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COLUMN ONE

Vietnam's Hold on America

■ Even after a generation, the emotional baggage of the war has not been set aside. The presidential race has released old demons.

When people speak to you about a preventive war, you tell them to go and fight it. After my experience, I have come to hate war. War settles nothing.

—Dwight D. Eisenhower

By DAVID LAMB
TIMES STAFF WRITER

WASHINGTON—Seventeen years after the last helicopter lifted off from the roof of the U.S. Embassy in Saigon, the Vietnam War still plays games with our national psyche, opening wounds we thought were healed and forcing us to re-examine all that we tried to forget.

For a generation of Americans—including the 3 million men who went to Indochina and the 13 million others who were eligible to go but did not—Vietnam was not a country as much as a state of mind. It was where our childhood ended and the long, dark shadows of the Ashau Valley began.

No conflict in our history lasted as long; only the Civil War was as divisive. And, somewhere between Dong Hoi near the DMZ and Ca Mau in the Mekong Delta, the character of an American era was defined. The era challenged the standards of World War II—the yardstick against which we had judged heroism and the rightness of battle for a generation—and turned society topsy-turvy with drugs, free love, political scandals and assassinations, interracial strife, protest demonstrations and the cry: "Hell, no! We won't go!"

Just when we thought the emotional statute of limitations had finally run out on Vietnam, as President Bush told us it had in his inaugural address, just when we thought our flash victory in Operation Desert Storm had buried lingering doubts about national resolve, out of the closet again pops the specter of Vietnam—this time to haunt the presidential aspirations of Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton.

If the war was so unpopular, if it was a misadventure, as is now widely believed, why should Clinton be penalized for deciding, as an anguished young man, not to rush off to the jungles of Vietnam? After all, John Wayne—deferred from the World War II draft because of his age (34) and a football shoulder injury—and Army Capt. Ronald Reagan—who spent the war years making military movies in Hollywood—are viewed as patriots. Why, then, should we care if a candidate served in Vietnam or legally avoided it?

"This is meant to be the age in which politics is essentially image, not issues, not ideology, not political parties," explained Alan Clem, a professor of political science at the University of South Dakota. "So we want to know not only if this guy has a nice smile and a good haircut, we want to know purely personal things, from his marital record to his military record."
Please see VIETNAM, A16

Echoes of Tragedy



Relatives weep over the grave of a man who was among those killed in Khojaly, the town in the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region that was stormed by Armenian militants last week. A4

Algerian Court Outlaws Islamic Political Party

By KIM MURPHY
TIMES STAFF WRITER

CAIRO—Algeria's experiment with Islamic politics officially ended Wednesday when an administrative court banned the Islamic Salvation Front, the first Muslim fundamentalist political party ever legalized in the Arab world.

The administrative tribunal of Algiers accepted the new military-backed government's argument that the party had pursued "subversive activities whose objectives imperiled public order and the institutions of the state."

The Islamic Front has a week to appeal the ruling to Algeria's Supreme Court. But in a communique issued before the court decision, the front warned that any action to ban its operations would "drive the country toward an uncertain future" and force the public "to find other means of combatting oppression and realizing their aspirations."

"Whatever the judicial situation, the [Islamic Front] remains a legitimate Islamic political party, for it is in the prisons, the living rooms, the mosques, the streets, the schools, the universities, the factories, the fields, the administration and the army," the front declared.

Wednesday's court ruling appeared to short-circuit calls on the part of many Algerian political leaders to attempt a dialogue with the Islamic Front.

The front won 3.5 million votes in the aborted national elections in December, in which fundamentalists appeared headed for a majority in the National Assembly, winning 188 of 430 seats in the first round of voting.

But shortly before the second round of elections, army leaders stepped in and forced the resignation of the front's leader.
Please see ALGERIA, A8

Kerrey Ready to End Campaign for White House

By JONATHAN PETERSON
TIMES STAFF WRITER

WASHINGTON—Nebraska Sen. Bob Kerrey, the war hero whose bid for the presidency had initially sparked sky-high expectations, abruptly called off a campaign trip to Miami on Wednesday, ready to abandon his uphill quest for the Democratic nomination.

