Kamka battles lawmakers over prison site

By John W. Freee

In Vietnam, Capt. Gordon C. Kamka's job as an Air Force intelligence officer was to fly low altitude reconnaissance missions over enemy territory, searching for hidden encampments and rocket launch sites.

Now, a decade later, Gov. Harry Hughes' secretary for prisons and public safety is caught up in a different type of war, but one which to him must be just as difficult to understand as the Vietnam conflict was to many others.

The former Baltimore warden and some of top aides have become embroiled in the most highly political, potentially explosive battle of the 1980 General Assembly: where to build and how to run prisons.

The fight has opened a philosophical chasm between the administration and the legislature, and has sent a lot more flak toward Kamka and his aides than a spy plane might draw on a reconnaissance mission.

The young secretary has been harangued in the House and scolded in the Senate.

Lawmakers dislike his plans to build new prisons and say they are fed up with the way he and his staff have been running the existing ones.

They blame him for a prison overcrowding condition that probably began back when he was still a pilot flying out of Da Nang.

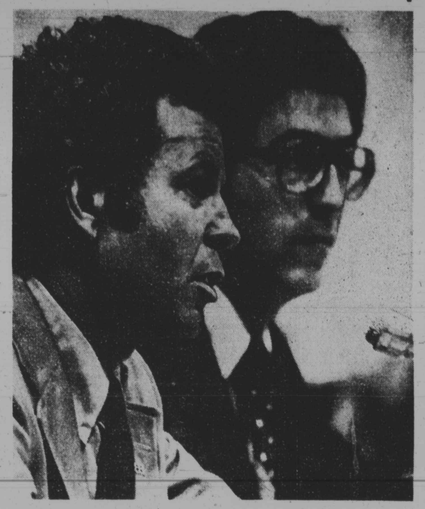
And if a federal judge refuses the Sates's request to extend this summer's deadline to end prison overcrowding, the legislators seem determined to hold Kamka personally responsible for every criminal who is put back on the street.

At the center of the swirl of problems engulfing Kamka is a simple truth: Lawmakers hate to talk about building prisons.

The problem is that somebody has to live near prisons, and no one wants to do that. So, wherever Kamka and Hughes say a new prison should be built, the residents of that area — and their legislative representatives — will oppose it.

Kamka is also in hot water because he told these same lawmakers a year ago that a prison they had planned to build in Baltimore was, first, too large and, second, probably not needed anyway.

While Kamka and Hughes insist they never ruled out the responsibility of building a new prison, that was clearly the impression they left. This year, their tune has changed.



TESTIFYING — Corrections Secretary Gordon C. Kamka officially announced his choice for the site of the new state prison, before the House Appropriations Subcommittee. The site would be in Howard County on the grounds adjacent to the Clifton T. Perkins State Hospital. Marvin Robbins, head of the Inmate Grievance Commission, is seated next to Kamka.

There is also the little matter of courtesy. Most of the Anne Arundel and Howard County legislators who represent districts around Jessup where the new prison may be built found out about the plan in the newspapers, not from Hughes.

Some still have not gotten over that insult.

Next comes the problem of who will be housed in the prisons, an issue that has, brought into focus the Corrections' Department's dearth of information about the inmates for whom they are responsible.

Last, but hardly least, comes the issue of Kamka's personality, which in itself may be what infuriates the lawmakers most.

Kamka is a believer — some say with evangelical fervor — in prisoner rehabilitation, and a critic of Prisoner warehousing.

He is a man of concepts who legislators say publicly — and some of the governors' top aides say privately — is a lousy manager.

To lawmakers faced with constituent complaints about crime in the streets and turnstile justice, Kamka's progressive philosophy translates into being soft on criminals.

His inability to supply the legislators with precise data about who is incarcerated, for what, for how long, and where, has led some to conclude that Kamka and his staff have not done their homework.

