

Adelaide, Australia - Australia's first Nazi war crimes case began today with claims that a Ukrainian-born pensioner was a Nazi collaborator who took part in the 1942 mass execution of up to 850 Jews.

Ivan Polyukhovich, 75, now an Australian citizen, was charged under the War Crimes Amendment Act. The penalty for conviction is not set and is at the discretion of the trial judge. Mr. Polyukhovich was charged in January 1990, but on the eve of a pretrial hearing in July, he was found with what police believe was a self-inflicted bullet wound in his chest. He spent several months in the hospital recovering.

Security was tight during today's pretrial hearing in Adelaide Magistrates Court, with members of the public searched as they entered. Outside, a small band of supporters held placards protesting the prosecution almost half a century after World War II. In arguing for the case to proceed to trial, prosecutor Greg James told the court that Mr. Polyukhovich had killed 24 people and was involved in the mass killing of between 553 and 850 others.

Mrs. Marcos plans shoe auction: Former Philippine first lady Imelda Marcos plans to auction off her famous shoe collection to raise funds for victims of the Mount Pinatubo volcano, aides said today. Mrs. Marcos will authorize a Filipino journalist to handle the auction of the more than 1,200 pairs of shoes she left behind when she fled the country in the 1986 uprising that toppled her late husband, Ferdinand, said the aides, who spoke by telephone from New York on condition of anonymity. Mrs. Marcos plans to return next week to face tax and other criminal charges. The shoes, clothes and other personal items are on display at the Malacanang presidential palace. Government officials have said the property can be returned to Mrs. Marcos if she requests it.

Carter fears new fighting in Liberia: Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter left war-shattered Liberia today, saying he could help organize elections within seven months but he was concerned about new outbreaks of fighting. Mr. Carter said at a news conference in Abidjan that he was pleased with an "obvious commitment to the peace process" displayed during extensive meetings he held with chief rebel leader Charles Taylor and Amos Sawyer, head of a West African-backed interim government. Both sides appeared more willing to make concessions, he said. Mr. Carter spent Saturday and Sunday in Monrovia, the Liberian capital, and behind rebel lines of Mr. Taylor, whose fighters have overrun most of the nation outside the capital.

Gorbachev to meet with Mitterrand in France: Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev will travel Wednesday to France to meet with President Francois Mitterrand after the start of the Middle East peace conference in Madrid. The two leaders will hold talks in southwest France, according to a communique from Mr. Mitterrand's Elysee Palace, but the statement did not say exactly where. France-Inter radio speculated that the meeting would take place at Mr. Mitterrand's country house in Latche. Mr. Gorbachev and Mr. Mitterrand will discuss Western aid to the Soviet Union, the officials said, along with an eventual disarmament meeting between the four nations keeping nuclear arms in Europe: the United States, Soviet Union, France and Britain.

ELSEWHERE

Roger Harrison, the U.S. ambassador to Jordan, suffered a serious stomach injury today when his car crashed head-on with another car at the edge of Jerusalem, diplomats and hospital officials said. . . . Tamil separatists fighting for an independent homeland ambushed a foot patrol in northeastern Sri Lanka, killing 14 government soldiers, the military announced. . . . Turkey bombed northern Iraq for a third day, continuing its attacks on the bases of Kurdish rebels fighting Turkey.

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