

Pope John Paul II makes ninety-fourth foreign visit to Ukraine

By the Associated Press
INTERNATIONAL
KIEV, Ukraine — When Pope John Paul II arrives in Ukraine on Saturday on his 94th foreign visit, he will find a nation still lurching through the transition from communism to economic and religious freedoms, and one eager to show it has more to offer than corruption and the Chernobyl nuclear plant.

The country will not be completely alien to the pope, who was born in a little town between Poland's Krakow and the current border with Ukraine. Yet while Polish language and culture is kin to Ukrainian, Poland abandoned communism much more swiftly and smoothly than its neighbor.

Visitors to Ukraine may be pleasantly surprised by the new European look acquired by the capital Kiev and some other major cities since independence a decade ago. But it conceals a country still strongly gripped by its Soviet past.

Although dependent on outside energy sources, Ukraine has everything else a nation could want for prosperity: Across a territory larger than France, it boasts rich black soil, numerous rivers, mineral resources, the picturesque Carpathian mountains, long coasts

ap news capsules

along the Black and Azov Seas, and a population of 49 million.

Ukraine — which means “borderland” — spent centuries under Russian domination, and most of the 20th century under Soviet control.

LIMA, Peru — Speaking from prison, New Yorker Lori Berenson said standing up for her principles has taken a devastating toll on her and her family — but she expects to be freed and ultimately vindicated.

“I was really totally appalled when they read the sentence,” Berenson told The Associated Press in exclusive comments Thursday.

“Unfortunately, I really couldn’t show it, basically because I was afraid they would misinterpret any reaction I would have.”

Berenson, sentenced Wednesday to 20 years in prison for “terrorist collaboration,” was not allowed face-to-face interviews with the media. But she was able to respond on tape to written questions delivered to her from the AP. Her mother, Rhoda, confirmed it was her daughter’s voice.

“What is positive about this trial is

the fact I could actually say the truth, not only about me, but about what I feel about Peru, what I feel about the situation here,” Berenson said on the tape.

NATIONAL
CULVER CITY, Calif. — Carroll O’Connor, whose gruff charm as the cranky bigot Archie Bunker on “All in the Family” pioneered a new era of TV comedies that brought race relations into America’s living rooms, has died of a heart attack. He was 76.

O’Connor collapsed at his home and was rushed to Brotman Medical Center, publicist Frank Tobin said. His wife of nearly 50 years, Nancy, was at his side.

Despite declining health, O’Connor remained active until the end of his life. He had a toe amputated last year because of circulatory troubles related to diabetes and underwent coronary bypass surgery in 1989.

Personal tragedy darkened O’Connor’s later years. His only child, Hugh, a co-star with his father on the TV series “In The Heat of The Night,” shot himself in a drug-related suicide in 1995.

A talented actor who appeared on

stage and in many movies, O’Connor’s image was forever branded in the public’s consciousness as Archie Bunker, the outspoken, blue-collar bigot who railed against a changing world he no longer understood.

SAN FRANCISCO — For six decades, John Lee Hooker’s rich sonorous voice coupled with a brooding rhythmic guitar inspired countless musicians and electrified audiences with songs like “Boom Boom” and “Boogie Chillen.”

The legendary bluesman from the Mississippi Delta sang of loneliness and confusion. Neither polished nor urbane, his music was raw, primal emotion — and remained hypnotic and unchanged throughout his career.

“There are no superlatives to describe the profound impact John Lee left in our hearts,” musician Carlos Santana said Thursday after learning of Hooker’s death. “When I was a child he was the first circus I wanted to run away with.”

Hooker, who had estimated he recorded more than 100 albums, died of natural causes at his Los Altos home, said his agent Mike Kappus. He was 83.

Even in the ’90s, when his fame was

sealed and he was widely recognized as one of the grandfathers of pop music, Hooker remained a little in awe of his own success, telling The Times of London, “People say I’m a genius but I don’t know about that.”

ATLANTA — A man who climbed up a 200-foot construction crane and held police at bay for an entire day hanged himself early to day after hours of failed efforts to get him down.

Michael D. Kelly, 23, edged his way to the side of the crane just before 3 a.m. and hung by both arms for several seconds before falling, said Atlanta Deputy Police Chief C.B. Jackson.

Jackson said the man “apparently had second thoughts” and was struggling to climb back up when he fell 20 feet. A noose was around his neck.