Kerrey scheduled a press conference today to announce his decision. But as he spent the day conferring with friends and colleagues at the Capitol, the direction of his thinking was apparent.
Please see KERREY, A15

Infertility Doctor Is Found Guilty of Fraud, Perjury

By MARLENE CIMONS
TIMES STAFF WRITER

WASHINGTON—A federal jury convicted an infertility specialist, who admitted inseminating patients with his own semen, of 52 counts of fraud and perjury Wednesday.

On the fourth day of jury deliberations in Alexandria, Va., Dr. Cecil Jacobson was found guilty of lying to women about the identity of the sperm donor used in their artificial insemination procedures and of telling other women that they were pregnant when they were not.

The case has provoked an intense debate, raising disturbing ethical questions about medical procedures.
Please see INFERTILITY, A12

Tsongas-Clinton Rivalry Heads to Duel in Florida

By CATHLEEN DECKER
and PAUL RICHTER
TIMES STAFF WRITERS

MIAMI—Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton campaigned through Florida on Wednesday, seeking to persuade voters that former Massachusetts Sen. Paul E. Tsongas stands too far to the right on economic issues. Tsongas, who ended his day in the state, said he plans to concentrate on getting better known among the South's black and lower-middle-class voters.

Strategists for the two front-runners for the Democratic presidential nomination believe Florida, with its diverse population and unique mixture of Southern and non-Southern elements, is shaping up as the main battleground among the 11 states voting in next week's Super Tuesday slate of primaries and caucuses.

Former California Gov. Edmund G. (Jerry) Brown Jr., meanwhile, embarked on a campaign swing through Arizona, Nevada and Texas seeking to capitalize on the newfound political credibility he won with his victory in the Colorado primary Tuesday.

The vote, he wryly proclaimed, had transformed him from "nuisance to wild card" in the eyes of political pundits. He also said his campaign had a new motto, which he recited in Latin: "Ad astra per aspera."—To the stars, through the thorns.

During his campaign stops, he pushed hard for support from unions and environmentalists as he tried to occupy the left side of the political playing field.

Clinton, campaigning in Miami's predominantly black Liberty City area, ridiculed Tsongas' economic record.
Please see FLORIDA, A15

6 Drug Officers Partially Cleared

■ Scandal: Jury acquits 5 deputies, LAPD detective on 13 counts in corruption case. Jurors deadlock on other charges and more deliberations are ordered.

By VICTOR MERINA, TIMES STAFF WRITER

In a startling setback for government prosecutors, six Los Angeles County narcotics officers were acquitted Wednesday on 13 counts of civil rights and theft charges spawned by a federal corruption investigation.

But the jurors told a federal judge that they remained hopelessly deadlocked on the remaining 14 counts against five sheriff's deputies and a Los Angeles police detective who are accused of skimming drug money, beating drug dealers and planting cocaine on suspects.

U.S. District Judge Robert M. Takasugi ordered the jury to resume deliberations but not before announcing the acquittals—which mark the first major court defeat for prosecutors in the 3½-year-old money-skimming investigation known as Operation Big Spender.

Prosecutors previously had obtained 11 convictions, including four guilty pleas from sheriff's deputies, in one of the worst corruption scandals in local law enforcement history.

The current trial, which is in its seventh month, involves members of a joint LAPD-Sheriff's Department anti-drug team, which operated in Southwest Los Angeles in the mid- to late 1980s and had been praised for its effectiveness against drug traffickers.

The narcotics officers later became targets of the Big Spender investigation and were accused of beating drug dealers with fists and flashlights, skimming hundreds of thousands of dollars in drug cash and falsifying police reports.

