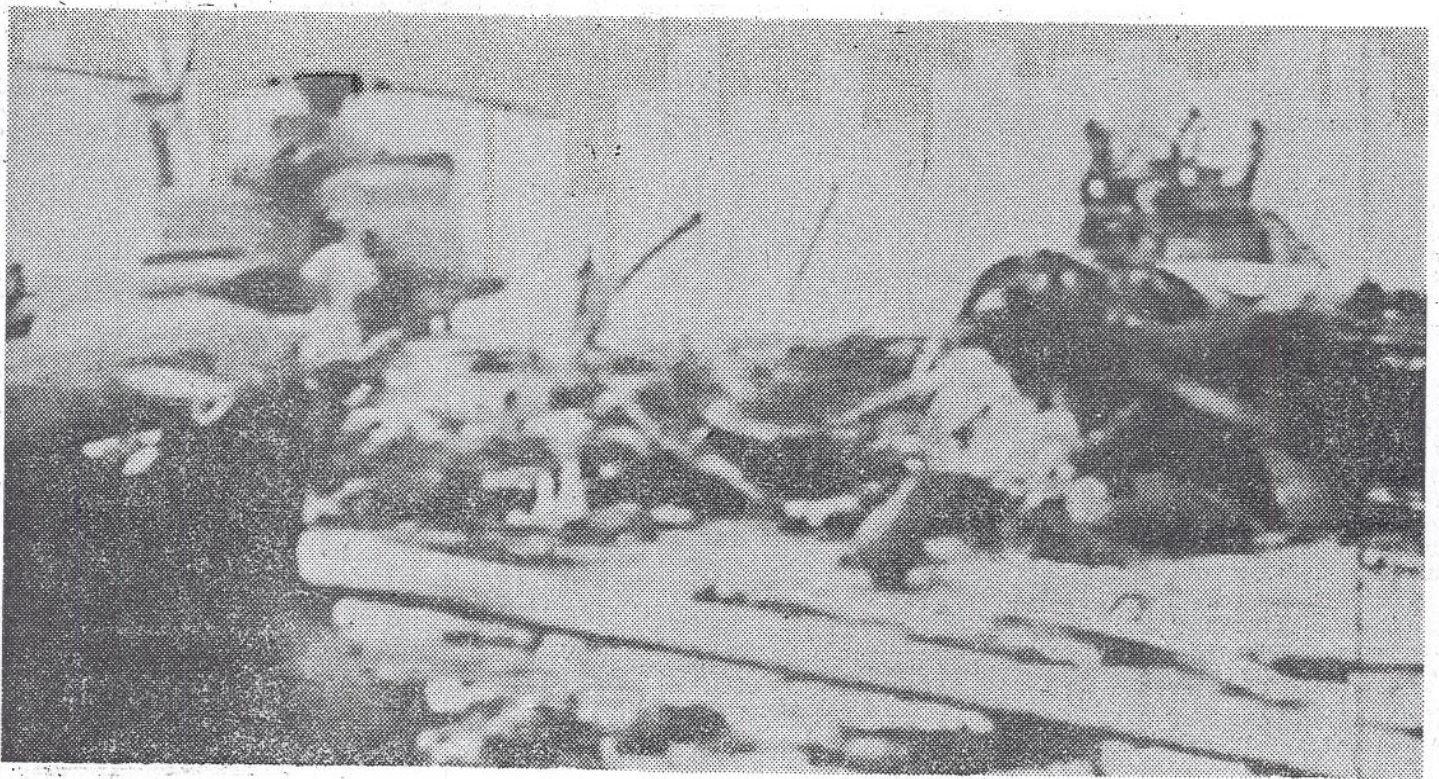


Washington Post

SUNDAY, APRIL 27, 1980

Hostages Moved From Embassy, Iran Says



Associated Press

Photo taken from CBS monitors of Iranian newscast shows eastern Iran area where helicopters and wreckage of C130 were left behind.

