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Majority of video yearbook staffers resign

By Rodney Rather
Staff Writer

The majority of the staff of the video yearbook has resigned because of a series of ongoing conflicts with the National Broadcasting Services, according to a resignation letter submitted Friday to President Frank E. Vandiver.

Whether the video yearbook project will be continued is at this time uncertain, Donald C. Johnson, Student Publications coordinator, said. Student Publications, which originally had announced the project at preregistration time last year, is studying possible options. He is uncertain what EBS might do to do, even without Student Publications involvement.

When asked if his department would take on the task of taping the yearbook, Dr. Mel Chastain, Student Publications director, said he was optimistic the yearbook would continue under the auspices of Student Publications.

Johnson said he wants to be sure if the project is dissolved, or is continuing in another form, that students

who already have paid for their tapes will be given the option of refunds, but the exact procedure has not yet been determined.

Ricky Telg, who last April had been nominated by the Student Publications Board, and approved by then-Provost Gordon Eaton as producer of Video Aggieland, was one of those who resigned. He said the biggest problem for the video yearbook staff was that it was supplied poor equipment from EBS.

Johnson said Student Publications' original concept for the video project, which had been approved in March by A&M President Frank Vandiver, was that it would be a student-run operation using new equipment bought by Student Publications specifically for the project.

After it was discovered Vandiver in June 1985 already had authorized EBS to produce a video yearbook, the president decided he wanted the project to continue and urged Student Publications and EBS to work out an arrangement using EBS equipment, under student direction, with Student Publications administering the project.

Vandiver could not be reached Wednesday for comment.

Chastain said he had not been aware of the Video Aggieland staff was having problems. EBS operates KAMU-TV and is a broadcast production arm of Texas A&M.

"No students had come to me and said, 'We're having difficulties,'" Chastain said. "I heard that some notes had been written by students saying that they had some problems, but no student ever came to me or indicated that things were so bad they were all getting ready to quit."

Telg said Student Publications could have bought new equipment for the video yearbook for about \$20,000.

Telg said negotiations to work out a compromise between EBS and Student Publications started in June but didn't end until late August.

Chastain said before an agreement could be reached, EBS had to know exactly what the students wanted to do and how they planned to do it.

Telg said one of the main issues in the negotiations involved the rental rate EBS should charge for video

equipment. It was finally set at \$30 per hour for mini-camera rentals, and other rates for other equipment which would be needed later. In addition, when taping local events, Student Publications was to be required to pay for the services of an EBS student technician, who went with the equipment.

Although it was originally believed that Video Aggieland would be a financially profitable venture for Student Publications, the rental situation made Video Aggieland a money-losing venture, Telg said.

Johnson said projections given the Student Publications Board at the time of their approval of the project last spring indicated Video Yearbook probably would have broken even operationally within two years, with the cost of equipment purchases probably being covered in three or four years. Johnson indicated that under the new EBS arrangement, the operational break-even point was probably four or five years away.

Andy Richardson, former associate producer of Video Aggieland,

another of those who resigned, said the rental arrangement did not work because the equipment given to the staff was old and faulty.

"We felt the situation wasn't going to get any better as far as getting any type of better equipment, and the rental situation just wasn't very workable," he said.

Tapes of the first two events covered by Video Aggieland — Fish Camp and All-University Night — were not usable because of equipment problems, he said.

"I was there for Fish Camp and the videotape deck that the tape is housed in when it's recording malfunctioned somehow — and the way it was hooked up, we had no idea anything was wrong," Richardson said.

Both Chastain and Rodger Lewis, programming director of KAMU-TV, where EBS is located and the person assigned as liaison for the EBS project, said they weren't sure if the problems were caused by equipment malfunctions or by the students' lack of knowledge of the equipment.

Chastain said, "I'm not sure whether it was ever determined whether or not the equipment didn't work or the students just weren't real familiar with how it works."

"I'm not going to say it was brand new equipment, because it wasn't, but it did work and provided acceptable pictures prior to the time they took it out the first time."

Telg said the staff had a training session at KAMU-TV before they taped Fish Camp. He also had worked at Channel 3, KBTX-TV, for almost three years, and Richardson worked there for over two years, Telg said.

Both have used portable cameras in their duties at the television station, although Channel 3's equipment is different, he said.

