

Marine halts Israeli tanks

United Press International
WASHINGTON - Marine Capt. Charles Johnson, 30, commander of Lima Company, halted tanks that were trying to cross American lines in Beirut Wednesday by climbing aboard the lead tank with his pistol drawn and ordering the Israelis to leave the area, the Pentagon said.

The three British-built Israeli Centurion tanks departed without further incident, ending a 50-minute standoff, the Pentagon said.

Israel flatly denied there was any attempt by their tanks to cross the American lines and said the confrontation probably was the result of new rules governing patrols in the area.

The incident was the sixth and most serious confrontation between Israeli and American forces in the Beirut airport area south of the city.

Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, who is uncomfortable with the Marine presence in Beirut as part of the multinational peace-keeping force, cited Johnson as a hero.

"I find it very disturbing and a continuation of a set of problems both unnecessary and damaging to the prospects of the president for seeking peace," he said. "I think the Marine captain behaved not only correctly but with extreme courage."

He said he would recommend a commendation for Johnson's actions in the face of threatening moves by the Israeli tanks.

The Israelis said their tanks were not trying to cross U.S. lines but were on a routine patrol in an area permitted to them by an agreement worked out Friday between U.S. and Israeli officials and suggested Johnson was unaware of the new rules.

"These recurring challenges by the Israeli forces are unacceptable," State Department spokesman Alan Romberg said. "They endanger the safety of the troops involved and hamper the peace-keeping efforts of the multinational force. We view such incidents very seriously."



staff photo by Octavio Garcia

Finishing touches

Jay Medor, a senior theater arts major from Houston, puts the finishing touches on a section of one of the props to be used for "Blood Wedding," a play presented by Texas A&M Theater Arts Program. The play, directed by Bob Wenck, an assistant professor of English, will run Feb. 9 to 12.

Costs may not fall with utility ruling

United Press International
AUSTIN - State utility companies have dismissed the elimination of the fuel adjustment clause by the Public Utility Commission as a cosmetic change that does little to alter current billing procedures.

"It really doesn't change much except to make something already complicated even more complicated," Graham Painter, a spokesman for Houston Lighting & Power Co., said Wednesday. "We don't see how there's any real benefit to the customer."

"We haven't seen anything that would reduce the cost of fuel or the cost of electricity," he said.

The new rule, adopted unanimously by the commission Tuesday, would maintain the current fuel adjustment clause until September. The rule also is subject to a 30-day public comment.

The fuel adjustment clause is the billing procedure through which electric utilities are allowed to automatically pass fuel costs on to consumers. The amount charged under the clause appears separately on electric bills and often exceeds base rates.

Under the new rule, beginning April 1, utilities will be required to file 12-month estimates of fuel costs which can include monthly or quarterly adjustments within the one-year period. The yearly fuel estimates will be commission review before inclusion in the utilities' rate bases in September.

Under the new scheme, the fuel

factor would be excluded for profit purposes and utility companies would be bound to produce electricity as economically as possible. The rule establishes a 1 percent allowable margin for overcollection or undercollection of estimated fuel costs.

The rule also requires utilities with billings over the margin to refund the extra collections plus interest to ratepayers. Billings under the margin would entitle utilities to recover fuel costs through a surcharge.

A spokeswoman for Gov. Mark White, who campaigned on a promise to abolish the clause and reform the PUC, said the governor was concerned the PUC had given consumers too little.

"He is pleased to see the situation has finally gotten the PUC's attention," said Ann Arnold, White's press secretary. "He is concerned they are not going far enough, particularly in that they are not ensuring there are detailed audits of fuel expenses."

The new rule, which now undergoes a 30-day public comment period, grants utility companies the right to seek adjustments on an emergency basis, with the commission bound to act on the request within a 20-day period.

The commission Tuesday presented the Senate Finance Committee with a supplemental appropriation request seeking \$2.1 million for the next biennium to hire 18 additional staff members to investigate utility fuel costs and transactions.

Women's dorms to get lock system

by Stephanie M. Ross
Battalion Reporter

A new security system is almost ready for the modular residence halls and Legett Hall.

As soon as the physical plant staff prepares the keys and installs locks on dormitory doors, new security systems will be effective in Clements, Haas, Hobby, McFadden, Neely, Underwood and Legett halls. The new system should be installed in about two weeks, said Ron Sasse, associate director of student affairs.

When the new system is installed, outside doors to the dormitories will be locked during non-visitation hours and each resident will be issued a door key. Telephones will be installed outside the dormitories so residents can call their roommates if they forget or lose their keys.

