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HOLIDAYS

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HOUSING MARKET: A RETURN TO NORMALCY

BUSINESS

Spy overhaul nears

Agreement with lawmaker clears way for vote on intelligence bill.

FROM REGISTER NEWS SERVICES

WASHINGTON

Congressional and White House negotiators reached a deal Monday with a key House lawmaker who has been standing in the way of a sweeping overhaul of the nation's intelligence services. The agreement paves the way for a vote on the measure as early as today.

If passed, the bill will mark the largest structural change in U.S.



Hunter

intelligence since the creation of the CIA almost half a century ago.

House Armed Services Committee Chairman Rep. Duncan Hunter said Monday that he was satisfied the bill would not interfere with the military chain of command and endanger field troops' access to timely intelligence. Under the first House and Senate version, Hunter feared that would be the

case. The bill, which is Congress' answer to the 9/11 Commission report, omits some immigration changes that Judiciary Committee head Rep. James Sensenbrenner has been insisting on. But through the weekend, White House officials, most notably Vice President Dick Cheney, concentrated on appeasing Hunter, leaving the immigration issues to be dealt with next year.

The Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 is Congress' answer to the 9/11 Commission report. The bill:

- Creates a new, stronger Director of National Intelligence with budget and personnel authority to coordinate all U.S. intelligence.
- Creates an independent Privacy and Civil Liberties Board with access to all federal agency policies and practices.
- Adds thousands of Border Patrol agents; enhances cargo inspections and aviation security.
- Creates a National Counterterrorism Center to unify intelligence efforts.

Key provisions of bill

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- Creates a National Counterterrorism Center to unify intelligence efforts.

MORE ON INTELLIGENCE BILL
FOES: Borders ignored. News 5

For breaking news, go to:

www.ocregister.com

THIS SECTION

Study finds Celebrex safer than Vioxx

Medicine • New research suggests that Celebrex does not carry the same heart attack risk as Vioxx, another arthritis drug pulled from the market in September.

News 16



NATION & WORLD

5 more U.S. troops die in Iraq

Battle • A heavy gunfight erupted on a dangerous Baghdad street within blocks of Iraq's most fortified facilities. Five more American troops were killed in separate clashes.

News 17

Election • Ukraine officials worked to reach a deal that could end a standoff with outgoing President Leonid Kuchma's government, smoothing a rerun of disputed presidential vote.

News 17

LOCAL

Condo investor admits bribery

Cities • An investor pleaded guilty to bribery in connection with the illegal conversion of apartments to condos in Huntington Beach.

Local 1

Religion • University Synagogue's recognition of Hanukkah, an eight-day festival beginning at sundown, will be a bit different from other area synagogues' because of its participation in a national pilot program.

Local 1

SPORTS

Trojans fire Bibby

Colleges • USC fired basketball coach Henry Bibby. He had been with the Trojans since 1996.

Sports 1

NBA • The Clippers defeated Charlotte, 99-93, in two overtimes.

Sports 1

BUSINESS

Spike in food prices predicted

Economy • U.S. food prices might take the biggest jump in 14 years this year, the Agriculture Department said.

Business 1

Parks • Knott's Berry Farm will open the Silver Bullet – the longest, fastest and tallest suspended roller coaster in the West.

Business 1



LIFE, ETC.

Demure will have its demise

Saar • Is this "demure fashion" trend just a cover-up? Life, etc. 1

Concert • Celebrated video artist Bill Viola provides startling imagery for an L.A. Philharmonic staging of Wagner's "Tristan and Isolde."

Life, etc. 1



BIG MOMENT: California Supreme Court Chief Justice Ron George swears in Van Tran as wife Cindy Nguyen holds a Bible for him.

Day of history and sadness

Supporters including his cancer-stricken brother usher Van Tran into the Assembly.

By JOHN GITTELSON
THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

SACRAMENTO • Van Tran made history Monday, becoming the first Vietnamese-American elected to the California Legislature. But the latest twist in his family saga brought tears to his eyes.

"I want to ask all of you to pray for my brother Henry, who is very ill," the new lawmaker

IN DEPTH NEWS 3 >>

said of his eldest brother, a Stockton dentist who was diagnosed last month with pancreatic cancer.

