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Members of Nicaraguan Invasion Contingency Action colorfully depict the activities of U.S.-backed contras in Nicaragua. Jeff Goulding/Courier-Journal

Group Stages 'Terrorist Acts' To Show Effect Of Contra Aid

By Teresa A. Parsons

If the city bus you're riding is attacked by people in fatigues with smudged faces under military-style hats, don't be alarmed — they're armed with nothing more lethal than signs and water balloons. The scene may sound like something out of the Keystone Kops, but its message is far from frivolous.

The Nicaraguan Invasion Contingency Action — NICA — has been protesting U.S. aid to anti-Sandinista rebel forces for months. But in light of the June 6 vote by the U.S. Senate approving \$38 million in aid to contra forces, a move the group viewed as a declaration of war, NICA members decided something dramatic was necessary to illustrate their message. The answer — "Contra Days."

Since June 7, citizens impersonating the Nicaraguan rebels have pretended to mine Charlotte Harbor, destroy the Genesee Co-Op building on Monroe Avenue, attack workers leaving Kodak, and assassinate a wedding party in Greece Towne Mall, among other activities. All are based on events that have actually occurred in Nicaragua according to reports by the Witness for Peace network and the personal experiences of NICA members who have visited the country. Their hope is to hit Americans with the daily reality of life in a war torn land so they'll more carefully consider the role U.S.

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Hijackers Free Priest, Some Pilgrims; Others Still Held

By Stephenic Overman
NC News Service

A priest of the Diocese of Rockford, Ill., who had been leading a Holy Land pilgrimage and about two dozen parishioners were released by hijackers in the first days of the Middle East hijack drama involving a TWA jetliner which was commandeered June 14.

But several other Illinois pilgrims, including two other priests and a permanent deacon, remained hostage as the hijacking continued June 17.

Father William McDonnell, pastor at St. Margaret Mary Church in Algonquin, Ill., who had led the two-week pilgrimage, was among passengers released June 15. Members of the pilgrimage had been returning to the United States with others on the Athens-to-Rome flight when it was hijacked.

Father Thomas Dempsey, pastor at St. Patrick Church in St. Charles, Ill., and Father James McLoughlin, pastor at St. Peter Church in Geneva, Ill., had not been released as of June 17, nor had Raymond Johnson, a permanent deacon at Annunciation Church, Aurora, Ill.

Father McLoughlin's mother, Loretta McLoughlin, a Deerfield, Ill., resident who joined the pilgrimage, was freed, as was Johnson's wife, Margaret.

Several other male pilgrims from the Rockford Diocese were among those still being held June 17, according to Father

Robert Balog, secretary to Bishop Arthur J. O'Neill of Rockford.

The Holy Land pilgrimage was made up mostly of members of St. Margaret Mary, St. Peter and Annunciation parishes in the Rockford Diocese, along with a few parishioners from the Rockford area, according to Father Balog.

Father Balog said "between 30 and 34" pilgrims were aboard the jetliner when it was hijacked. The hijackers were reported to be extremist Shiite Moslems who demanded the release of hundreds of Shiite Moslems held by Israel.