Because the modular halls only have two entrances, the student affairs department thought security problems could be solved first in these halls, Sasse said.

A push-button combination lock was installed in Briggs Hall this semester. To unlock the door, the correct combination must be punched.

Sasse said the system has not been as successful as it could have been because residents have given the door combination to friends rather than

going to open the door for them.

Other systems are being sought for the women's dormitories in the Commons area and the balcony-style halls on the north side of campus, he said.

Mosher and Krueger halls pose different security problems because of their size and number of entrances, Sasse said. Other types of locking systems, including a magnetic lock system and push button locks, are being sought for those dormitories. Video cameras also are being considered as a security measure, he said.

The balcony-style halls — Keathley, Fowler and Hughes — pose different security problems because of their construction, Sasse said. Entirely different systems will be considered.

The student affairs department also is stressing student awareness, Sasse said.

The security awareness committee has urged students to lock their doors, report suspicious activity and take a friend when going anywhere at night. The committee also wants to inform students of incidents that occur on campus, Sasse said.

The department also has considered such security improvements as increased lighting in certain areas of the campus, Sasse said.

Vandiver names interim provost

Dr. Gordon Eaton, who has served as Texas A&M dean of geosciences for the past 16 months, has been named interim provost and vice president for academic affairs University President Frank E. Vandiver announced Wednesday.

Vandiver said he will request that the Texas A&M Board of Regents confirm the appointment at its next meeting. The interim appointment is effective immediately.

"Dr. Eaton is an able scientist who brings extensive experience to the key academic position on campus," Vandiver said.

Eaton, 53, succeeds Dr. Charles E. McCandless, who has headed the University's academic division on an interim basis for 13 months. Dr. J.M. Prescott resigned the position in 1981 to direct the new Institute of Occupational and Environmental Medicine in the College of Medicine.

McCandless will serve as associate vice president for academic affairs — a position he has held since 1979 — and also will be associate provost.

The faculty-staff search committee appointed by Vandiver recom-

mended Eaton after screening nominations and applications from across the nation.

Eaton said: "I am excited by the prospects afforded by this position, and I look forward to working directly with President Vandiver... We are armed with all the right people and resources to make this the pre-eminent university that we all aspire it to be."

Eaton was named dean of geosciences Sept. 1, 1981, after serving as associate chief geologist with the U.S. Geological Survey's geologic division. He earned national recognition for his research on the origin of volcanic rocks in Yellowstone National Park and for tectonic studies in western portions of the nation.

He holds graduate degrees from the California Institute of Technology and an undergraduate degree from Wesleyan University in Connecticut.

Eaton announced that Dr. Melvin Friedman will serve as interim dean of geosciences. Friedman now serves as associate dean and has been a faculty member for 16 years.

Chagra trial nearing close

United Press International
JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — An attorney for Jimmy Chagra presented his defense against charges Chagra arranged the murder of a Texas federal judge in just 15 minutes Wednesday after prosecutors spent a month presenting their side.

Defense attorney Oscar Goodman called two witnesses: Jerry Ray James, former cellmate of Chagra's at Leavenworth Federal Prison in Kansas and the government's star witness; and Marvin Finney, of Austin.

James testified earlier that Chagra, 39, a Las Vegas, Nev., gambler and convicted narcotics trafficker, told him that he had ordered the assassination of U.S. District Judge John H. Wood Jr. of San Antonio.

On Wednesday, James repeated his testimony that Chagra also told him he killed a man named Mark Finney in Austin.

Finney, who has a felony conviction for marijuana possession, then testified that he knew Chagra and had met with him three times — twice in Austin.

Goodman asked, "And I assume you are alive and well?"

"I feel pretty good," Finney said.

Goodman has contended all along that any statement Chagra made while in prison was merely a boast to win favor with his fellow inmates.

For four weeks, prosecutors had called 85 witnesses and played more than 12 hours of tape-recorded conversations before resting their case Wednesday.

The government's case, which cost several million dollars to put together, stretched over four weeks. The evidence included charts, maps and a scale model of Wood's townhome.

Prosecutors charge that Chagra paid convicted hitman Charles V. Harrelson \$250,000 to assassinate Wood.

The judge, who was scheduled to preside at Chagra's trial on narcotics charges, was shot once in the back with a high-powered rifle as he was getting into his car May 29, 1979.

The government contends that Chagra feared a long prison sentence from Wood, whose nickname was "Maximum John."