Tran's election to the Legislature marked a new step in the Americanization of his people, but his brother's cancer was a reminder of Vietnamese suf-

SEE TRAN • PAGE 4

THE MORNING READ

Pearl Harbor vet rides train of thought

By COURTNEY PERKES
THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

Warren Hutchens finished World War II with a long train ride home in 1945. He had plucked sailors from the fiery waters of Pearl Harbor and fired a bazooka on the frontlines of Europe. After five Christmases away from home, Hutchens at last held a cross-country train ticket, bound for California and Army discharge. As rowdy soldiers drank, sang and played cards, he gazed out the window quietly. Hutchens longed to body-surf in the Pacific. Find a job. And forget. In the Saturday morning mist last week, the 82-year-old boards another train, one bound for remembrance. On this jour-

SEE TRAN • PAGE 4

Consulate attacked in Saudi Arabia

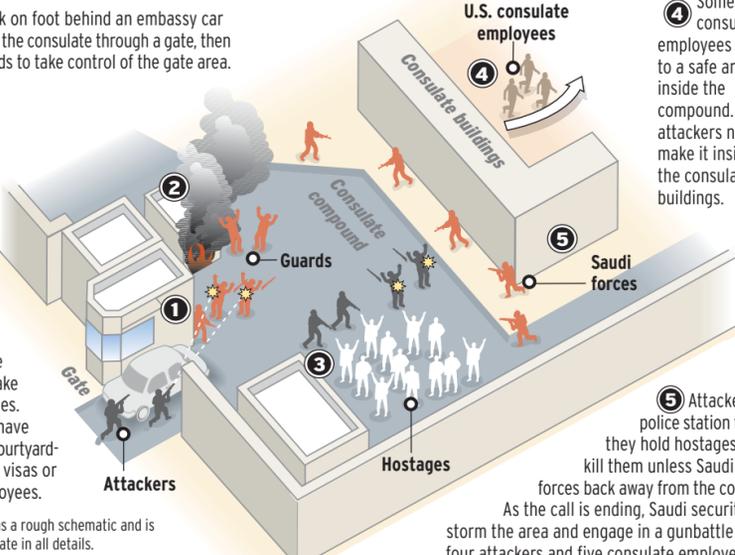
Five attackers thought to be linked to al-Qaida staged a daytime raid on the U.S. Consulate in Jiddah, Saudi Arabia's most cosmopolitan city, storming through a fortified gate and starting a gunbattle that left five local employees and four of the attackers dead.

It was the first deadly assault on a large expatriate target in seven months and the first on a Western diplomatic mission since May 2003.

The attack fell exactly a year after the Interior Ministry made the unprecedented move of listing the 26 most-wanted terrorists linked to al-Qaida in Saudi Arabia. In the ensuing year, about 17 of them have been captured or killed in numerous skirmishes throughout the desert kingdom.

But the attack was a reminder that the increasingly fragmented group is still capable of lethal violence. **Story on News 11**

- 1 Attackers sneak on foot behind an embassy car that is entering the consulate through a gate, then lob grenades at guards to take control of the gate area.
- 2 Attackers use incendiary grenades that can create fires and send plumes of heavy smoke into the air.
- 3 After getting inside the compound's outer security wall, the five attackers appear to take as many as 17 hostages. The hostages would have typically been in the courtyard-like area to apply for visas or were consulate employees.
- 4 Some consulate employees rush to a safe area inside the compound. The attackers never make it inside the consulate's buildings.
- 5 Attackers call a police station to report they hold hostages and will kill them unless Saudi security forces back away from the compound. As the call is ending, Saudi security forces storm the area and engage in a gunbattle that left four attackers and five consulate employees dead.



Note: Drawing is meant as a rough schematic and is not intended to be accurate in all details.
Sources: The Associated Press, U.S. Embassy in Saudi Arabia

Index

- Comics • Life, etc. 10-11
- Crossword • Life, etc. 10-11
- Deaths • Local 5
- Dear Abby • Life, Etc. 7
- Lottery • Local 1
- Movies • Life, Etc. 4-5
- Stocks • Business 7-9
- Weather • Local 8

Weather

Today 61° 65°
COAST INLAND

Tonight 51° 40°

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"This is truly, as you all know, an historic occasion and a true American success story."

STATE SUPREME COURT CHIEF JUSTICE RON GEORGE
BEFORE ADMINISTERING OATH OF OFFICE TO
ASSEMBLYMAN VAN TRAN

TRAN: Brother is ill with cancer

FROM PAGE 1

fering since arriving here as refugees.

Officially, Tran represents the more than 460,000 residents of the 69th Assembly District - covering parts of Anaheim, Costa Mesa, Fountain Valley, Garden Grove and Westminster. But in spirit, he represents all Vietnamese-Americans who came to this country over the past 30 years.