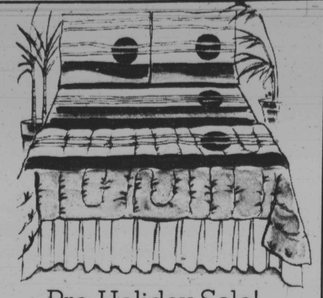
The problems are compounded by the tension between Kamka and House and Senate committee members who are reluctant to embrace the ideas that Kamka, a part-time college psychology lecturer, advocates.

The lawmakers bluntly say they have little confidence in Kamka's department, and the secretary's response has bordered on contempt.

Hughes, who himself has had some difficulties dealing with the General Assembly, last week called Kamka, "one of the best corrections people in the country." But Hughes conceded there are problems.

"I've talked with him about it on occasion, just like people sometimes talk with me about bettering my relations with the legislature," said Hughes. "It's a continual learning process, and an interesting one."

What is being murmured around State House halls lately, however, is that Kamka's learning process better speed up, or else he and his concepts may become casualties of the legislative war over prisons.



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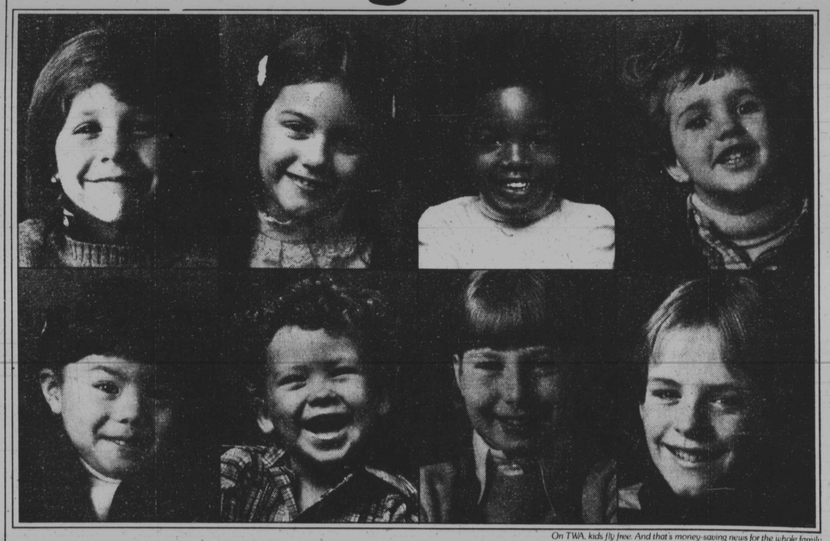

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For reservations and information, call your Travel Agent or TWA—the airline where kids fly free.

Kids Fly Free offer is not available on Florida and Arizona routes.

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Public awareness campaign set

City planners estimate as many as 45,000 residents were not counted during the last census, costing the city federal and state funds.

This time, the city will try to prevent that.

Mayor William Donald Schaefer began a public awareness campaign this week to remind residents of the importance of being counted. The campaign will continue through April 1, the date of the actual census.

Elliot Lieberman, a city planner, said the key to an accurate count in Baltimore will be reaching minorities. Most of those who were not counted in 1970 were minorities, he said.

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Study says aspirin reduces chance of second heart attack

A group of heart patients reduced their chances of a second attack by one-third by taking aspirin along with the drug Persantine, according to a University of Maryland medical school study.

Dr. Christian R. Klimt, a medical school professor who conducted the study, said his findings confirm earlier research that a daily dose of aspirin reduces the incidence of heart attacks.

But even more significant is the fact that Persantine — used to treat certain forms of heart disease — increased the effectiveness of aspirin in reducing the recurrence of heart attacks, Klimt said.

The study found that three aspirin and three Persantine tablets reduce heart attacks by a third during the first 24 months of treatment, while with aspirin alone the same reduction held true for only the first 20 months of treatment.