U.S. District Judge William H. Sessions scheduled final arguments for 9:30 a.m. today. Before excusing the jurors for the day, Sessions told them to bring a packed bag in case they have to be sequestered overnight.

Before recessing for lunch Wednesday, Sessions denied defense motions for a directed judgment of acquittal and dismissal of the four-count indictment against Chagra.

Goodman, a Las Vegas attorney, argued that court rules enabling prosecutors to withhold witnesses' statements to the FBI until 24 hours before their appearance prevented him from conducting adequate cross-examinations.

Gay Student Services continues battle for recognition

by Kim Schmidt
Battalion Staff

The Gay Student Services organization is continuing its seven-year battle to gain recognition at Texas A&M by appealing a federal judge's dismissal of its suit last May.

The suit, filed in 1977, claimed the University's refusal to grant recognition to the group was a violation of the members' First Amendment rights of free speech and assembly.

But the suit was dismissed in May 1982 by U.S. District Judge Ross N. Sterling who said the University had not violated those rights.

The GSS, after receiving funds from the Texas Human Rights Foundation to help pay court costs, filed an appeal of the dismissal. Briefs in the appeal case are due to the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans by Tuesday.

Despite previous setbacks in the courtroom, GSS spokesmen said they are optimistic about the outcome of the appeal suit.

M. Robert Schwab, president of the Texas Human Rights Foundation who spoke for the GSS at a press conference Wednesday, said recent rulings in other cases have favored gay rights. He said he is hopeful that the same will prove true in this case.



Jo Katherine Foy, treasurer of GSS, left, and M. Robert Schwab, president, the Texas Human Rights Foundation.

The key ruling favoring gay rights was made in a September 1982 case in which a federal district judge in Dallas struck down Texas' Homosexual Conduct Law. This move has made it illegal to penalize consenting adults for private homosexual relations.

Although the striking down of Texas Penal Code 21.06 has made

GSS members more optimistic of their chances of winning the appeal, they agree that a final approval of their organization could take some time. "I think we'll win eventually," said Jo Katherine Foy, treasurer of the GSS.

Foy said the GSS is seeking University recognition for several reasons.

"We feel our organization is very much needed on campus, not only for the support of each other, but also for the political statement of our rights," she said.

Foy said that "the majority of gay people come out during their college years." At this time, she said, gay students may need counseling with peers to help them adjust and "accept their sexual orientation."

Recognition also would help the GSS initiate a long-term strategy for growth and public education about the gay community, Foy said.

The 38-member GSS also wants University recognition so it can have the same privileges as other recognized organizations, including access to phones, reduced mailing costs and office space on campus.

Texas A&M officials, however, said the GSS does not qualify for University recognition or privileges because it is a social rather than a service organization.

GSS members and supporters disagree.

"The real reason the University won't recognize the GSS is because it wants to deny gays exist and that their needs are valid," Schwab said.

According to Schwab, services are provided for such groups as international students, but the

University's gay students are not receiving services.

"This case is another clear travesty of discrimination against gays," Schwab said.

"For the University to recognize other groups, political and various other groups, and to deny gay students the right to have their own service or social organization flies in the face of other court decisions. It also defies reason."

"If the First Amendment has any meaning whatsoever, freedom of expression and association should be allowed at a state university," he said. "To infringe on those freedoms is to allow the state to control too much."

Schwab said that one consideration in the suit will be whether the GSS is a social or service organization. And, if the GSS is a social organization, whether the University can deny recognition to social organizations.

The appeals court may choose to decide these questions, Schwab said, or it may choose to remand the case. If the case is remanded, Judge Sterling would hear the case again, he said.

"We're only asking equal treatment," Schwab said. "We'll accept nothing less. It's time."

The GSS controversy began in April 1976, when the group asked for official University recognition. The group's request was denied in May 1976.

inside

- Classified..... 8
- Local..... 3
- National..... 9
- Opinions..... 2
- Sports..... 11
- State..... 7
- What's up..... 14

forecast

Partly cloudy and becoming mostly cloudy today with a high of 57. The winds will be north at 10 mph. Mainly cloudy tonight with a low of 39, and a 50 percent chance of rain. Cloudy with a 60 percent chance of rain on Friday, and a high of 48.

almanac

United Press International
Today is Thursday, Feb. 3, the 34th day of 1983 with 331 to follow.

On this date in history:
In 1978, Egyptian President Sadat arrived in Washington and urged the United States to become the arbitrator in the Arab-Israeli dispute.

A thought for the day: As Gertrude Stein once said to Ernest Hemingway, "Remarks are not literature."