Another Shock for Hostage

Bewilderment . . . Sorrow . . . Anger

By Stephen J. Lynton

Special to The Washington Post

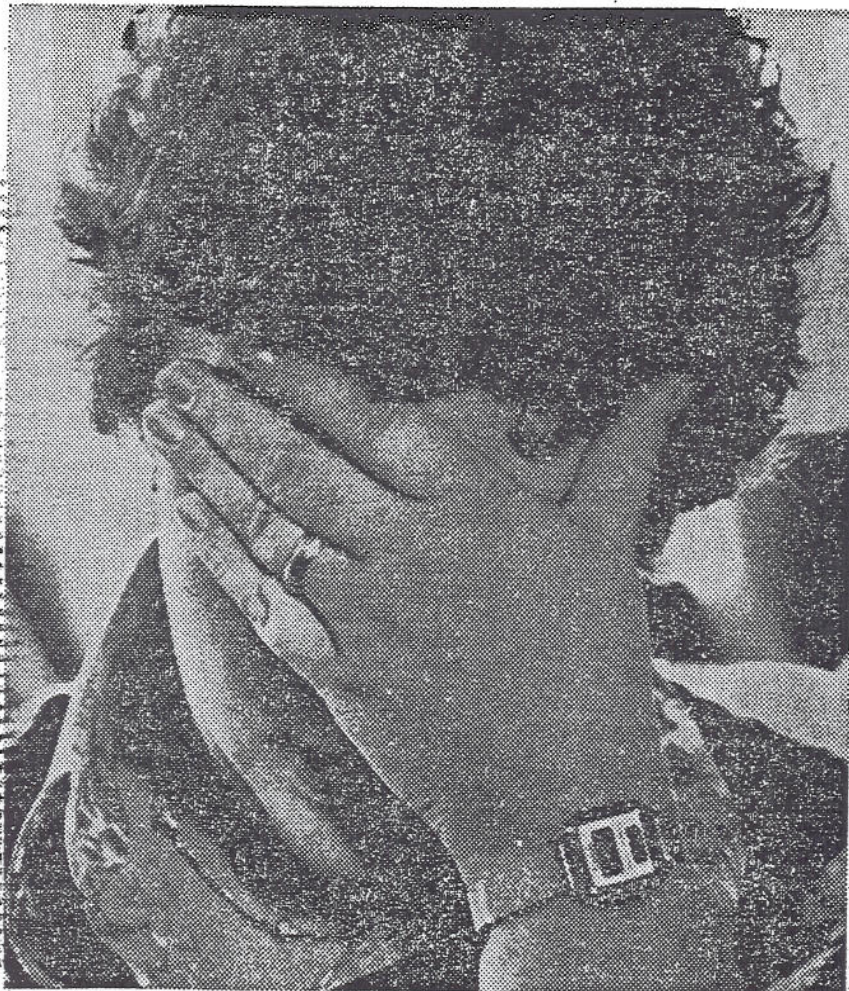
At homes of hostages' families scat-

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Saturday, April 26, 1980

THE WASHINGTON POST



United Press International

Carol Elledge of Kennewick, Wash., wipes tears as she pauses to talk to press in Denver airport en route to federal briefing in Houston on her hostage brother.

tered across America, their relatives spoke in somber tones yesterday, reflecting bewilderment, shock, fear, sorrow, disappointment, some anger and some lingering hope.

"It's a 'bumbling error by the president," said Zane Hall of Little Falls, Minn., whose son, Joseph, is among the 53 hostages in Tehran. Hours earlier he had learned of the abortive rescue attempt in Iran. "We didn't approve of it," Hall added. "We don't know what this could lead to."

Others disagreed.

"Our feelings now are that we are going to support President Carter in the action that he took. We're sorry it didn't work," said Mary Needham of Bellevue, Neb., whose son, Paul, is a captive. "I don't want to see this disintegrate into 'Hey, he should have done this—hey, he should have done that.' This is no time for that."

John W. Limbert, father of a hostage, telephoned the White House yesterday morning to express sympathy for the eight killed in the rescue mission and voice understanding for a Carter's move. "I understand why he had to go in at this point in time," Limbert said later. "He had to take action."

Sorrow for the dead and disappointment at the collapse of the rescue mission were widespread among hostages' families.

