

Hastert Makes 1st Court Appearance In Case

BY MICHAEL TARM AND SARA BURNETT
Associated Press

CHICAGO — A haggard Dennis Hastert appeared in court Tuesday for the first time since he was indicted, pleading not guilty to charges that he violated banking rules and lied to the FBI about paying \$3.5 million in hush money to conceal misconduct from his days as a high school teacher.

As his attorney entered the plea on his behalf, the 73-year-old former House speaker stood motionless, his hands folded and eyes downcast at the floor. When the judge asked if he understood he had to submit a DNA sample and could go to jail if he violated any conditions of his release, the man who was once second in the line of succession to the presidency answered quietly, "Yes, sir."

Hastert has not spoken publicly about the accusations that emerged two weeks ago and quickly raised questions about possible sexual abuse by the once-powerful Republican legislator from Illinois. Neither he nor his attorneys commented after the hearing.

The politician-turned-lobbyist is accused of evading federal banking laws by withdrawing hundreds of thousands of dollars in smaller amounts and lying about the money when questioned.

At the start of Tuesday's hearing, Hastert reached into a coat pocket and pulled out his passport, handing it to his attorney, who turned it over to a court official. Surrendering foreign travel documents is another standard condition of release.

The former congressman was also ordered to have any firearms removed from his property by June 23 and was forbidden from having contact with victims or witnesses in the case.

Judge Thomas M. Durkin spent most of the 20-minute hearing explaining



Former U.S. House Speaker Dennis Hastert, second from right, is led by Sidley Austin attorney John Gallo as they make their way through the media gathering at Chicago's Dirksen U.S. Courthouse on Tuesday, June 9, 2015.

how he believed he had no conflict of interest in the matter but then giving prosecutors and defense attorneys until Thursday to say if they want him to stay on the case.

The issue came up because Federal Election Commission records indicate he donated \$500 to the "Hastert for Congress" campaign in 2002 and \$1,000 in 2004. Durkin was an attorney at a Chicago law firm at the time of the contributions.

Durkin cited those donations and that he knew Hastert's son Ethan. The two worked together in private practice before Durkin became a judge. But, the judge said, he does not consider the younger Hastert "a personal friend."

To the best of his knowledge, he said, he never met Dennis Hastert.

"I have no doubt I can be impartial in this matter," the judge said.

After the judge issue is resolved, Durkin or another judge brought in to replace him will lay out a timetable for prosecutors to share evidence with the

defense. Hastert could seek a plea deal or take his case to a jury. Any trial would probably be many months away.

Appearing much thinner than in his days as speaker, Hastert walked into court slowly, slightly bent over. He appeared nervous as he sat at a defense table waiting for the hearing to begin, rubbing his chin, biting his lip and occasionally scanning the courtroom benches packed with reporters. At one point, a defense attorney reached over and patted him on the shoulder.

His lead attorney, Thomas C. Green, is based in Washington and has represented clients in the Watergate, Iran-Contra and Whitewater cases. Chicago attorney John Gallo is also on Hastert's defense team. Steven Block is the lead U.S. prosecutor.

Prosecutors did not shed any more light on the secret Hastert allegedly sought to conceal by paying the person the indictment refers to as "Individual A."

Police Descend On Small Town In Search For 2 Escaped Killers

BY MICHAEL HILL
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Associated Press

WILLSBORO, N.Y. — With police helicopters hovering overhead, hundreds of law officers in body armor poured into this small town in the Adirondack foothills Tuesday in a search for two killers who used power tools to break out of a maximum-security prison 30 miles away.

The hunt that began over the weekend focused on Willsboro, close to Lake Champlain, after residents reported seeing a couple of men walking on a road late Monday during a driving rainstorm.

Hundreds of black-clad searchers wearing bullet-proof vests and sidearms methodically worked their way shoulder-to-shoulder in the rain through hilly woods, fields and swamps, checking

every home, garage, shed and outbuilding, then yelling, "Clear!" when there were no signs of the inmates.

By early evening, it appeared the sweep had come up empty, and there was no confirmation from police that the escaped convicts had been there.

Authorities have fielded numerous tips since the breakout from the Clinton Correctional Facility in Dannemora, about 20 miles from the Canadian border, but appeared to have jumped hardest on this one.

David Sweat, 34, and Richard Matt, 48, cut through a steel wall, broke through bricks and crawled through a steam pipe before emerging through a manhole outside the prison grounds.