He is the first Vietnamese-American to assume state office. Hubert Vo, a Democrat from Houston who was elected Nov. 2 to the Texas Legislature, will take his oath of office Jan. 11.

Nearly 100 of Tran's friends, family and supporters shared the joy and sorrow as they converged on the Capitol on Monday. About 50 rode a chartered bus from Orange County, singing old-country songs, telling jokes and swapping stories during the ride.

Their festivities began with a Sunday dinner feast at a Sacramento Chinese restaurant with countless cognac-lubricated toasts, glasses raised to honor Tran and his new bride, Cindy Nguyen. The couple married Nov. 20 but postponed a reception in Orange County because of Tran's brother's illness.

To accommodate supporters here, Tran arranged a private swearing-in, staged in the governor's press room, administered by state Supreme Court Chief Justice Ron George.

"This is truly, as you all know, an historic occasion and a true American success story," George said before administering the oath, which Tran took by resting his hand on a red-covered Vietnamese-language Bible.

In April 1975, when South Vietnam was being overrun by the communist North, Tran's parents told their five children that the family was leaving for a vacation. They have never returned.

The future lawmaker arrived in the United States at

age 10, knowing only two English words: OK and Salem, after the brand of cigarettes. He became fascinated with politics in college at UC Irvine, worked for two congressmen, earned a law degree and ran for Garden Grove City Council. He spent two years campaigning for the Assembly, organizing supporters and raising nearly \$1 million.

His first day in office was about work as well as ceremony. He introduced his first bill, AB38, a measure to slash salaries of members on 14 state boards. The board members earn as much as \$114,000 a year for meeting just once a month. Similar bills died in previous sessions.

But few missed the symbolism of Tran's inauguration. During his remarks to open the session, Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez, D-Los Angeles, cited Tran as evidence of the Legislature's - and the state's - diversity.

Tao Mai, 70, a Garden Grove retiree and campaign volunteer who hung hundreds of roadside signs for Tran, said he was awestruck by his first visit to the Capitol.

A former South Vietnamese government official who came to America in 1993 after surviving 13 years in a postwar communist re-education camp, Mai put the speaker's comments in different words.

"This building represents the power of government," Mai said through an interpreter. "I am very happy because now I feel my people have a place here."

Tran could invite only two people to sit in the Assembly gallery to look down as he took the oath with 80 other lawmakers. His brother Henry, looking thin and wearing a stocking cap, sat with his father. He returned to his hotel room, too weak to celebrate.

"How can you not be emotional?" Van Tran said later. "He's my brother."

CONTACT THE WRITER: (916) 449-6048 or jgittels@ocregister.com



THOR SWIFT, FOR THE REGISTER

WELL-WISHERS: Lynn Bach and professor Le Phuoc Sang, center, and other supporters listen as Van Tran is sworn in as the first Vietnamese-American member of the Assembly.



PHOTOS: MARK RIGHTMIRE, THE REGISTER

PAST TIMES: Amanda Hatrick of Santa Ana, dressed as a stewardess for the Southern Pacific Railroad; and Dennis Leslie of Garden Grove, dressed as Gen. Douglas MacArthur, listen to a story on a Pearl Harbor Day trip from L.A. to San Diego.

TRAIN: History buffs salute

FROM PAGE 1

ney, Hutchens tells old war stories and chats so much he hardly notices the surfers in the gray waves along the seaside tracks.

He and other Pearl Harbor survivors revisit Dec. 7, 1941, from a 1949 railroad club lounge hitched to an Amtrak train on the early-morning Los Angeles to San Diego route.

Hutchens and his wife, Fay, who live in Westminster, board the 8:02 a.m. train in Anaheim. They enter a car filled with a couple of dozen history buffs sitting at dining tables and chattering beside expansive picture windows.

Ken Lopez, 33, a member of the Airborne Interpretative Association, strides down the aisle in a 1944-era Army captain's uniform he purchased on eBay.

Hutchens leaps out of his lounge chair.

"Here comes an officer. I'd better salute him," Hutchens says with a grin.

The man with a buzz-cut and a green Eisenhower jacket laughs with the veteran with the white hair and a blue Hawaiian shirt.

Minutes later, Lopez returns. He solemnly shakes Hutchens' hand.

"It's you I should salute," he tells him.

Lopez says veterans such as Hutchens show him just how good he has it.

