

Rudder's Rangers attend weekend recondo school

By JOHN CURYLO

Rudder's Rangers, formerly the A&M Ranger Company, got a taste of Army life this weekend during a visit to the Recondo School at Ft. Hood.

Twenty-eight cadets, accompanied by four members of the Military Science Department staff, went through a short version of the three-week course in patrolling, reconnaissance, and mountaineering, taught by infantry officers and non-commissioned officers.

Capt. Charles Briscoe, Major Donald Henderson, Capt. Mario Macaluso, and SFC James Fugate went along on the trip. Capt.

Briscoe is the advisor of the unit.

During their stay at the base camp of the Recondo School, the Aggies were treated like recruits and expected to perform to perfection.

Upon arrival at the school, the cadets received a brief refresher course in use of the compass. They then encountered a night compass course, using skills learned in Military Science classes.

Saturday was the big day, beginning with breakfast at 6:00 a.m. The first instruction was in immediate action drills, used while on patrols. A demonstration was given, and then the

cadets were divided into patrols, using the techniques employed when a patrol is attacked.

The quick fire drill was next for the Aggies. BB guns were used to avoid injury, as they first practiced hitting a disc tossed into the air by another cadet. Protective equipment was issued, and the Rangers moved down quick reaction lanes, returning the fire of hidden aggressors.

The highlight of the weekend was the mountaineering phase of the training. To insure safety, a knot-tying class was taught, and cadets learned to tie the knots they would later use in rappelling and belaying. These two activities were conducted after lunch on cliffs of 30, 50, and 120 feet. The Aggies learned how to lower one another down a cliff, using ropes and the knots they were

taught (belaying) and how to lower themselves in a safe manner (rappelling). In addition, free climbing was employed to return to the tops of the cliffs.

Further confidence in knots was obtained in manipulating one, two, and three rope bridges stretched across a ravine. The Rangers were required to hook themselves to the bridges and move across the ravine, learning

to put up with "windy" conditions.

Further instruction in night patrolling and night vision was learned Saturday evening. The unit was again broken into reconnaissance patrols, and these groups went through a booby trap course. Most of these were set up by Major Henderson. In this way, the cadets learned to carry out an operation under the hardship of darkness.

Unexpected training came when two of the patrols ambushed the two who started the course last. Here, everyone put into use a combination of what they learned in immediate action, quick fire, and night vision classes.

Before leaving Sunday, certificates were presented to members of Rudder's Rangers, making them honorary graduates of the Recondo School.

Stock scandal gets investigative group

AUSTIN (AP) — Texas House members voted overwhelmingly Monday to create machinery that could—but might not—result in an investigation of an alleged stock scandal involving state officials.

In a long debate session that carried hungry lawmakers three hours past their usual lunch break, the House:

—Voted 143-0 to set up the House General Investigating Committee, which House Speaker Gus Mutscher said he would appoint before the Easter holidays.

—Approved, 128-16, a resolution asking several state agencies and professional associations to investigate the collapse of the Sharpstown State Bank of Houston, the "enjoining of National Bankers Life Insurance Co." and "related matters."

But they rejected four attempts at a more specific probe of the passage of two bank deposit insurance bills in 1969. The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission alleged in a suit filed in Dallas Jan. 18 that quick-profit stock deals were arranged for several state officials to induce passage of the bills.

According to the SEC petition, the bills were designed so that Sharpstown State Bank could avoid examination by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.

Mutscher, Gov. Preston Smith, Rep. W. S. Heatly of Paducah, Rep. Tommy Shannon of Fort Worth and state Democratic Chairman Elmer Baum all told SEC investigators they borrowed large sums from Sharpstown in 1969 to speculate in National Bankers Life Insurance Co. stock. They denied any connection between the stock deals and the two banking bills, and none is a defendant in the SEC suit.

"Those of you who feel an investigation should be made, you have here the vehicle by which an investigation can be made," said Rep. Dewitt Hale of Corpus Christi, sponsor of the General Investigating Committee resolution.