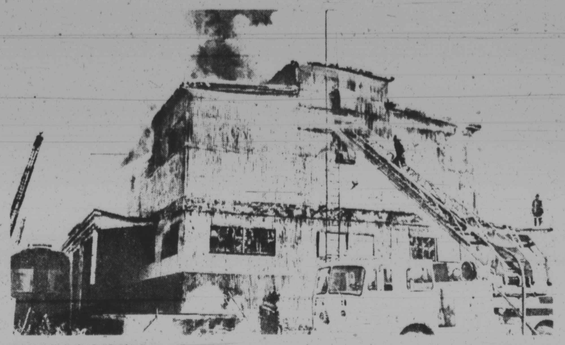
"Our primary interest was the combination of Persantine and aspirin which act both on the platelets but in different ways," Klimt said. "The feeling was that the two together would do better than aspirin alone and that indeed is what we found."

The study involved 2,026 men and women, including 100 patients at North Charles General Hospital in Baltimore. It was conducted at 10 medical centers, four in England and 16 in the United States.

Klimt said his Persantine study and other aspirin research contradicts the findings of the largest study done on aspirin.

He said the findings of all studies will be discussed Feb. 20 at a meeting of the National Institutes of Health.

"The issue of aspirin is an unsettled one. None of the studies have reached statistical significance," he said. The aspirin question is wide open."



RAILROAD WAREHOUSE BLAZE — A three alarm fire completely burned the second floor and roof of a vacant two-story brick and corregated steel warehouse, owned by the Chesale System, in the 1100 block of W. Pratt St., Wednesday, Feb. 13. More than 30 pieces of fire equipment were called to the scene around 11 a.m. The fire was brought under control at 12:18 p.m. No injuries were reported. Fire investigators report that fires were started in several portions of the building which indicate arson was the cause of the blaze.

AFRO photo by Roman Hankewycz

Local realtor named top agent

Mrs. Patricia Davis of Century 21, Otis Warren Realty, was the top real estate sales producer in the Century 21 Greater Maryland District in October 1979. Mrs. Davis is a graduate of Morgan State University and has a graduate degree in public information from American University. She is also a graduate of the Graduate Realtors Institute designation.

Patricia Davis
Top Agent

NOTIFICATION

TO BIDDERS

Sealed Bids will be received at the Virginia Department of Highways & Transportation, Rm. 1220, and the parking lot Security Sta., Annex Bldg., 401 E. Broad St., Richmond, Va.; and the lobby of the Richmond Hyatt House, W. Broad St. at I-64, Richmond, Va., until 10 A.M., EST, March 4, 1980, and will be opened in the Central Office Auditorium, 1221 E. Broad St., for the following work:

Job Des. 61-80 - Cold Mix Bit. Mat'l. - Statewide - 52,156 Tons Aggr.; 11,940 Tons Aggr. (state owned) to be applied; 995,710 Gals. Bit. Mat'l.; Air to Sch. CM4246, CM4445, CM4640 & CM47-80 - 12,023 Tons Hot Mix Bit. Mat'l.; 16,500 Gals. Cold Bit. Mat'l. (Tack).

Job Des. 62-80 - Slurry Seal - Statewide - 11,161,449 Square Yds. Slurry Seal.

Job Des. 63-80, 64-80, 65-80, 66-80, 67-80, 68-80, 69-80 and 70-80 - Bristol, Salem, Lynchburg, Richmond, Suffolk, Fredericksburg, Culpeper & Staunton Districts - 635,115 Tons Bit. Plant Mixed Mat'l.; 562,595 Gals. Cold Bit. Mat'l. (Tack); 6,650 Gals. Liquid Bit. Mat'l.; 13,990 Square Yds. Asphalt Pavement Planing; 26,650 Square Yds. Pavement Reinforcement Fabric; 532,625 Units Bit. Conc. Heat Stabilization.

The Department hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively insure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, minority business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color or national origin in consideration for an award.

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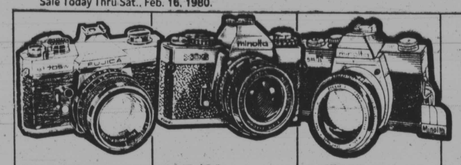

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