

THE BATTALION

Serving the Texas A&M University community

Vol. 74 No. 173
2 Pages

Thursday, July 9, 1981
College Station, Texas

USPS 045 360
Phone 845-2611

The Weather	
Today	Tomorrow
High 92	High 94
Low 76	Low 76
Chance of rain 20%	Chance of rain 20%

IRA prisoner dies; replacement added to list

United Press International
BELFAST, Northern Ireland — Catholic mediators accused Britain of reneging on a deal that might have saved the life of hunger-striker Joseph McDonnell, and the IRA chose his replacement in the macabre chain of death fasts.

In an equally hardening attitude, Britain's northern Ireland office vowed Wednesday it would not negotiate with a "pistol to its head" and would never abdicate control of Maze Prison to "terrorists" despite seven IRA prisoners still on hunger strikes and the prospects of an eighth. McDonnell, 30, who died early Wednesday, four days after the Dublin-based Justice and Peace

mission reportedly presented a peace formula to Britain, was the fifth hunger striker to die this year in a quest by IRA detainees to gain political prisoner status.

"By the clawing back on the part of the government, a fine opportunity to get a resolution was lost," commission chairman Brian Gallagher said Wednesday. "We were let down by the British government."

In Dublin, new Irish Prime Minister Garret FitzGerald said he had been in touch with the British government to "impress on them the need for an urgent solution."

The five-man commission met the Maze pris-

oners four times in six days to draw up its peace formula to satisfy the inmates' demands — unrestricted movement inside the jail, permission to wear their own clothes, refuse prison work, get more mail and a 50 percent reduction in their sentences for good behavior.

The IRA prisoners, led by Bobby Sands, the first striker to die, began their fasts in March, charging Britain reneged on a deal granting those privileges enjoyed by inmates until the mid-1970s when they were revoked after reports the inmates were using the freedom of movement to conduct classes on how to make bombs.

In its most explicit language this year, Bri-

tain's Northern Ireland office reiterated that granting the privileges would amount to letting the prisoners run the jail.

"The government cannot have a pistol to its head," said Minister of State Michael Alison, explaining the Maze "was not meant to be a training camp for terrorists."

Northern Ireland Secretary Humphrey Atkins offered concessions on two points in the formula but reaffirmed the government would not discuss reform until the hunger strike ended.

The peace formula has not been publicized, and Gallagher, the chairman of the Dublin com-

mission, said he was "astonished" at the statement by the Northern Ireland office.

The concessions were read to the seven prisoners still on hunger strike, as the IRA announced Pat McGeown, 25, who is married and has a 6-year-old son, will replace McDonnell on the hunger strike within 48 hours. McGeown is serving a 15-year term for possession of explosives and the bombing of Belfast's Europa Hotel in January 1975.

Of the seven surviving fasters, the weakest was Kiernan Docherty, now in the 52nd day of not eating. Sunday, IRA sources said he could not hold down water.



Staff photo by Greg Gammon

Setting the trap

Although this spider hasn't had any courses in civil engineering, the intricacy of its web rivals any man-made construction.

The unusual photographic effect is achieved by holding a light strobe behind the web while shooting the picture.

Researchers study methanol's use as fuel

By BERNIE FETTE
Battalion Staff

Americans may be running their automobiles on fuel that is cheaper, cleaner and more efficient in three to five years if the work of four Texas A&M researchers continues as planned.

Joe Popp and Al Hulsey of the engineering technology department and Dr. Bill Harris and Dr. Dick Davidson of the chemical engineering department are developing a process in which methanol, a kind of alcohol, will be used as a fuel in automobile engines.

"We think methanol is the fuel of the future," Hulsey said. "And it's going to be here sooner than people think."

The methanol used in the engines can be produced from coal at a cost of 40 to 50 cents per gallon, and expected mileage is approxi-

mately 75 percent of that gained from gasoline.