They were discovered missing early Saturday after stuffing their beds with clothes to fool guards on their rounds and leaving be-

hind a taunting note: "Have a nice day."

Given the meticulous planning that went into the breakout itself, there was speculation that the inmates had arranged for someone to pick them up outside the prison and were long gone from the area. On Monday, authorities said the inmates could be anywhere — perhaps Canada or Mexico.

On Tuesday, Willsboro dairy farmer George Sayward said he saw troopers parked next to his barn around 5 a.m., and they told him they were there because of a possible sighting of the convicts. Around 7 a.m., Sayward said, he heard one trooper tell another to call in 100 more men.

"The next thing I know, there were a ton of them, by the busload," Sayward said.

State Police said more than 400 corrections and other law enforcement

officers were in the area and planned to go door to door, checking homes and seasonal camps.

The escape from the 3,000-inmate state prison has raised suspicions the men had help on the inside.

Investigators have been questioning prison workers and outside contractors to try to find out who may have supplied the power tools. Contractors have been doing extensive renovations at the 170-year-old prison, a hulking, fortress-like structure that looms over Dannemora's main street.

A \$100,000 reward has been posted for information leading to the men's capture.

Sweat was convicted in the 2002 killing of a sheriff's deputy and was doing life without parole. Matt was serving 25 years to life for kidnapping and dismembering his boss in 1997.

Estonian Climber Rescued; 3 Still Missing

BY FRANKLIN BRICENO AND JARI TANNER
Associated Press

LIMA, Peru — An Estonian mountaineer who fell into a deep crevasse has been rescued, but her three fellow climbers remain missing, Peruvian officials said Tuesday.

The group, which included some of Estonia's most renowned mountaineers, fell into a 65-foot (20-meter) deep crack on Sunday after an avalanche shook the snowy Toclaraju mountain in the Cordillera Blanca range in the Andes of northern Peru. They were caught at an elevation of about 19,400 feet (5,900 meters), about 300 feet from the summit.

Annemai Martson, a gynecologist, was taken to a clinic Tuesday with two fractured ribs and symptoms of dehydration. Rescuers were unable to make con-

tact with the rest of her party, according to team leader Alfredo Quintana. The other mountaineers fell before Martson and, unlike her, were covered by the snow, dramatically reducing their chances for survival, Quintana said.

"With an avalanche, you have about 30 minutes to save a person. After that, the possibilities are very slim," he said.

Quintana called Martson's survival after more than a full day in the crevasse at freezing temperatures a miracle. Rescuers made contact with her on Monday morning, and spent 18 hours carrying her down the mountain.

The mountaineers, between 36 and 45 years old, were highly experienced, according to reports in Estonian media.

One of them was Tarmo Riga, often described as Estonia's best mountain

climber, with a record of more than 20 years climbing the world's highest peaks, according to broadcaster ERR.

His wife Jane Riga, a guide and interpreter, was also in the group. The fourth was seasoned mountain climber Allan Valge.

Jane Riga wrote in her blog that the four mountaineers celebrated Valge's 36th birthday on May 31, while on their way up the mountain, according to Estonian media.

Estonia, a European nation of 1.3 million people, has no mountains of its own.

The high climbing season in Peru runs from May to September, with thousands of adventure-seekers flocking to the Cordillera Blanca.

US Finds Iran Sanctions More Complex

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Obama administration may have to backtrack on its promise that it will suspend only nuclear-related economic sanctions on Iran as part of an emerging nuclear agreement, officials and others involved in the process tell The Associated Press.

The problem derives from what was once a strong point of the broad U.S. sanctions effort that many credit with bringing Iran to the negotiating table in the first place.

Administration officials vehemently reject that any backtracking is taking place, but they are lumping sanctions together differently from the way members of Congress and critics of the negotiations separate them.

Under the sanctions developed over decades, hundreds of companies and individuals have been penalized not only for their role in the country's nuclear program but also for ballistic missile research, terrorism, human rights violations and money laundering.

Now the administration is wending its way through that briar patch of interwoven economic sanctions.

Court Rules Against Gay Marriage

WASHINGTON (AP) — Gay and lesbian couples could face legal chaos if the Supreme Court rules against same-sex marriage in the next few weeks.

Same-sex weddings could come to a halt in many states, depending on a confusing mix of lower-court decisions and the sometimes-contradictory views of state and local officials.