In Washington, a group known as FLAG (Family Liaison Action Group), which represents hostages' families, issued a statement expressing "deepest sympathy to the families of those servicemen who lost their lives in the rescue attempt to free our captives in Iran."

Susie Roeder, a hostage's wife, conveyed her sadness in simpler terms. "I can identify with their families. My husband is a pilot, too," she said at her Northern Virginia home, decked with an American flag and a yellow ribbon.

The failure of the rescue attempt was a bitter disappointment for Eugene Lauterbach of Dayton, Ohio, whose son is a hostage. "It's a great pity that they didn't pull it off," he said.

Many hostages' relatives were stunned, by news of the rescue mission, surprised it had been attempted with no clear forewarning. Richard Hermening, the father of a hostage, did not believe it had happened with a newsman telephoned him early yesterday at his suburban Milwaukee home.

"I went back to bed and thought that was a rumor," he said. Soon, however, a Marine Corps official called



Associated Press

Dorothea Morefield, wife of the imprisoned U.S. consul general in Tehran, embraces son eKenneth, 14, in San Diego home after learning of attempted rescue.

him with a government statement. Then he became distressed.

Hermening is the father of the youngest hostage, Kevin, a 20-year-old Marine sergeant. His former wife, Barbara Timm, is in Tehran, where she was allowed to visit their hostage son earlier this week. Yesterday, both parents criticized President Carter.

"I'm a little confused about how he really expected to pull this off," Hermening said in a telephone interview. "I thought the timing was bad. The maneuver itself was bad."

In an ABC News interview, Timm said, "I am very angry that the president of our country would do something so stupid, something that we've been told for five months could be so disastrous and could not in any way bring about good results."

She charged that the president and

his advisers "are not capable of handling this crisis," reiterating her appeal for congressional action to break the U.S.-Iran impasse.

Also caught by surprise were four hostage kin who are in Europe as FLAG representatives seeking allied support for efforts to gain the captives' release.

At a news conference in London, Louisa Kennedy, wife of a hostage and FLAG's news media representative, said she was "extremely distressed" about the abortive rescue. "I regret that it didn't work," she said.

But she added, "I do not think covert action of this kind is necessarily reckless."

One possible effect of the failed rescue mission, Kennedy and other hostages' relatives said yesterday, may be a security clampdown at the embassy compound in Tehran and a cutoff of communication between the hostages and their families. "We, the families, suspect that for the next few weeks, we won't even be able to get letters," Kennedy said. They have been receiving letters sporadically.

This possible loss of contact was especially troubling to Elsie Koob of Jubilee, Iowa, whose daughter, Kathryn, is a hostage. "We got two letters from her in April plus a message from the (International Committee of the) Red Cross that she was okay. I'm just worried that this may cut all communications with her. I just wish I knew how the Iranians will react," she said.

Fear, an emotion that has been rising in recent weeks among hostages' families, was near a high point early yesterday. Later in the day, as no new threat from the militants emerged, the families' worries seemed to ease slightly.

"There certainly is more danger than before," said Clara Holland, mother of Col. Leland J. Holland, the Army attache for the occupied em-

bassy. "It depends on what the militants will do."

"The only thing I can say is I am deeply worried and concerned about the fate and future of the hostages," said Harold Queen, a father, speaking in carefully measured words. "I'm making as noncommittal a statement as I can make and still be responsive."

Fears had previously mounted among hostages' families chiefly because of President Carter's increasingly explicit threat of possible military moves against Iran. Yet despite recent meetings with high State Department officials, they appeared wholly unprepared for yesterday's rescue attempt.

Some hostages' families from the Washington area met Wednesday, for example, with David D. Newsom, un-

dersecretary of state for political affairs. "There was a very big concern about military action. We were all scared to death about it. We still are," said one relative.

Nevertheless, the relative noted, "I came away feeling that there was not going to be military action."

Another meeting of hostage families is scheduled in Houston this weekend.

Still, many relatives clung to hopes. "I can't say it will. I can't say it won't. We just have to hope nothing happens," said Bettie Jo Kirtley, a hostage's mother.

Contributing to this report were Washington Post correspondent Leonard Downie Jr. in London and staff writers Sandra G. Boodman, Athelia Knight and Robert Myers.