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52 hostages wing to haven in Germany after 444 days



The Associated Press

After 444 days of captivity, the 52 former hostages arrived at Rhoss-Main Air Base outside Frankfurt, West Germany, early today in the throes of hundreds of fellow Americans.

A huge cheer arose from the military and civilian personnel gathered along the tarmac in frigid pre-dawn temperatures to greet the freed captives as they arrived on two medical-evacuation planes from Algiers, where they were flown after release from Tehran.

Former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and other U.S. officials greeted them as

• It was Jimmy Lopez's heroism that allowed five other Americans to escape to the Canadian Embassy, and eventually back to this country, when the U.S. Embassy was overrun. Page 15A.

• A team of doctors and psychiatrists is on hand in West Germany to examine the hostages, and there will be creature comforts galore at the hospital where "decompression" will occur. Page 3A.

they came down the steps from the plane, wearing parkas against the cold.

The former captives were immediately bused to a U.S. Air Force hospital in Wiesbaden about 20 miles away, where they were cheered by Germans lining the streets near the hospital before receiving a tumultuous welcome from hundreds gathered on the grounds of the facility, dubbed the "Freedom Hotel" by its staff.

Church bells rang through this town on the hills above the Rhine River as their police-escorted motorcade arrived.

Doctors, nurses and patients lined the front porch and second- and third-story balconies in anticipation of their arrival.

Yellow ribbons were hung from trees and buildings all over the hospital grounds.

Earlier, as they landed in Algeria, the freed Americans were greeted with embraces, kisses and tearful cries of "God bless you" by their countrymen on a wind-swept runway at the Algiers airport.

Algerian intermediaries turned them

(See HOSTAGES, Page 15A)

Former hostages, from left, Barry Rosen, Donald Cooke, Kathryn Koob and Michael J. Metrisko at Algiers airport

'No compromise on principles'

Reagan takes office for 'era of renewal'

By JEROME R. WATSON
(HI) Chicago Sun-Times

WASHINGTON — In balmy, springlike weather, Ronald Wilson Reagan took the oath of office as the nation's 40th president yesterday and summoned Americans to "begin an era of national renewal" that would be a revitalization of the economy and the people's faith in their country.

"It is time to reawaken this industrial giant, to get government back within its means, and to lighten our punitive tax burden," Reagan said after taking the oath at noon EST. "These will be our first priorities, and on these principles there will be no compromise."

Reagan also said, "We must act today in order to preserve tomorrow. And let there be no misunderstanding — we are going to act beginning today."

Only moments before, George Bush was sworn in as the nation's 43rd vice president.

The celebratory spirit of the occasion was magnified by a news heliport only minutes before the swearing-in that announced the 52 American hostages had been freed from their 444-day captivity in Iran. In fact, the hostages' plane left the Tehran airport at 12:20 p.m. EST.

Just as Jimmy Carter, at his inaugural four years ago, thanked outgoing President Gerald R. Ford for his efforts to heal the nation's scars, so Reagan drew applause by lauding Carter.

"Mr. President," Reagan said, "I want you fellow citizens to know how much you did to carry on this tradition of a smooth transfer of power. By your gracious cooperation in the transition process, you have shown a watching world that we are a united people pledged to maintaining a political system that guarantees individual liberty to a greater degree than any other."



Tough move — Amy Carter, daughter of former President Jimmy Carter, breaks into tears as she and her family prepare to board their plane to return to Plains, Ga. (AP)

In an obvious reference to the Iranian crisis, Reagan also praised the "will and courage" of a free people as a powerful weapon not enjoyed by the nation's adversaries, and added: "Let that be understood by those who practice terrorism and prey upon their neighbors." The remark drew warm applause.

Reagan has criticized Carter for allegedly pursuing erratic policies toward allies, including an inconsistent application of the Carter human-rights doctrine.

—To the enemies of freedom, to those who are potential adversaries, they will be

(See REAGAN ASKS, Page 14A)

The buoyant Reagan, who will be 70 next month, struck themes familiar from his campaign and his long public career as he pledged to take steps to end an "economic affliction of great proportions" that he said has featured a punitive tax system, insupportable federal budget deficits and too much government.

But Reagan, accused by some of lacking concern for the unfortunate, pledged to "reflect the compassion that is so much a part of (the nation's) makeup."

"We are too great a nation to limit ourselves to small dreams," Reagan said. "We are not, as some would have us believe, doomed to inevitable decline. I do not believe in a fate that will fall on us no matter what we do. I do believe in a fate that will fall on us if we do nothing."

"So, with all the creative energy at our command, let us begin an era of national renewal. Let us renew our determination, our courage, and our strength. Let us renew our faith and our hope. We have every right to dream heroic dreams."

Reagan's speech focused heavily on his dream of a national renaissance, but in two short passages, he took note of the turbulent international situation.

"To those neighbors and allies who share our ideal of freedom," Reagan said, "we will strengthen our historic ties and assure them of our support and firm commitment. We will match loyalty with loyalty. We will strive for mutually beneficial relations. We will not use our friendship to impose on their sovereignty, for our sovereignty is not for sale."

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The nation's 40th president kisses his wife, Nancy, after taking the oath of office