During their trial, the government found its chief witness contradicted repeatedly by federal agents. The judge moved at one point to declare a mistrial because FBI agents had destroyed some accounts of key interviews. The defense hammered at the credibility of drug dealers who were testifying for the prosecution.

After deliberating for 16 days,
Please see DRUG, A20

Bush to Boost Water Flow to State's Farmers

By GLENN F. BUNTING
TIMES STAFF WRITER

WASHINGTON—President Bush today will direct the Interior Department to immediately make available 1 million acre-feet of water to drought-starved farmers in the Central Valley, The Times has learned.

Bush today will also sign emergency drought relief legislation allowing California communities to use federal projects to transfer and store new sources of water, knowledgeable Administration sources said.

The presidential order, to be unveiled in Sacramento, will furnish water to 7,000 Central Valley farmers who last month were told their federal water deliveries would be eliminated following six years of drought. It also will provide 100,000 acre-feet of water to assist federal efforts to save a threatened winter run of chinook salmon in the Sacramento River.

"The Central Valley farmers made this request and the President heard what they were saying," said Steve Goldstein, spokesman for Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan. "We believe this can provide a little more security for their livelihood."

The announcement will be an opportunity for Bush to boost his popularity.
Please see WATER, A22

Early Primaries Feature Candidate Role Reversals

By RONALD BROWNSTEIN
TIMES POLITICAL WRITER

If anyone wanted to make a movie about the first stages of the 1992 presidential race, the title would be a natural: Switch.

In both parties, dramatic role reversals are driving the early primary contests, an analysis of exit polls and election results suggest. Key actors in each drama are playing parts that are virtually the opposite of what their strategists had anticipated.

In the Republican contest, President Bush—who, like Ronald Reagan before him, ran much better among men than women in his drive to the White House—is now depending on women's votes to contain conservative columnist Patrick J. Buchanan's pugnacious challenge.

Adding to the irony is a second

role reversal: Buchanan is posting his strong numbers in part by pummeling Bush with the same kind of issues—primarily race and taxes—with which the President battered Democrat Michael S. Dukakis in 1988. And, like Dukakis,

NEWS ANALYSIS

Bush has appeared uncertain how to respond, many Republican strategist say.

In these ways, the 1992 Republican race is increasingly resembling the 1988 general election—only with Buchanan playing the role of Bush, and Bush uncomfortably emulating Dukakis. "It's like one of our lab rats has escaped and is biting our leader with a deadly virus that we developed to use against someone else," says one of
Please see SWITCH, A14

AQMD Vote May Reshape Southland Clean Air Fight

■ Smog: A trading market in pollution rights would replace many of the agency's regulations.

By JUDY PASTERNAK
TIMES STAFF WRITER

The South Coast Air Quality Management District will consider a radical change in course today in its fight against smog when it decides whether to replace many of the agency's regulations with a revolutionary trading market in pollution rights.

Ostensibly, the decision the board faces is whether to allow the staff to spend the next year designing the trading program. But making a commitment of so much time and effort, says AQMD Executive Officer James M. Lents, will be tantamount to a go-ahead on the market itself.

Most rule-making, in effect,

would be put on hold, so if no market were put into place the agency would be well behind schedule in its drive to clean the air by the year 2010.

The decision—which will be monitored by entities as disparate as the Coalition for Clean Air in Venice and the Chicago Board of Trade—follows six weeks of intense lobbying that began after the AQMD staff formally recommended a "smog exchange."

At the time, AQMD board member Larry L. Berg forecast a "period of indigestion" as various interests jockeyed to change the details in the proposal that will be put before the board today.