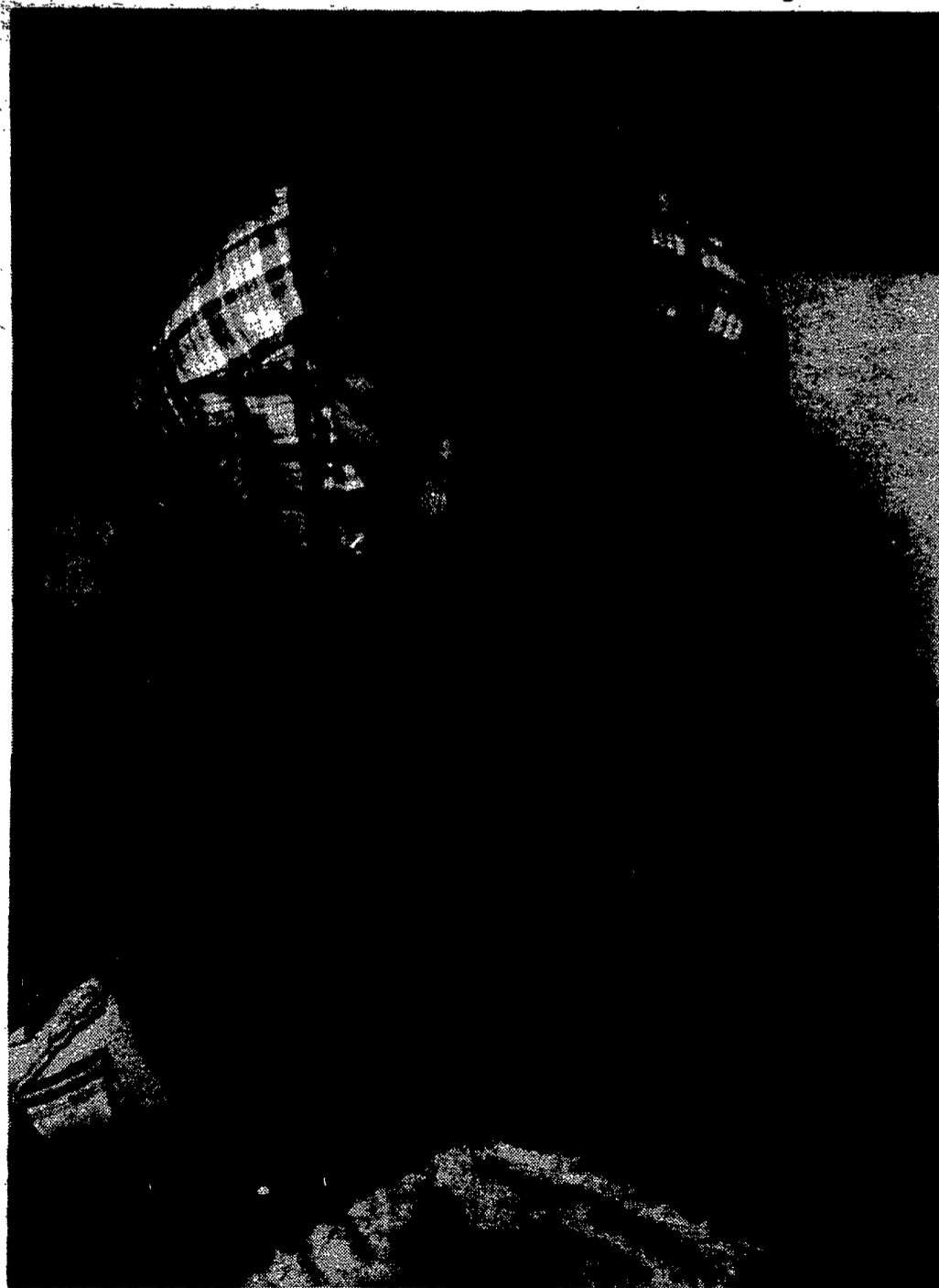
The plane was flown first to Beirut, Lebanon, where some of the women and children, including Mrs. McLoughlin, were released. It then went to Algiers, Algeria, where more passengers were freed.

The plane flew back to Beirut June 15, where an unidentified hostage, reported to be a U.S. serviceman, was shot and killed. At the same time, some American hostages with Jewish-sounding names reportedly were taken off the plane and more hijackers boarded.

The airliner then flew a second time to Algiers, where several other hostages were released.

The plane returned to Beirut a third time June 16 with about 30 remaining U.S. male passengers.

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Along the Way

Bishop Matthew H. Clark discusses the agenda for the meeting of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops now underway in Collegeville, Mn. — Page 3.

Drizzle Sizzle

Students at St. John's School didn't let bad weather spoil their fun and fund raising for mission work — Page 6.

Needs Assessment

The diocese embarks on a process of assessing parish needs, beginning with a leadership conference in September — Page 5.

Pirouette

Nazareth Academy initiates dance program for all students as part of fitness classes — Page 11.

Families Celebrate Fathers' Day

Over the Fathers' Day weekend, the Quinalan family of St. Mary's parish in Rochester had double cause to celebrate. On Fathers' Day five years ago, June 15, 1980, Timmy was born, just in time for a special Fathers' Day present for Tim Sr. Above, Timmy gets some help from his father in blowing out his birthday candles, as his friend Gabriel Squalia looks on in mouth-watering anticipation.