The man apparently scaled a fence and climbed the crane’s long ladder early Thursday, said Steen Miles, a spokeswoman for Atlanta’s transit system. A crane operator said he found the man around 6 a.m., when he climbed up to begin work.

The distraught man demanded the worker’s cell phone and said he was an FBI agent watching the Gold Club, a nearby strip club at the center of a salacious federal racketeering trial. FBI

agent Richard Kolko, who was at the scene, said there was no indication that the man had ever been a bureau employee.

WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON — The economic boom of the 1990s improved the financial outlook for upper middle class and wealthy Americans, but it had little impact on the outlook or financial condition of those who make less money, a poll says.

“The boom has passed these people by,” said pollster Andrew Kohut, director of the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press.

Americans increasingly see an economic divide between the haves and have-nots, according to the poll, released Thursday.

Overall satisfaction with the country’s direction has fallen in the past six months, with 43 percent now saying they’re satisfied and 52 percent saying they’re dissatisfied. That drop-off from a 55-41 positive split in January was led by a decline among women and minorities.

The number of people who think the country is divided between those who have enough and those who don’t has grown steadily and now is at 44 percent — up from 26 percent in 1988.

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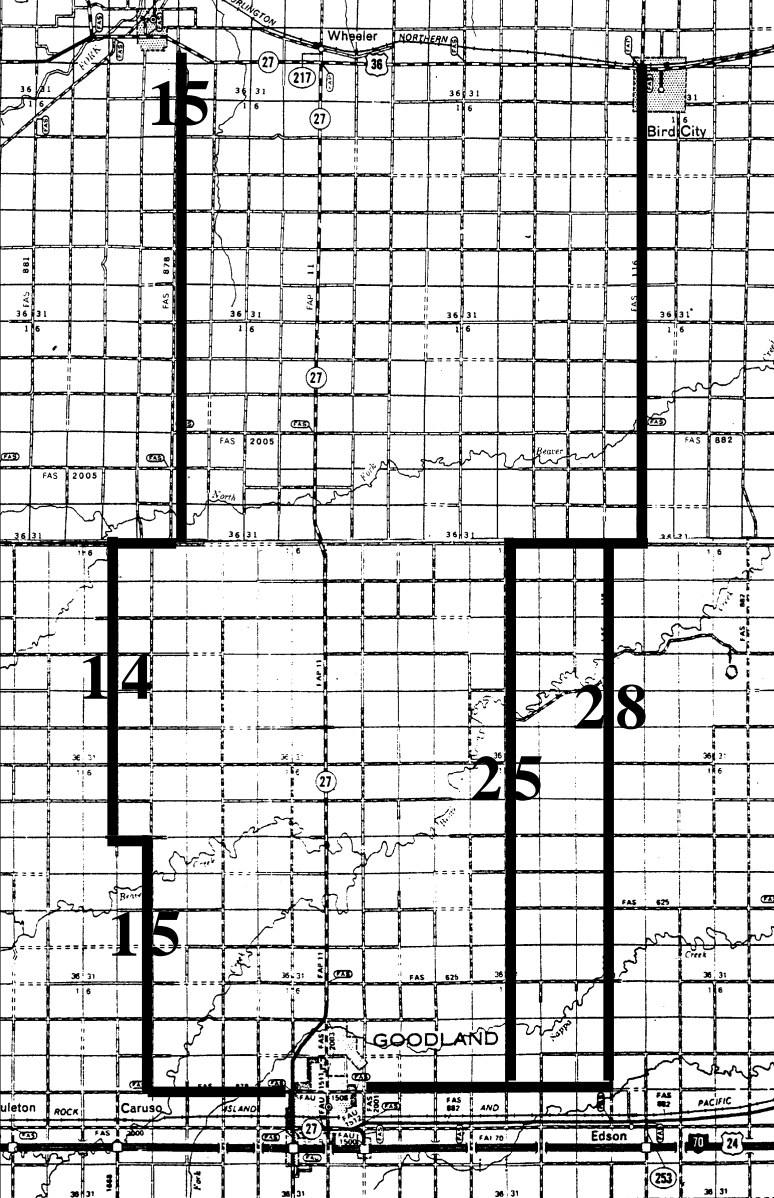
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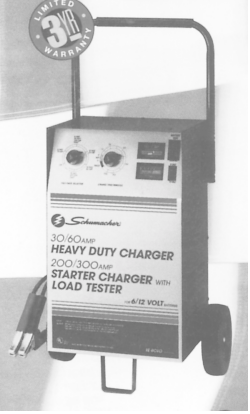
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