As agreed upon with Student Publications, EBS sent a student technician along with staff members on the one local shoot they made — All-University Night.

Chastain said EBS had ordered some new equipment at a cost of \$7,000 July 31 specifically intended for yearbook use but not all of it had arrived.

A&M official: Spy case may be intentional ploy

Soviets may try to cancel summit meeting with U.S.

By Craig Renfro
Staff Writer

The filing of espionage charges against American reporter Nicholas Daniloff may be a ploy by the Soviet

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Union to cancel a year-end summit meeting between the two superpowers, a Texas A&M official said Wednesday.

Dr. Richard Thomas, director of the Center for Strategic Technology, said the Soviets don't want to negotiate arms control talks and by imprisoning Daniloff they hope to provoke the Reagan administration into canceling the proposed summit.

"If the business of ending the summit comes up they will hold Daniloff until the U.S. cancels," Thomas said.

Thomas, who was involved in a series of talks with the Soviets in April, said they are accusing the United States of trying to turn the detention of Daniloff into an excuse not to engage in arms negotiations.

"The Soviets would say, 'We want peace, but the Americans won't talk,'" Thomas said.

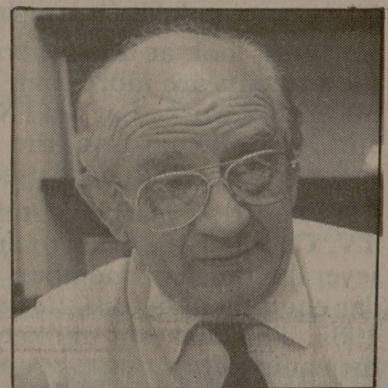
Daniloff was arrested Aug. 30 after a Soviet acquaintance gave him a packet later found to contain secret maps and photographs.

On Sunday, a military prosecutor charged Daniloff with espionage under a law that imposes penalties ranging from seven years in prison to death. He has been held in Moscow's Lefortovo prison since he was grabbed by eight KGB agents in a Moscow park.

Thomas said Daniloff was framed by the KGB in retaliation for the arrest of Soviet United Nations employee Gennadiy Zakharov, who was arrested in New York Aug. 23.

Thomas would not rule out the possibility of a prisoner exchange between the two nations.

Thomas cited examples of American businessmen and government employees being confronted with charges of espionage while in the Soviet Union. Most of the charges were



Dr. Richard Thomas

dropped, but the actions proved the powerful influence of the KGB, he said.

"The KGB has much greater control than our CIA or FBI," Thomas said.

"KGB influence permeates the Soviet Union," he said. "The average Russian is used to that type of government so they are disinclined to revolt."

Thomas said the KGB is similar to the SS secret police of Hitler's Germany.

"They (the KGB) became so powerful because they are a secret police," he said. "They know about the skeletons in the closet and are in a position to blackmail to gain support."

Thomas said Soviet politics are strongly influenced by the KGB. The KGB's political strength was solidified when Yuri Andropov, former KGB chief, became general secretary of the Soviet Union, he said.