The researchers are presently working with two cars which were purchased for the experiments by Conoco, who will test the prototypes when they are finished. Conversions on one of the cars have been completed and the other will be finished in two to three weeks.

Hulsey said the rising price of gasoline has prompted many individuals to produce their own alcohol and use it as fuel in their cars. But the methanol has a distinct advantage over alcohol.

When alcohol is burned in a car's engine it also burns away the oil which lubricates the cylinders, causing excessive wear on the engine. But Popp and Hulsey say that by vaporizing the methanol through a heat-transfer process, that problem can be eliminated.

The methanol also has an environmental advantage over gasoline

because it burns much cleaner, Popp said.

Since burning the methanol in a car engine requires a different air-to-fuel ratio, there is the need for a minor adjustment on the car's carburetor.

Popp said that at this stage of the research, the cost of converting an automobile to methanol as a primary source of fuel costs between \$2,000 and \$3,000 because all the parts must be custom-made.

The researchers say they hope to make the conversion kits available to consumers for \$500 in three to five years. Hulsey said that at that time, methanol would probably be available at most filling stations.

"I don't care what it is," Popp said. "If there's a cheaper fuel for cars, then people are going to buy it."

Instructors try to take children out of the classroom and into the "field" settings as much as possible, Nash said. "We try not to limit the experience just to classroom instruction."

Children in the coastal lore and creative writing section go out to the beach and find an object to weave a story around.

Marine biology workshop participants spend time on boats to gather and study specimens of marine life and children in the architecture section tour Galveston and Houston to compare early and modern architecture styles.

A tour of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Johnson Spacecraft Center and several planetariums is on the agenda for kids in the space science workshop along with a visit to Galveston by some astronauts.

Roberts said the opportunity students have to interact with other children who also have above-average intelligence is just as important as the learning aspect.

The children who participated in the camp last year found it "rewarding to be with people they could finally relate with," Roberts said.

Mother Nature smiled on Texas growers

This summer's fruit crop especially peachy

By KATHY O'CONNELL
Battalion Staff

If you enjoy a mouth-watering peach, now is the time to get them, because Texas peach growers have experienced bumper crop this summer.

B.G. Hancock, a horticulturalist with the Texas A&M Agricultural Extension Service, said this year, "Ol' Mother Nature smiled on Texas growers."

Last year, he said, growers were plagued with late frost, drought and severe hail storms. All these elements can either make or break a good crop.

Hancock said the most damage to peach crops in Texas comes from hail storms. If the storm hits the early developing fruit and knocks them off the trees, then the crop is ruined. But, if the crop is "hail kissed", that is, the fruit is nicked, then they can still be sold to the consumer.

These "hail kissed" peaches are sold at a discount and are good for canning, preserving and freezing, he said.

"Texans are proud of their peaches," he said. "To the Texan, the tree-ripened peach is the best." Even though California is number one in peach productivity, most Texans prefer a more ripe, mature peach.

He said California growers use an entirely different variety of peaches, which



Staff photo by Greg Gammon

are bred mainly for their color. "They (Californians) have developed peaches that will look mature before they are," he said.

"Ripe peaches is where we can beat the livin' daylight out of them (Californians)," he said.

Texas is also unique in that ripe

peaches are ready at the beginning of May. Other crops grown in Midwestern, Eastern and Southeastern United States aren't ready until July.

MSC Council will discuss lounge abuse

The MSC Council will meet Saturday to hear reports from three council officers and approve speakers for MSC SCONA and MSC Great Issues.

MSC Council president Doug Dedeker said the meeting will focus on a report from the vice president of operations concerning abuse of the Serpentine and Schiwetz lounges.

Dedeker said there are several groups of people who play "war games" in the Serpentine lounge, which is located on the 2nd floor above the MSC Main Desk.

Dedeker said the MSC Hotel staff has been continually disturbed by horseplay and loud laughing. He said the council will discuss how to solve the abuse of these lounges.

The council will meet at 10 a.m. Saturday in the Council Conference Room (216T MSC).