



Book: Nixon beat wife, took drugs

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WASHINGTON — A new biography asserts that Richard Nixon over many years took a mood-altering drug without a prescription and that he beat his wife at times of personal crisis — a claim a Nixon intimate calls “inconceivable.”

“The Arrogance of Power” by Anthony Summers will be published Monday. It chiefly concerns the aspects of Nixon’s life “that he and his supporters have preferred to conceal,” writes Summers, a BBC journalist and author of biographies of J. Edgar Hoover and Marilyn Monroe.

The author named his sources for most of the book’s assertions. But many of those he quotes got their information second-hand. Some of the book’s claims have been made in the past but in less detail.

The book said that in 1968 Nixon was given 1,000 capsules of the drug Dilantin, an anti-con-

vulsant used to counter epileptic seizures, by Jack Dreyfus, founder of an investment firm and an enthusiastic promoter of the drug. Dreyfus later supplied another 1,000, it said.

White House physician Dr. Walter Tkach, “a compliant doctor who would do exactly as a patient asked,” was also a user of the drug himself, the book said, citing Nixon aide John D. Ehrlichman as its source.

When asked later if Nixon was still taking the drug, Tkach replied, “I don’t know, but the amount of pills in the bottle in his bathroom is reducing in size, so I suppose he is,” according to Summers.

“The Physicians’ Desk Reference” lists a number of adverse reactions to Dilantin, including slurred speech, decreased coordination and mental confusion.

Summers wrote that the relationship of Nixon and his wife was one of “prolonged marital difficulty, of physical abuse, of threatened divorce.”

But that view was contested by John Taylor, Nixon’s chief aide in his retirement years, now director of the Richard M. Nixon Library and Birthplace in Yorba Linda, Calif.

Summers’ claims that Nixon abused his wife came from secondary sources. Among others, he cited journalist Seymour Hersh, who said he learned of three instances of Nixon wife beatings but did not identify his sources; retired Washington lawyer John Sears, who was a campaign consultant to Nixon; and the late Bill Van Petten, a Los Angeles area reporter, who years later told a friend, not identified by Summers, that just before or after his 1962 loss to Brown Nixon beat Mrs. Nixon “so badly she could not go out the next day.”

Summers said Sears told him that he had been told “that Nixon had hit her (Pat Nixon) in 1962 and that she had threatened to leave him over it. ... I’m not talking about a smack. He blackened her eye,” Sears said he had been told of the beating by

two lawyers, both now dead, Walter Taylor and Pat Hillings.

Twenty-two years later, after he resigned in disgrace over the Watergate scandal, Nixon “attacked” his wife at their home in San Clemente, Calif., and she had to be treated at a hospital, Summers wrote, citing Hersh as his secondary source.

The New York Times, which carried a story about the book Sunday, quoted Taylor, the former Nixon retirement aide, as responding on behalf of Nixon’s daughter, Julie Nixon Eisenhower.

“It cannot possibly be true,” Taylor told the Times. “It is utterly inconceivable. Anyone who knows and worked with President Nixon knows first of all that he could not have done it, second of all that he would not have done it and third of all that had he done it there are innumerable people who would not have spoken to him and yet remained active in his life and in Mrs. Nixon’s life until their deaths and beyond.”

Clinton urges Africans to break the silence on AIDS

BY ANNE GEARAN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

ABUJA, NIGERIA — Africans must “break the silence” about AIDS or risk losing hard-fought democratic and economic gains, President Clinton said Sunday as the White House announced more than \$20 million in U.S. aid to fight AIDS, malaria and other diseases devastating Africa.

“In every country, in any culture, it is difficult, painful, at the very least embarrassing, to talk about the issues involved with AIDS,” Clinton said after touring health centers worldwide last year.

AIDS is now the leading cause of death in Africa. In sub-Saharan Africa, 13 million children have lost a parent to AIDS, and the disease is reducing life expectancies and dimming development hopes across the continent.

“It is harder to talk about these things than to watch a child die of AIDS?” Clinton asked. “We have to break the silence about how this disease spreads and how to prevent it.”

