

^AP Top News At 1 a.m. EST<<
^Friday, Dec. 29, 1995<<

IRS BOMB

RENO, Nev. (AP) — Two men who were angry with the IRS were charged Thursday with planting a powerful bomb that fizzled outside the agency's building in Reno last week. Federal agents said Joseph Martin Bailie, 40, had a gripe with the IRS and that the agency had garnished Bailie's wages. He enlisted Ellis Edward Hurst, 52, to help him with the plan and borrowed Hurst's pickup to transport the bomb, authorities said. They were charged Thursday with attempted destruction of a government building and use of a destructive device. No bail was set. They each face up to 50 years in prison if convicted on both charges.

FAA-PLANE CRASH

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Federal Aviation Administration is reviewing American Airlines' pilot training program in light of indications human error may have been involved in last week's deadly crash in Colombia. The federal regulators also will look at American's operating procedures. Colombian officials say there was no indication on a cockpit recorder that the pilots of the doomed flight conducted a routine checklist in preparation for their descent. The crash killed 160 people. American Airlines itself has issued a statement suggesting human error was involved.

CONGRESSIONAL TRAVEL

WASHINGTON (AP) — Despite the federal budget impasse and partial government shutdown, many lawmakers still plan official trips abroad during the winter congressional recess. Work is on the agenda, but fine dining, sightseeing and squash games also make the to-do lists. So-called fact-finding missions are a seasonal rite for Washington legislators, but this year's trips may be more problematic; Many U.S. embassy staffers who handle accommodations and arrange meetings for lawmakers with local officials are furloughed or working without pay while President Clinton and Congress negotiate a spending plan.

CLINTON-DEFENSE

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Clinton vetoed a \$265 billion defense authorization bill, objecting to demands for weapons systems he said are unnecessary. In his veto message, Clinton said he was against an item that would compel him to build and deploy a Star Wars-style missile defense system by 2003.

TIMES SQUARE BALL

NEW YORK (AP) — As if Times Square could be any flashier, along comes a bigger, better, brighter ball to ring in the New Year. The new ball, unveiled Thursday atop its perch at One Times Square, is outfitted with strobes, halogen lamps, a fog machine and 12,000 rhinestones. The glitz is capped by two powerful Yag lasers, originally designed for the Star Wars defense system, and search lights placed atop nearby buildings. The ball even has a better way to get to the 300,000 revelers Sunday night: descending from a 77-foot pole via a mechanical winch, replacing the six people who lowered the 500-pound sphere using pulley ropes.