Among the 36 states in which same-sex couples can now marry are 20 in which federal judges invoked the Constitution to strike down marriage bans.

Those rulings would be in conflict with the nation's highest court if the justices uphold the power of states to limit marriage to heterosexual couples. A decision is expected by late June in cases from Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio and Tennessee.

Top officials in some states, including California, seem determined to allow gay and lesbian couples to continue to marry no matter how the court decision comes out. But some county clerks, who actually issue marriage licenses, might not go along, experts said.

'Angola 3' Inmate Release Blocked

ST. FRANCISVILLE, La. (AP) — Prison activist Albert Woodfox, the last member of the "Angola Three" inmates held in solitary confinement at the Louisiana State Penitentiary, will have to wait at least several more days to see if he'll experience the "immediate" and "unconditional" freedom ordered by a federal judge.

A federal appeals court on Tuesday temporarily blocked the release of Woodfox, who spent decades in isolation after forming a Black Panther Party to protest prison conditions.

Tuesday's order came a day after a federal judge ruled that the state can't fairly try Woodfox, now 68, a third time for the killing of a prison guard 43 years ago, and that the "only just remedy" would be setting him free after all the years he spent in "extended lockdown."

Woodfox has long maintained his innocence in the guard's killing, which happened during protests of brutal conditions inside the huge penitentiary built on a former slave plantation in Angola, Louisiana. His two previous convictions were overturned for racial prejudice and lack of evidence.

Louisiana Attorney General Buddy Caldwell is appealing the order by U.S. District Judge James Brady, saying Woodfox is a killer who should remain locked up. The stay by the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans blocks his release until 1 p.m. Friday, providing time for the court to decide whether to accept the state's appeal.

Texas Officer Resigns After Pool Incident

MCKINNEY, Texas (AP) — The white police officer who was recorded on video pushing a black girl to the ground at a North Texas pool party resigned from the police force Tuesday.

Officer David Eric Casebolt resigned from the McKinney Police Department after almost 10 years on the force, said his attorney, Jane Bishkin of Dallas.

Police Chief Greg Conley confirmed the resignation at a news conference later Tuesday, saying Casebolt had not been pressured.

A video recorded by another teenager and posted online showed Casebolt pushing a bikini-clad black girl to the ground on Friday and brandishing his gun at other black teens after he and other officers responded to complaints about the pool party at a community-owned McKinney swimming pool. The 41-year-old former Texas state trooper was put on administrative leave after the incident.

Conley said a review of the incident video showed Casebolt's actions were "undefensible," and that "our policies, our training and our practices do not support his actions."

White House Press Briefing Evacuated

WASHINGTON (AP) — Secret Service agents interrupted a live, televised White House press briefing Tuesday to evacuate journalists after a bomb threat was called in to police. No bomb was found, the Secret Service said.

President Barack Obama was in the Oval Office and remained there during the evacuation, which only affected the James S. Brady Briefing Room. White House press secretary Josh Earnest, who was briefing reporters at the time of the evacuation, said later that first lady Michelle Obama and daughters Sasha and Malia were in the White House residence and were not evacuated.

The incident came after a bomb threat related to the White House briefing room was phoned in to local Washington police, the Secret Service said. Roughly 20 minutes later, uniformed Secret Service officers on the scene said an all-clear had been issued, and journalists were later allowed back into the White House, where the daily press briefing resumed.

Evacuations at the White House are rare, but not unprecedented. Last year, journalists and officials were temporarily evacuated after a fence-jumper made it inside the White House.

Yet Tuesday's incident was made more dramatic by the fact that it took place on camera during a live press briefing — the first such instance since the White House started allowing live television coverage of full press briefings in the 1990s.

Spain Drops Probe Into Journalist

MADRID (AP) — Spain's Supreme Court has closed its criminal investigation into the 2003 killing of a journalist by tank fire in Iraq and canceled arrest warrants for three U.S. soldiers.

Justice Santiago Pedraz ruled Tuesday that the case cannot continue because Spain's government last year placed limitations on cases tried under its principle of universal justice that allows prosecution of incidents outside of the country.

Spanish cameraman Jose Couso died when a shell crashed into a Baghdad hotel. Also killed was Ukrainian reporter Taras Protsyuk.

A U.S. review found the use of force was justified after the soldiers responded "to what they said was hostile fire."

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