AIDS, which is primarily transmitted sexually in Africa, is entirely preventable, Clinton reminded his audience.

About 2.6 million Nigerians, 5.4 percent of the population, are afflicted with AIDS. That puts the country on better footing than many of its neighbors with higher infection rates, but in danger of letting the disease gain ground, Clinton said.

“AIDS can rob a country of its future,” Clinton said. “I know you are not going to let that happen to Nigeria.”

Clinton’s two-day stay in Nigeria is intended to underscore U.S. approval of the 15-month-old democratic government in Africa’s most populous nation, with 123 million people.

He promised continued U.S. help, but did not, as Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo had hoped, agree to cancel or cut the nearly \$1 billion U.S. portion of Nigeria’s \$32 billion foreign debt, a move that would require congressional approval.

Speaking to business executives later Sunday, however, Clinton said he supports reducing the debt, but only if Nige-

ria spends the extra money on improving lives and diversifying the economy.

“There must be a dividend to democracy for the people of Nigeria,” Clinton said.

Clinton, accompanied by daughter Chelsea, began his day with services at a Baptist church in Abuja, and then ventured outside the capital to get a first-hand look Sunday at both the pageantry and poverty of life in Ushafa, a pottery-making center.

“I came to Nigeria to express the support of the people of the United States,” Clinton told villagers from a makeshift platform. “We support your democracy.”

Khairat Abdulrazaq Gwadabe, who represents the village in the Nigerian Senate, said she explained Clinton’s visit to villagers ahead of time.

“I had to translate it as the king of the world himself is coming. The president of the world is coming to their chief,” Gwadabe said.

Villagers said they hoped Clinton’s visit would translate into a new school, a factory or some other investment, although they were unclear on how that might happen.

Hajija Haunwa Mohammad, 42, said if Clinton could help ease Nigeria’s debt, she might earn more money selling sugar and other products. Her four daughters, ages 8 to 23, might also go to school, she said.

“Now, my children don’t go to school because I have no money for their school fees,” she said.

Clinton’s brief African tour will also take him to Tanzania on Monday. Former South African President Nelson Mandela invited Clinton there to help preside over a planned peace ceremony to end seven years of civil war in neighboring Burundi. Hopes for a cease-fire agreement faded this week and negotiators began work Sunday on a less ambitious pact. Clinton still plans to go out of respect for Mandela’s efforts so far, the White House said.

Three Israeli soldiers dead after failed raid on hide-out

BY MARK LAVIE
ASSOCIATED PRESS

ASSIRA ASHMALIA, WEST BANK — A botched raid on an Islamic militant hide-out in this West Bank village ended Sunday with three Israeli soldiers dead — all possibly by friendly fire — and Palestinian officials angry at how Israel handles threats to peace between the two peoples.

The target of the nighttime raid was Mahmoud Abu Hanoud, a fugitive at the top of Israel’s most-wanted list, blamed for two 1997 bombings that killed at least 21 Israelis.

Abu Hanoud, known as the leader of the militant Hamas group’s military wing, was wounded and fled the shoot-out into Nablus, a nearby town under total Palestinian control. There, he gave himself up to Palestinian security forces to receive medical attention, said Palestinian officials, who were keeping him under heavy guard.

The raid comes a month after Israeli and Palestinian negotiators broke new ground at the Camp David summit. The sides still hope to agree on a permanent peace soon, a prospect that has spurred Hamas — implacably opposed to any deal with the Jewish state — to increase its efforts to scuttle the peace.

Despite their own failure to capture Abu Hanoud, for whom they’d been searching for years, Israeli officials praised Palestinian security forces and said his detention proved the effectiveness of Palestinian-Israeli security cooperation.

“It doesn’t matter under whose custody he is,” Carmi Gillon, a former head of the Shin Bet security service, told Israel radio. “He’s out of commission.”

“His arrest prevents the Hamas from carrying out spectacular terrorist operations,” said Deputy Defense Minister Ephraim Sneh.