Berg was right. New qualms
Please see SMOG, A21

INSIDE TODAY'S TIMES

SLAP AT HIGH COURT

Apparently because the state Supreme Court approved legislative term and expense limits, an Assembly panel called for a 38% cut in the court budget. A3

COMEDOWN FOR GORBACHEV

The former Soviet president arrived in Germany on his first trip abroad since resigning, but few even noticed the onetime superpower chief's arrival. A4

ISRAELI ARABS ACCUSED

Four Israeli Arabs were arrested on suspicion of killing three Israeli soldiers last month in an attack that led Israel to strike at Palestinians in Lebanon. A7

WEATHER: Mostly cloudy today with widespread showers and a few thunderstorms. Civic Center low/high today: 54/64. Details: B5

■ TOP OF THE NEWS ON A2



BERNIE BOSTON / Los Angeles Times
Patricia Schroeder at debate

ABORTION RIGHTS BILL

A House panel began debate on a bill that would prevent states from eliminating a woman's right to an abortion even if Roe vs. Wade is overturned. A12

Ueberroth Says He May Enter GOP Senate Race

■ Politics: Head of 1984 Olympics will decide by Friday. His statement takes state Republican leaders by surprise.

By DAVE LESHER
and GEORGE SKELTON
TIMES STAFF WRITERS

NEWPORT BEACH—Peter Ueberroth, the former baseball commissioner and chief of the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, said Wednesday that he is considering a campaign for U.S. Senate in the Republican race to succeed retiring Democratic Sen. Alan Cranston.

An attorney representing Ueberroth paid a non-refundable \$2,502 filing fee Wednesday at the Orange County registrar of voters office and took out papers that must be returned by Friday to qualify for the race.

Later, Ueberroth issued a state-

ment saying: "I am considering running for the U.S. Senate . . . and will make up my mind finally on Friday. In order to facilitate the decision either way, I have today authorized my representative to secure the appropriate nomination documents from election officials."

Ueberroth's move was a shock to Republican leaders around the state since he has said repeatedly over the last few months that he had no intention of running for political office.

The popular businessman is widely regarded as somebody who would be an instant top contender for the GOP nomination for the Senate seat. But some Republicans remain skeptical that he will run.
Please see UEBERROTH, A18

Enclave Horror Echoed in a Cameraman's Sobs

Karabakh: Film is shown in Moscow as Azerbaijanis and Armenians again trade charges over Khojaly attack.

By CAREY GOLDBERG
TIMES STAFF WRITER

MOSCOW—As the camera panned from sere winter weeds to the frozen corpse of a small child in a red snowsuit, then to a cluster of five dead women with bloodied, discolored faces, the cameraman's own sobs made up the soundtrack.

The horror of the scene overpowered him, Azerbaijan Television cameraman Chingiz Mustafayev admitted Wednesday at a Moscow news conference called to bring world attention to the deaths at Khojaly, the Nagorno-Karabakh town stormed by Armenian militants last week.

"A square with a radius of 500 meters was just scattered with corpses," Mustafayev said, describing what officials in Azerbaijan have termed a massacre.

Azerbaijani spokesmen say that as many as 1,000 people were killed and 300 taken hostage on the night of Feb. 25 when Khojaly was taken; Armenian officials in Nagorno-Karabakh say the Azerbaijani account "does not correspond to reality" and estimate that 80 Khojaly residents died.

The Nagorno-Karabakh Parliament's press center also says that Mustafayev's video was falsified; the corpses it shows were part of a general exchange of Armenian and Azerbaijani dead that occurred on Sunday, rather than in the aftermath of a single massacre, the press center says.

Whatever the exact death count, Khojaly clearly constitutes the latest tragedy in four years of inter-necine Azerbaijani-Armenian fighting over the mountainous enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh. The warfare had already left more than 1,000 dead, wrecked the local economy and turned thousands of villagers into homeless refugees.

At Wednesday's news conference presenting Mustafayev's videotape along with eyewitness accounts and official comments, Azerbaijani presidential adviser Rasim Agayev also accused the last regiment of former Soviet soldiers left in Nagorno-Karabakh of participating in the assault on Khojaly.

"This crime was committed by the 366th Regiment" of the Commonwealth of Independent States armed forces to frighten Azerbaijan out of its pursuit of a full-fledged national army, Agayev said. "This can be qualified as a war crime. This can be qualified as a genocide because only Azerbaijanis were killed."