The other resolution, by Rep. Carl Parker of Port Arthur, instructs the attorney general, state banking commissioner, state securities commissioner, state insurance commissioner and the presidents of the State Bar of Texas, Texas Bankers Association, and Texas Society of Certified Public Accountants to make an investigation.

The agencies and associations would file with the attorney general and the House Investigating Committee "the complete record of all factual information with regard to closing of the Sharpstown State Bank, the enjoining of National Bankers Life Insurance Co. and all related matters as soon as practicable."

Mutscher has stated he thinks the investigating committee should conduct its work—whatever it chooses to investigate—after the legislature adjourns May 31.

"The air must be cleared once and for all. The publicity surrounding the current SEC activities must be fully explored. I want the members of the House and people of this state to know the facts. Facts—not rumors, not innuendos, not distortions. I want to emphasize that I do not want the results of these resolutions you pass to be a whitewash nor a witch hunt. The facts must be laid before the public," Mutscher

told the House before debate began.

Several members said privately that lobbyists asked them to reject any attempt at major changes in the Hale and Parker resolutions.

It became clear early that Mutscher had the votes to pass the two measures—which had his blessing — without significant amendments.

Representatives tabled, 110-35, an amendment by Rep. Tom Bass of Houston to require Mutscher to appoint the investigating committee in 10 days.

Then they tabled, 108-55, an amendment by Bass to the Hale resolution that would have required the investigating committee specifically to probe circumstances surrounding passage of the two banking bills.

Rep. Tom Moore of Waco was defeated, 105-38, in an effort to compel the investigating committee to see whether state bribery laws were violated in connection with the two banking bills.

"This is an allegation of nothing less than bribery," Moore said of the SEC suit. "It is incumbent upon us to lay the facts bare and put this dog to rest one way or another."

He pointed out that the investigating committee decides what to probe unless the House instructs it.

"The committee may investigate . . . or they may not, and the public will be on our backs unless we pass this amendment," Moore said.

"Is it your motive to investigate or accuse?" asked Parker. "I don't think that question is worthy of an answer, and you ought to be ashamed of yourself," Moore replied.

Parker later told him that "if we incorporate those accusations in writing in your amendment, we will be giving credence to those accusations."

"That baby already has been born. This merely acknowledges it," Moore replied.

Reps. Bill Blythe of Houston and Bob Vale of San Antonio were defeated in attempts to substitute for the Parker resolutions proposals for full investigations of the passage of the two banking bills.

The hottest exchange of the day came over an attempt by Rep. Maurice Angly, Austin Republican, to get an investigation of state deposits in Sharpstown by state Treasurer Jesse James.

"I think Mr. Jesse James is doing a wonderful job. He is the best treasurer we have ever had and one of the best in the nation," said Rep. Billy Williamson, Tyler.

"Shouldn't you be up here apologizing to the depositors of Sharpstown State Bank," Williamson thundered at Angly, "when it was you who precipitated the run on Sharpstown State Bank by prematurely announcing the withdrawal of state deposits from Sharpstown Bank. You, more than any other person, are responsible for the collapse of Sharpstown State Bank."

Angly, evidently flustered by the attack, declared that Williamson's statement was contrary to findings of the SEC and the FDIC.

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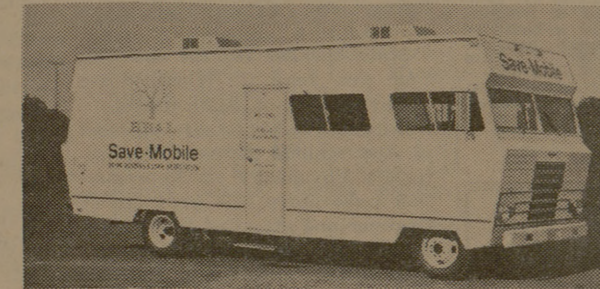
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