But the Palestinians were hardly as sanguine, and did their best to distance themselves from the operation.

“What the Israelis have done is a mistake, that they committed on their own initiative, and it has nothing to do with the Palestinian Authority,” said Col. Jibril Rajoub, the top Palestinian security official in the West Bank. “They paid the price.”

This prosperous village, tucked into a dry riverbed, is designated in interim agreements as a ‘B’ area — jointly controlled by Israel and the Palestinians, with ultimate security control in Israel’s hands.

Rajoub suggested that, with the sides approaching an agreement that would transfer most ‘B’ areas to a sovereign Palestinian state, it was time for Israeli forces to move out for good.

“It would have been more appropriate to have given the information to the (Palestinian) police to tackle the issue peacefully and without bloodshed,” he said.

Israel was not about to cede its West Bank operations, said Lt. Gen. Shaul Mofaz, the military chief of staff. Still, with three young men dead, all possibly by friendly fire, hard questions needed to be asked.

“It is possible that the lower-level officers made erroneous decisions about the place, the people, the firing. All these issues will be investigated,” he said.

Prime Minister Ehud Barak, expressing sorrow over the deaths, acknowledged that “maybe they were killed as a result of our own friendly fire” — a result of miscommunication among the troops.

The troops entered the village, a Hamas stronghold, on Saturday night looking for Abu Hanoud. He has been a fugitive since the 1997 bombings at the crowded Mahane Yehuda market in Jerusalem and the Ben Yehuda pedestrian mall.

He is also suspected in other attempted attacks, and Israel radio said he was suspected of involvement in the operation of a bomb factory uncovered earlier this month in Nablus by Palestinian police.

Abu Hanoud was walking through the village when an Israeli soldier told him to halt, said his mother, Fatma, who visited him in the hospital. He fired at the soldiers, who were on a nearby rooftop.

He was hit in the shoulder but fled through olive groves to a Palestinian police checkpoint, Fatma Abu Hanoud said.

“Thank God he defeats the Jews,” she said, encircled by cheering villagers after she visited her son.

“We are very proud of Mahmoud Abu Hanoud because he acts against the Zionists, the occupiers, to get our rights,” said Bashar Yassin, 34, an economist with the Palestinian Authority, standing next to the pile of rubble that had been the house where the armed clash took place. Israel demolished the house after the raid.

The owner of the home, Nidal Daglas, who witnesses say also shot at the soldiers, was arrested by Israeli troops and was being questioned.

It was the second fiasco in two weeks for Duvdevan, an elite unit charged with rooting out terrorism in the West Bank. On Aug. 16, Duvdevan troops shot and killed Mahmoud Abdullah, 70, the mayor of another area ‘B’ village during a night exercise. Abdullah had fired at the troops when they entered his property because he believed they were burglars. The army expressed regret at the incident.

Spotlight turns to U.S. behavior in Nazi era

BY PAULINE JELINEK
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The international reckoning over evils of the Holocaust is about to come home to America.

The country that would prefer to be known more for its World War II heroism will take its turn in examining how some in corporate America and official Washington also failed Hitler’s victims.

“There are things that have to be faced up to,” said Elan Steinberg, World Jewish Congress executive director.

In four years of lawsuits, soul-searching, revelations and arm-twisting, the United States has led in promoting Holocaust truth-telling. And it has helped Jewish groups wrest billions of dollars from European governments and companies and institutions that profited from Nazi Germany.

That includes Swiss banks that hid Holocaust victims’ money, European insurers with unpaid policies held by victims and German companies that used slave labor.

In the coming weeks, Jewish organizations plan to push for payments from dozens of America’s oldest and best-known corporations — some still not

named publicly — who they accuse of using forced labor. They also want to see company archives.

“It’s their turn,” said Steinberg. “American companies were collaborating with Nazi Germany at a time when we were at war, because there was an ethos that demanded huge profits at the expense of everything else.”

At the same time, a presidential panel will report on what the government did with jewelry, art and other valuables that were stolen from Holocaust victims and came under U.S. control before, during or after the war.

