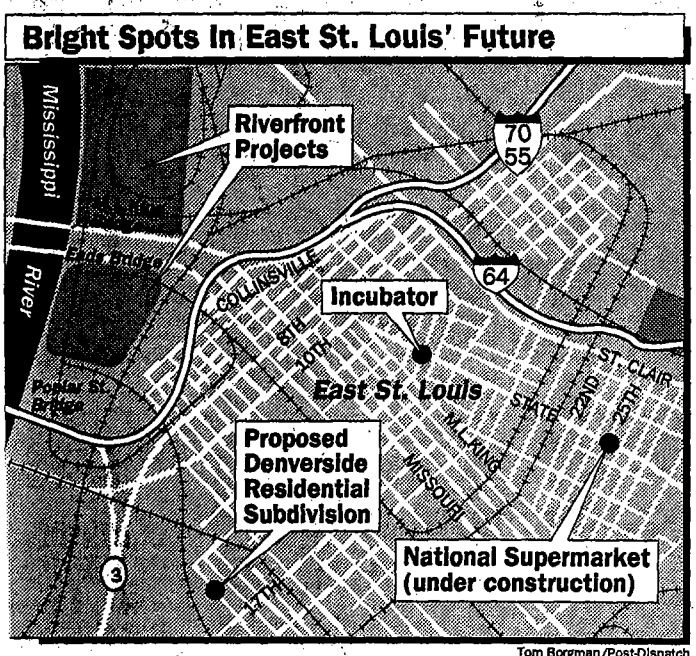

Tom Borgman/Post-Dispatch



ABOVE: **One of the houses built recently on the south side. Officials hope the new homes, a rarity in East St. Louis in recent years, may be a sign of better times to come.**

BELOW: **Sylvia Jackson-Holt, director of the East St. Louis Small Business Center, shows space to a prospective tenant. Called the "incubator," the center is helping seven fledgling companies get started.**





Martin L. Seidel, a merchant in downtown East St. Louis, is upbeat about the city's future. Seidel, 85, owns a women's clothing store at 239 Collinsville Avenue which hung on as other businesses pulled out.

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