But Ivan Skrylnik, the Commonwealth Defense Ministry spokesman, denied outright that the regiment, whose role is officially neutral, could have helped Armenian militants surround Khojaly and occupy it. He acknowledged, however, that deserters who have reportedly absconded with several armored vehicles could have participated in the battle.

The 366th, a motorized infantry regiment long caught helplessly between the two warring sides, was set to withdraw by land on Monday. But its departure has been blocked by fighting in the area. Its commanders announced Wednesday that its equipment would have to be airlifted to neighboring Geor-

gia and that most of its personnel were already being flown out.

Khojaly residents are convinced the regiment helped in the town's capture because, they told reporters, they were surrounded on three sides by at least 40 armored vehicles; they insist that Armenian militants do not have nearly that number of armored vehicles.

The field of corpses that Mustafayev said he taped last Friday lies east of Khojaly, between the Armenian towns of Askeran and Nakhichevanik, on the escape route that Khojaly residents took toward the nearest Azerbaijani town, Agdam.

Oleg Aliev, a 40-year-old Khojaly bookkeeper who survived the assault, said a large group of people fleeing the fighting had just emerged from the forest into the field when at least two armored vehicles manned by Armenian fighters, apparently waiting in ambush, opened fire on them with machine guns. "They thought they had already reached a safe place," he said of his neighbors and relatives. "They were just a little way from Agdam. And then they were all shot."

Mustafayev said he had counted more than 100 bodies in the field. Many of the three dozen or so corpses shown in the tape were women and children, some with head wounds but others with no visible injuries. Much of their clothing was in disarray, as if they had been searched.

The cameraman said that a survivor had told him that militants seeking gold and money had put guns to the heads of those already wounded as they lay helplessly on the ground. They demanded their valuables and then shot them. That would explain the many point-blank head wounds, he said.

When Mustafayev returned to the site again Monday, he said he found two corpses with part of their scalps removed and one dead woman with one side of her face cut away. He speculated that the corpses had been mutilated to intimidate opposition fighters, or perhaps that soldiers brought back body parts to their commanders to show they had been actively killing people.

Commonwealth television carried a small fragment of the tape, commenting that "it's a horrifying picture" and that the residents of Khojaly, formerly a town of about 7,000, had met a "tragic fate."

Armenian officials have insisted that Khojaly and the surrounding areas had largely been cleared of civilians. They said the town was inhabited mainly by Azerbaijani fighters who used the few remaining local residents as human shields while employing the town as a base to rain down shells on the Armenian-populated capital of Stepanakert; since Khojaly was taken, they say, the shelling of Stepanakert has halted.

Reacting to the escalating fighting in Nagorno-Karabakh, Russian President Boris N. Yeltsin dispatched special mediators to the region to try once again to break the four-year cycle of war in the disputed enclave.



Reuters

Mikhail and Raisa Gorbachev arrive at Frankfurt airport en route to Bonn. With them is Sen. Alan Cranston (D-Calif.), who accompanied them after attending opening of Gorbachev Foundation in Moscow.

Gorbachev Takes Trip, Comes Down to Earth in Germany

By TYLER MARSHALL
TIMES STAFF WRITER

BERLIN—For Mikhail S. Gorbachev, one of the 20th Century's great figures, it was a comedown—a measure of just how far it is between powerful statesman and has-been.

Arriving Wednesday in Germany on his first foreign trip since leaving office last December, the man who more than any other precipitated the changes that swept communism from Europe, came as a simple citizen, the former leader of a former country that was once a superpower.

And he was hardly noticed. There were no anthems, no honor guards. Indeed, there was not even a red carpet for Gorbachev and his wife, Raisa, as they descended the steps of the helicopter that brought them from Frankfurt to the grounds of a large government guest house in the hills east of Bonn.

A couple of TV crews and a knot of mainly Russian reporters were on hand to watch Foreign Ministry functionaries meet him and guide him to his quarters.

