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Kidnapping sparks violence in Beirut

BEIRUT, Lebanon (UPI) — Gunmen kidnapped two Lebanese faculty members of the American University of Beirut Sunday as rival gunmen clashed across Beirut and in the mountains that overlook the capital.

Guerrillas said they launched a rocket attack on an Israeli-backed militia position in southern Lebanon.

A police spokesman said unidentified gunmen seized the two Lebanese teachers near the AUB campus in west Beirut and sped off in a car. He said contact was made with Moslem militiamen seeking the release of Joseph Salameh, an economist, and Munir Shamaa of the university hospital.

The spokesman said the seizure of the two Christians apparently was part of a string of such kidnappings by Moslem and Christian militiamen in the capital and was not related to the plight of foreign hostages in Lebanon.

The American director of AUH, David Jacobsen, and AUB Agriculture Dean Thomas Sutherland were kidnapped in May and June and are believed to be held by the same Moslem fundamentalists holding at least two other Americans.

AUB librarian Peter Kilburn was kidnapped in November 1984, but his condition is unclear.

A total of six Americans, four Frenchmen, a Briton and an Italian are missing after being kidnapped in west Beirut. Some 2,000 Lebanese also disappeared during the 10 years of civil war; most are feared dead.

The abductions Sunday came one day after unidentified gunmen kidnapped two Finnish soldiers in west Beirut, demanding an exchange for two Shiite Moslem bank robbers captured by the army in a shootout hours earlier.

The two Finnish members of a U.N.

peace-keeping force based in southern Lebanon were freed unharmed after eight hours with the help of the Shiite Amal militia and army. The two robbers are still in detention, police said.

In southern Lebanon, Israeli soldiers backed by helicopters captured two Palestinian guerrillas just north of the border in their second strike against Palestinian fighters in a week, the Israeli military said.

Authorities said the two prisoners admitted under interrogation that they planned to attack an Israeli settlement and that they were members of the pro-Syrian Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine movement.

Christian and Moslem militiamen fought sporadically with machine guns and automatic weapons along the Green Line dividing mostly Moslem west Beirut from the Christian east. The military said there were

no immediate casualty reports

In the Shouf Mountains east of the capital, Druze Moslem militiamen traded machine-gun and sniper fire with Lebanese soldiers. Each side blamed the other for the hostilities.

The violence in the capital coincided with an announcement by the Lebanese National Resistance Front — a coalition of guerrilla groups fighting Israeli-backed forces in southern Lebanon — that "fighters" scored direct hits at dawn on a hilltop post of the South Lebanon Army militia.

There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military on the reported attack on the position of the Israeli-backed SLA, near the village of Alit Al Taher, 5 miles from the Israeli border.

Beirut radio, which is controlled by the

Shiite Moslem Amal militia, said SLA gunners later bombarded three villages and caused heavy material damage but no casualties' in apparent retaliation for the guerrilla raid.

Overhead, Israeli warplanes on increased reconnaissance missions across Lebanon broke the sound barrier several times.

Shiite Moslem Amal militia leader Nabih Berri warned last week that his men would launch cross-border attacks on Israel if SLA and Israeli gunners shelled villages in Lebanon.

In other developments, Sunni Moslem Voice of the Nation radio said Sunni representatives left for Damascus late Sunday to consult with Syrian officials on details of a Syrian-sponsored plan to end violence in west Beirut.

Future Farmers vice president from Missouri

Year of travel, speeches ahead

By Rhonda Scheulen
Missourian staff writer

In the next year, University junior Kevin Coffman will travel to Japan, meet President Ronald Reagan and visit about 40 states — all for free.

Coffman, who is majoring in agricultural economics and agricultural education, will travel as the national vice president of the Central Region for the Future Farmers of America. He was elected to the office in November.

"It's the most exciting thing that has ever happened to me," Coffman said. "I really believe in the Future Farmers of America, and it's an honor to have been selected to serve as a national officer."

Coffman grew up on a diversified crop and livestock farm near Holiday, Mo. In 1983-84, he served as president of the Missouri Future Farmers of America Association. He spent much of his free time traveling throughout the state.

But Coffman will be putting his studies on hold this year when his travels expand to overseas. When he returns to the academic world in January 1987, the organization will give him a \$4,000 scholarship. During the next 12 months, he will travel nearly 200,000 miles. His first trip will be to Washington, D.C., where

he will receive his assignments for the rest of the year.

"January is already booked full," he said. "It's amazing how busy we will be and how many states we'll visit in the first couple of months."

To start February off on the right foot, the officers will travel to Tokyo.

Coffman said it's hard for him to believe he will be traveling to the Orient in less than two months.

"When you grow up in a small town, you don't think about trips to Japan very often," he said. "You can read about it in books and see it on television, but that's not quite the same as the chance to actually experience it."

While in Japan, Coffman will spend a few days on a farm with a host family, tour manufacturing plants and visit with his counterparts in the Future Farmers of Japan organization.

After returning from the Orient, Coffman will do the rest of his traveling in the United States.

Coffman's thrill began when the organization chose their six national officers at the group's national convention in Kansas City.

Each state was allowed to send one candidate to the convention. Coffman was selected to represent Missouri because of his public speaking ability, leadership skills and involvement in the group's activities.

"In any occupation, your ability to communicate is important," Coffman said. "An ability to express



Kevin Coffman, national vice president of FFA, at his family's farm near Madison, Mo.

Peter Essick

yourself and your ideas can lead to better understanding. That makes communications an especially vital part of agriculture today."