Separate inquiries of American business and government have been long planned. It’s just coincidence they are coming together now.

The presidential panel has collected information on government handling of assets for two years and promised its report in mid-October. Government officials have held talks in recent months with some companies on how to meet forced-labor claims.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce announced May 1 that it would organize a Holocaust fund. But it hasn’t received a single pledge, and officials say the effort is stalled on individual companies’ legal and public image concerns.

‘The issue is really whether America companies will face up to their historical responsibility in a way that is moral and proper.’

Gideon Taylor

Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany

“We’re trying to do the right thing,” said the chamber’s Stephen Jordan.

With 1,000 aging survivors dying each month, Jewish organizations say they’ll appeal directly to corporations.

“We are looking at this as an issue to bring up with these companies in September, and we intend to bring it up very firmly and very decisively,” said Gideon Taylor of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany.

“The issue is really whether America companies will face up to their historical responsibility in a way that is moral and proper,” Taylor said.

The turn to American companies comes as

officials try to tally the financial losses in Nazi persecution. The regime killed about 6 million Jews and 5 million others, including communists, homosexuals, gypsies and the mentally retarded. All the while, it was looting gold, art and bank accounts across occupied Europe.

There have been extensive compensation programs, but they left gaps in who received money and for what reasons.

This new round of payment-seeking began after the fall of the Berlin Wall and declassification of government documents. The 50th anniversary of the end of the war in 1995 started a new push to

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NEWS BRIEFS

■ Bush, Gore debate tax cuts

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republican presidential nominee George W. Bush and Democratic candidate Al Gore are fiercely debating which tax cut proposal is best for the average American. Who’s right? As usual in matters of the federal tax code, it depends — on how much taxpayers earn, whether they have a house or children and what they’re doing in life.

■ Conference to look at Caribbean

PORT-OF-SPAIN, TRINIDAD (AP) — Hundreds of thousands of people are living desperate, isolated lives in a region that has done little to stem the AIDS epidemic — out of ignorance, lack of funds and, some say, fear of scaring tourists away. That is slowly changing, and there are hopes that an AIDS conference Sept. 11-12 will put the Caribbean’s epidemic of the disease — second only to Africa’s — on the global agenda.

■ Clinton begins 3-day African visit

ABUJA, NIGERIA (AP) — President Clinton seeks to strengthen the fragile democracy in Africa’s most populous country in an address to the newly installed parliament of oil-rich, but poverty-stricken, Nigeria. Starting a three-day African visit, he and daughter Chelsea are welcomed by whirling dancers in flowing, red and black African dress.

■ Two men saved from Erie after 14 hours

SANDUSKY, OHIO (AP) — Pointing his binoculars just below where Lake Erie meets the horizon, Matt Cetin spotted what looked like two white flags in the water. “It took me about five seconds to realize what I was looking at,” he said. He had spotted Nick Sostaric and Matt Stookey — two men who survived a terrifying 14 hours floating in Lake Erie and fighting doubt, depression and hypothermia.

■ Profiling, brutality on agenda for civil rights event

WASHINGTON (AP) — Racial profiling and police brutality are among the issues to be addressed at a civil rights event held Saturday on the spot where the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. gave the movement its defining theme nearly four decades ago.

■ Algerian Cabinet resigns

ALGIERS, ALGERIA (AP) — Wrestling to end a civil insurgency that has killed thousands of people, Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika faced a new challenge Saturday when his 8-month-old government resigned.

The president accepted the collective resignation of his Cabinet after meeting with Prime Minister Ahmed Benbitour in the morning. He immediately charged close aide Ali Benflis, who served as justice minister in the early 1990s, with forming a new government.

■ Clinton uses Internet to help schools, teachers

WASHINGTON (AP) — Trying to use the Internet to fill a teacher shortage, President Clinton launched a one-stop clearinghouse Saturday to help schools find qualified teachers.

“By logging on to www.recruitingteachers.org, school districts can find qualified teachers, and teachers can find out where the jobs are,” Clinton said.