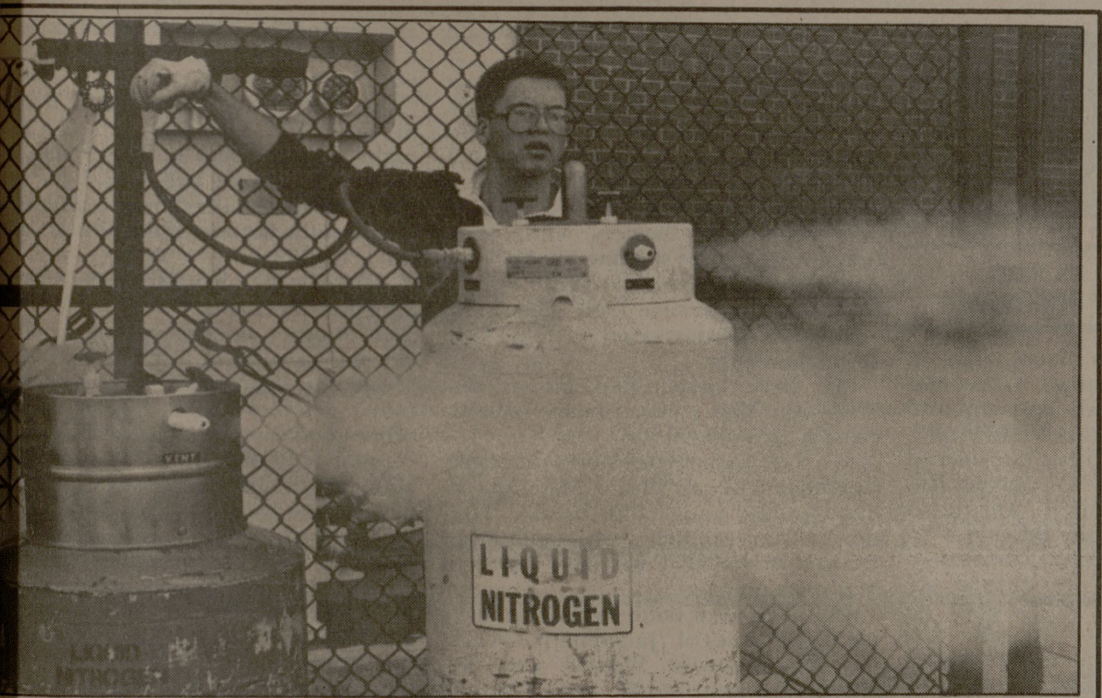


Photo by Tom Ownbey

Letting Off Steam

Sean Peters, a senior physics major from Waupaca, Wisconsin, and student worker for the Physics Department, stands away from the minus 328-degree

nitrogen gas being vented from the tank he is filling. The liquid nitrogen being used to fill the tank will be used to make liquid helium.

Israeli attack on arms depot kills 3

SIDON, Lebanon (AP) — Israeli planes attacked a Palestinian arms depot Wednesday, killing three Lebanese and destroying more than 50 shops in an industrial district on edge of this port city.

Shortly before the raid an Israeli boat intercepted a rubber carrying Palestinian guerrillas on a mission to attack Israel, Israeli and Palestinian officials said.

Hospitals said 13 other civilians were injured in the air raid, which began just after 6 a.m.

It was Israel's eighth air raid in Lebanon this year. Israeli officials said it was not linked to Saturday's terrorist killing of 21 Jews in a synagogue in Istanbul, Turkey, which Israel has vowed to avenge. Turkish officials have said they do not know who was responsible for that attack

but thought the two terrorists, who were blown up by their own grenades, were Arabs.

The Israeli command in Tel Aviv said the pilots who carried out the Sidon raid reported accurate hits on a warehouse used by the Popular Struggle Front to store weapons.

But police and witnesses in Sidon said Israeli rockets missed the front's two ammunition depots.

Another guerrilla group, the Palestine Liberation Front, issued a communique saying the raid came after four of its fighters tried to carry out a seaborne attack on the Israeli coastal town of Nahariya.

Both the Palestinians and Israelis said one of the four guerrillas was wounded during an exchange of gunfire at sea, and the Palestinians said he died later on shore.

Top Lions Club official kidnapped in Beirut

BEIRUT, Lebanon (AP) — The top official of the International Lions Club for Lebanon and Jordan was kidnapped Wednesday in Moslem west Beirut, one day after an American educator was abducted on his way to play golf.

Police said three men armed with semiautomatic pistols and riding a wine-colored BMW intercepted Lions Club governor Victor Kenou at 9:35 a.m. near the French Embassy compound on Rue Clemenceau.

Two of the assailants forced Kenou out of his white Mercedes-Benz

at gunpoint and bundled him into their car, police said.

Kenou, 50, heads the 39 International Lions Clubs in Lebanon and Jordan. A Syrian-born Christian, Kenou is a naturalized Lebanese citizen who runs a prosperous import-export business in both the Moslem and Christian sectors of the Lebanese capital, according to police and family friends.

Kenou's abduction, like the kidnapping of American educator Frank Herbert Reed on Tuesday, was an apparent challenge to Syria.

Convicted murderer gets stay of execution

HUNTSVILLE (AP) — A federal judge on Wednesday halted the execution of a 26-year-old Houston man convicted of raping and robbing a woman and then killing her by running her over with her own car.

Antonio Nathaniel Bonham, who received execution early today, was executed in 1981 in the death of Marie McGowan, 62, a teacher at Houston's Massey Business College. Bonham would have been the 11th Texas inmate to be executed this year and the 19th — tops in the

nation — since the state resumed the death penalty in 1982.