Thirty states sent candidates to the national convention this year, where they were interviewed by a committee. Coffman was selected out of 10 candidates from the coun-

try's central region, which included Kansas, Missouri, Illinois and Iowa.

As a national officer, Coffman will visit high school vocational agriculture programs, meet more than 25,000 Future Farmers of America members, visit farms and agribusiness companies and deliver more than 500 speeches. The group's

membership totals 430,000.

Most of Coffman's speeches will focus on the agricultural industry and leadership potential.

Coffman will travel with the other officers for the first week of January in Missouri before spending a week on his own in Arkansas. For the third week of the month, the officers

will be back together in Oklahoma; then they'll go to Washington, D.C., for a few days.

"It's a chance for this Missouri-grown boy to spread his wings and experience the culture of other places," Coffman said. "I know this is going to be one of the most educational and fun years of my life."

Air raids dominate Iranian, Iraqi front

United Press International

Iraq said Sunday its warplanes made 160 bombing raids on Iranian troops massed for a new offensive. Iran said it shot down one of the attacking Iraqi planes.

In the Gulf, an Iraqi missile pierced a Greek tanker shuttling oil from Iran's main oil terminal at Kharg Island to a new Iranian terminal at Sirri Island near the Strait of Hormuz, Greek shipping sources in Athens said.

The sources said the missile struck the 118,000-ton Polys in an empty hold, and the supertanker continued to Sirri Island under its own power. Its crew of 34 was unhurt.

Iraq said in a military communiqué its forces shot down one attacking Iraqi plane with ground fire over the Howzea marshes near Majnoon island.

Iraqi said it would hold the Iranians responsible for the safety of the pilot, who apparently bailed out before his plane hit the

ground near Jofayr.

The official Iraqi news agency said Iraqi warplanes "inflicted heavy losses on Iranian military personnel and equipment" during 160 raids on two camps.

Late last week, the Iraqis said their jets carried out 120 raids on Iranian troop positions and that Iraqi helicopter gunships also made several attacks.

Iraq said its troops shelled several Iraqi boats staging an attack near Majnoon island on Saturday.

The boat attack in the marshes was the second in as many days. Iranian troops Friday spotted several Iraqi patrol boats near Jofayr but repelled them with heavy artillery fire, the official Iranian news agency said.

The military communique issued in Tehran said Iranian troops Saturday "pounded Iraqi" positions throughout the southern front, halting their logistic operations and inflicting heavy casualties.

Reassessment hits Greeks hard

House owners push for change of classification

By Steve Richards
Missourian staff writer

Just when they were making plans to finish construction on the Delta Gamma house at UMC, Marcie Maledy and other members of the sorority's housing corporation received the house's property-tax assessment. It wasn't welcome news.

The sorority now owes the county \$9,974 — a 148 percent increase from last year's bill of \$3,940.

The increased taxes, a result of Missouri counties' property reassessment effort, spurred the Delta Gammas to begin thinking of ways to cut corners to pay the bills.

Maledy said she has a few ideas on how to raise the tax money; none are pleasant. "We'll have to go ahead and borrow some money that we hadn't expected to do." The housing corporation also may be forced to raise its house fees, she said.

The Delta Gammas aren't the only ones facing an increase. Reassessment, the update of property values throughout Missouri, has hit the University's fraternities and sororities

hard. Property-tax bills have doubled and tripled for most. For some, taxes have skyrocketed more than 500 percent.

The jolting increases stem from a decision by the state to classify fraternity and sorority houses as commercial property. Residential property is assessed at 19 percent of its value; commercial property is assessed at 32 percent.

The county bases its taxes on a percentage of each property's market value. That percentage, known as the assessed valuation, differs for each class of property.

Fraternity and sorority housing corporations are working to change their property's classification from commercial to residential. Director of Equalization Guy Long, who supervised reassessment for Boone County, said that change would cut down the houses' taxes by half.

"The difference between residential and commercial is twice the taxes," Long said. That would mean the county would collect \$173,201 rather than the \$332,837 the corporations now owe.

But changing the classification is difficult. The process requires each chapter to appeal to county and state committees.

Representatives of 28 of the University's fraternities and sororities took the first step in July when they appealed the classification to the Boone County Board of Equalization. The board refused to make the houses residential property.

Maledy said she's miffed by the board's rejection. "I think the judges we met could have changed it; they seemed to be in agreement with us."

Although the board could have changed the classification, the State Tax Commission has final say in assessment appeals, Long said.

Board members said they thought the issue should be resolved at the state level. Long said there is no statewide standard for assessing fraternity and sorority houses. For example, the houses at William Jewell College in Clay County have been assessed as residential property.

The next step for the organizations was to appeal to the State Tax Com-

mission. Twenty-six of them met the commission's Sept. 30 deadline.

Thomas Barklage, a St. Charles lawyer, will represent most of these chapters when the tax commission calls them for pre-hearing conferences. The commission requires a lawyer to represent commercial property owners during the appeals process. Residential property owners can represent themselves.

"From this point on, we don't have anything to go with it," said Jim Estes, property manager for seven University fraternity houses.

Estes and other fraternity and sorority alumni still wonder why their houses were classified as commercial property. The state classifies property containing more than four dwelling units as commercial.

By that definition, apartment complexes would count as commercial property. State guidelines, however, don't provide specifically for sorority and fraternity houses.

Because of the confusion, Long asked the State Tax Commission in the summer of 1984 for its opinion on how to assess the houses.

"We wanted to know if they fit the