During the course of his eight-day visit to the once-divided country he helped unite, the Gorbachevs are scheduled to meet many old friends, including Chancellor Helmut Kohl and his wife, Hannelore, who they dined with Wednesday evening, and former Social Democrat chancellors Helmut Schmidt and Willy Brandt.

The former Soviet president will also visit Munich, deliver a speech in Hamburg and give a press conference next week in the small town of Gutersloh.

"We Germans haven't forgotten and won't forget what he's done for us," Kohl said Wednesday evening after receiving Gorbachev at the federal chancellery in Bonn.

But if the German public has not forgotten, they were giving a fairly good impression of it. The grounds of the government guest house that Gorbachev occupied, usually under tight security during foreign visits, were open for public access on Wednesday, but hardly anyone bothered to turn up.

Only a couple of the country's national newspapers even noted his impending trip. The conservative daily, Die Welt, got the date of Gorbachev's arrival wrong in its editorial; Neues Deutschland, owned by the retooled Communist Party, carried nothing at all on his visit.

The mood was a far cry from the rapturous reception he received on his first visit to Bonn in June, 1989, when West Germans propelled Gorbachev to such a height that it raised concern in other Western capitals. Then, thousands of Germans stood outside the Bonn City Hall chanting, "Gorby! Gorby! Gorby!" The country went into a collective swoon, and the leading Soviet foreign policy specialist, Georgy A. Arbatov, crowed that "we are depriving our opponents of the enemy image."

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Russia Creates Agency to Oversee Nuclear Facilities

By ELIZABETH SHOGREN
TIMES STAFF WRITER

MOSCOW—To prevent nuclear accidents like the 1986 Chernobyl power plant catastrophe, the Russian government has created a watchdog committee to oversee the country's vast civilian and military nuclear facilities and the disposal of radioactive wastes, officials said Wednesday.

The announcement came even as Russian news agencies reported that a fire, caused by a short circuit, had prompted the early Wednesday shutdown of the Bala-kov nuclear power plant near Russia's border with Kazakhstan. Authorities said the fire was extinguished quickly and no radiation was released.

But to avert nuclear mishaps that might threaten people and the environment, the Russian government created the new State Committee for Control Over Nuclear Facilities, analogous to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Alexander T. Gutsalov, committee deputy chairman, told a news conference.

The new committee's existence is significant because, during the Soviet period, the Atomic Energy Ministry alone was charged with designing, building and controlling the safety of atomic reactors and disposing of nuclear wastes.

Now the powerful ministry—whose credibility and standing with the public was gravely damaged during the Chernobyl crisis—will be accountable to the new committee. The committee will also assist in drafting new laws and regulations for the country's nuclear facilities and for the disposal of radioactive wastes in keeping

with international standards.

During 1991, nine nuclear plants with a total of 28 reactors were in operation in Russia. Four of the reactors have recently been shut down for various reasons, especially safety, said Sergei A. Adamchik, who heads the committee's atomic energy stations division.

The new committee is now investigating the nuclear power stations to judge their effect on the environment and local populations. Committee members are also researching how radioactive wastes are stored and disposed of.

Gutsalov said the committee members hope to extend research to include nuclear sites run by the military.

The committee plans to analyze the safety of all nuclear facilities and decide whether they can continue to exist as they are or if they need to be modernized or shut completely. "We are preparing to license all objects, civilian and military, new and existing," Gutsalov said.

It is especially important to inspect nuclear facilities used by the military and the military-industrial complex because many of them are older than even the first-generation atomic energy stations, and thereby pose a greater potential danger, he said.

Special attention will also be given to the RBMK-1000 reactors, such as the one that exploded at Chernobyl in April, 1986, causing the world's worst nuclear accident.

Two nuclear power stations with old RBMK-1000 reactors—one in Russia's second-largest city, St. Petersburg, and another near the western Russian city of Kursk—have been ordered to cut their energy output, Adamchik said.

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