"They've been through hell and so they have a better outlook on life," says Lopez, of Anaheim. "I can sit on a train all day and listen to these guys."

The locomotive speeds by Camp Pendleton, where Marine values are painted on a building: honor, courage, commitment.

Hutchens befriends Herb Alexander, a Fullerton train aficionado. Hutchens pulls his Pearl Harbor books out of a briefcase and shows Alexander the worn brochure of the USS Arizona memorial.



HISTORY: Dec. 7 survivor Warren Hutchens of Westminster, left, with re-enactors Paul Umbricco, center, and Jeff Warner.

Background

The Japanese surprise attack on the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, began Sunday, Dec. 7, 1941, with 183 Japanese planes, followed by a second wave of 170 planes. The attack lasted just under two hours. Some 2,403 Americans were killed, including 68 civilians. About half of those killed were aboard the battleship Arizona, which sank. A total of 21 vessels were destroyed or damaged and 180 aircraft were destroyed. On Dec. 8, 1941, Congress declared war on Japan.

"Oil comes up once in awhile from the Arizona," Hutchens says. "They claim it's tears from the sailors."

The train ambles toward San Diego, raindrops wetting the windows. A Vietnam veteran emceeding the ride hands Hutchens a microphone.

Hutchens was at Camp Makole, about 10 miles from Pearl Harbor.

"I was eating breakfast at the time," says the retired pressman. "We ate at 7:45 on the weekends. At five minutes to 8, we started hearing explosions. We saw these planes diving down. Captain Lemon got out of bed, his pants were half up, his shirttail was out. He came out with a .45 in his hand and said: 'C'mon, the war's on!'"

He saw the USS Arizona

afire. Men scrambled to shoot. Some, who lacked weapons, hurled potatoes at planes overhead.

In the chaos of the day, when Hutchens went to relieve a fellow soldier on guard duty, the soldier fired his rifle at him. The bullet in the chamber did not go off, he says. Hutchens, the son of a minister, thanked God.

He was a kid who joined the National Guard in Long Beach in 1940 to earn \$4 a month. He began the war as a bugler.

He served in Fiji and helped replace the troops killed at the Battle of the Bulge.

In the Hartz Mountains, a colorblind comrade saved his life because he could detect the camouflaged Germans hiding in trees.

"I credit my life to him. They should have more colorblind guys in the service!"

He finished the war as an infantryman awarded the Bronze Star.

His story ends simply. "I came back."

Alexander, 75, pats Hutchens on the shoulder.

Santa Ana resident Bill Hatrick, who owns the vintage train car, organizes the annual ride to pay homage to Pearl Harbor veterans and the role of the railroad in war. Passengers hear a recording of FDR's declaration of war.

"A few years ago, I heard a

statistic that was just remarkable to me, that we're losing our World War II veterans at the rate of 1,000 a day," says Hatrick, 45. "It just stirred my heart."

Remembering wasn't so easy for Hutchens once.

When the great-grandfather returned from war, nightmares bloodied his knuckles when he pounded the walls in his sleep. Once while walking in Los Angeles, an airplane flew overhead and Hutchens dashed for cover.

His wife married him in 1953 not knowing that he lived through Pearl Harbor.

Then in 1962 he came across a notice for a Pearl Harbor Survivors Association. He began to talk. He regularly sees men at parades, meetings and funerals who know where he has been.

"We're never together as a family without him bringing up something about Pearl Harbor, about being in the military," said his daughter Karen Bayne, who joins him today at a Pearl Harbor survivors convention in Ontario. "That's so engrained in him, and I'm so glad really because I've heard of other people whose dads didn't talk about it."

Whistles blare in San Diego and the train starts back for Orange County. A ukulele band on board sings "God Bless America." Hutchens joins in over a lunch of sandwiches and pasta. His wife blots a crumb from his lip.

As passengers approach their stops in Irvine and Santa Ana, they linger at his table.

"Nice to hear you," one woman says.

Hutchens and his wife stand up before their stop in Anaheim to say goodbye.

Hatrick, dressed as the conductor, says he'll see Hutchens next year.

"It takes me back in time," the veteran says. "It looks like we've got a permanent ride."

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It is The Orange County Register's policy to correct promptly all errors of substance. To report an error or clarify a news story, please direct your letter to the attention of the publisher at Box 11626, Santa Ana, CA 92711-1626.

TOMORROW



Life, etc.: Usher or Ray Charles? We break down the Grammy Award nominations.

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