U.S. District Judge Ross Sterling issued the stay about nine hours before the scheduled lethal injection. The judge said in a brief written order that he thought the request should have been denied.

But Sterling said because the request came so close to the scheduled execution, he would allow more time for the trial record to be studied.

Bonham's attorney is seeking a new trial for Bonham.

Shuttle commercial payloads to end

Private firms will launch satellites

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Reagan's decision to force most commercial payloads off the space shuttle to a non-existent private U.S. launch industry is prompting communications satellite owners to consider France, China and even the Soviet Union for sending their cargoes aloft.

The Aug. 15 White House announcement has thrown the satellite industry into confusion. Some satellite firms, with multi-million-dollar investments, will be favored with a shuttle launch; others will have to buy expensive rockets from American firms that won't even have them for at least two years or will have to stand in line overseas.

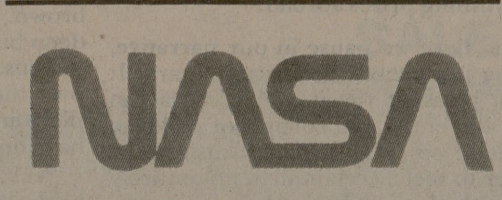
The government's choices are to be made in a few weeks.

Troy D. Ellington, GTE's vice president for satellite programs, said, "We don't know whether we are on the shuttle or off the shuttle for launch. We don't know what the availability of commercial launchers is or will be."

When Challenger exploded Jan. 28, NASA had 44 commercial payloads under contract for future flights, mostly communications satellites. It had collected \$190 million in advance payments and has made no refunds.

The backlog was created by the two-year shuttle standstill and the priority which military cargoes will get when flight resumes. Only 15 commercial satellites will be launched from the shuttle through 1992.

John E. Koehler, president of Hughes Communications, Inc. which holds contracts to launch 10 commercial and one military communications satellite from the shuttle, said, "Had we had any hint that the government of the United States would seriously consider abrogating contracts



entered in good faith, we wouldn't have made those deals. For a country that paid its Revolutionary War debt to walk away from contracts like this is a little distressing," he said.

Before the accident, commercial satellites were to be mixed on the shuttle with military and scientific payloads. The flight rate was to rise to 24 a year and — because the shuttle was the country's prime launch vehicle — no U.S. firm was manufacturing rockets for private use.

Initially, the redesigned shuttles will make only four flights a year.

President Reagan promised that the private sector "with its ingenuity and cost effectiveness" would take over where NASA left off. But Otto Hoernig, vice president of American Satellite Company, said that just adds more uncertainty, because "I don't think there is a large-enough commercial satellite base to support a commercial expendable launch vehicle industry."

Charles D. Walker, a McDonnell Douglas engineer who has flown in the shuttle three times with his company's drug-purifying equipment, said the launch vehicle industry will find survival tough without government subsidy.

"I've got to wonder how the federal government thinks we are going to have a viable com-

mercial space transportation industry when the federal government has never made rail transportation pay, when it took decades to begin to get the commercial airline business into a situation where it was paying," he said. "I have to wonder what historical and economic basis we are operating on in these decisions."

Two major aerospace firms — Martin Marietta, which built Titan rockets for the Air Force, and General Dynamics, manufacturer of Atlas and Atlas Centaur — say they'll sell launch contracts. McDonnell Douglas has not decided whether to enter the commercial market with its Delta rocket.

"We are listening to everybody," said Richard R. Colino, director general of Intelsat, a cooperative of 110 countries, which is the world's most frequent user of launch services. "We have made backup plans with the Ariane launch vehicle, which isn't completely reassuring since they had two failures in their last four flights, including one of our satellites."

Arianespace, the private French-based company, recently signed a contract to launch an Indian government satellite. It was the fourth satellite originally scheduled for shuttle launch to make other arrangements. Arianespace is booked until late 1990.

Colino said Arianespace is taking advantage of U.S. delays to raise its prices at least 20 percent.

China, trying to market its Long March rockets, has had a delegation in the United States trying to capture business.

American Satellite's Hoernig said, "I think it's a regrettable situation where we in the United States are having to talk to foreign entities to obtain an opportunity to launch."