

Texas A&M The Battalion

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Amnesty ends for illicit calls Star Tel claims 80 percent agreed to make restitution

By Christi Daugherty
Staff Writer

At the end of Star Tel Inc.'s 15-month amnesty period for those suspected of misusing long-distance access codes, the company's controller claims 80 percent of those known to have made illegal calls have turned themselves in.

Star Tel Controller Dan Ginzel said the amnesty period, during which anyone who had made illegal phone calls could turn themselves in and make restitution rather than face prosecution, ended Monday.

"We are proud of those who came forward and turned themselves in," Ginzel said.

"It takes guts to swallow your pride and admit something like this," he said.

Many of the students chose to work with the company through the student legal service, he said. He said working with the legal service was a very well.

He said Star Tel is aware that about 20 percent of the illegal calls remain unaccounted for.

"It's unfortunate that some are taking this risk, by not turning themselves in, when they had such an opportunity to clear the slate," Ginzel said.

He added that the company intends to begin investigating the unturned calls as soon as it clears up its current backlog.

Officials said that some of the calls were made by a person who was a member of the U.S. Marine Corps.

He said the bills are being prepared this week and should be sent out soon.

This amnesty period was for people to turn themselves in," Ginzel said.

The payment period will probably start next week," he said.

Some students expressed concern about the size of their bills, he said, but added that Star-Tel will attempt to work out a payment schedule for the students who have trouble making their payments.

Hajovsky, general counsel of the student legal service, said his office handled about 100 cases.

He said that all students were given the option of using code names if they didn't want to reveal their identities.

Many of those who contacted Hajovsky's office were not sure if they'd done anything illegal, he said, but said they wanted to be sure the numbers they'd used weren't stolen.

"Most just volunteered, and many wanted to find out if access numbers they'd borrowed from friends were legal," Hajovsky said.

Hajovsky said students didn't have to reveal the access numbers they'd used, but instead indicated the phone numbers they'd called.

He said Star Tel then used those numbers to bill the student for the calls.

Hajovsky's office will continue working with students while a pay schedule is being formulated with Star Tel.

Meanwhile, Brazos County Attorney Jim Kuboviak said the five people whom he had allowed restitution had contacted his office.

He said they are currently working with the phone companies involved to pay their bills.

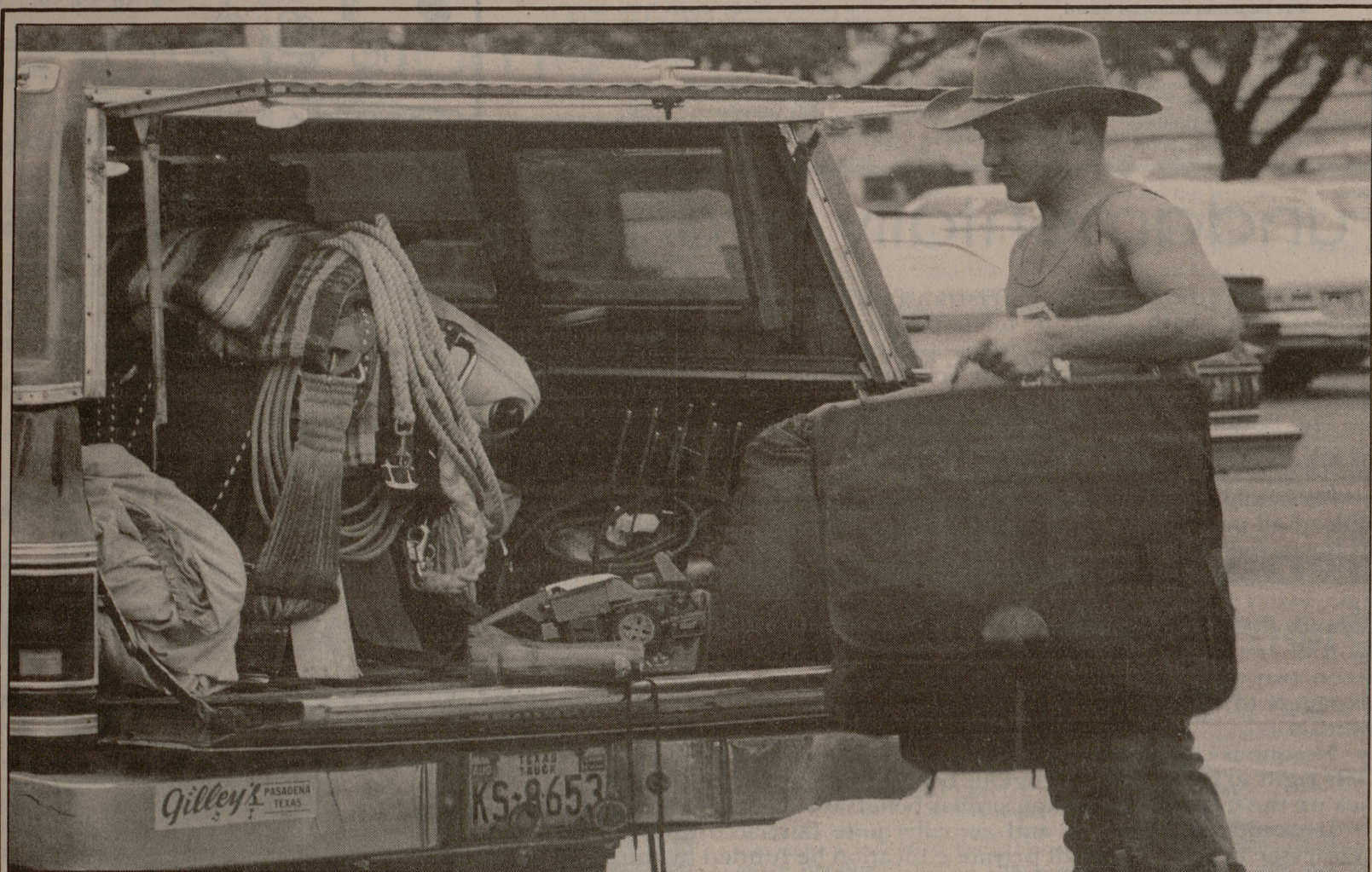
After Star Tel granted an amnesty period, Kuboviak elected to allow those charged by other phone companies the same chance to make restitution rather than face prosecution.

But Kuboviak said he isn't making any promises about whether he'll ever do that again.

"I'll look at each case individually from now on," he said. "I can't let phone companies determine my policy. The decision in each case will rest with me."

Ginzel said Star Tel also has no plans to offer another amnesty period in the future.

District Attorney Bill Turner, who is handling the case of Archie Roberts, the A&M track runner charged with making illegal calls, said he hasn't made a decision about allowing the athlete to make restitution, and has set no deadline for making that decision.



Get The Hell Outta Dodge

Scott Armstrong, a sophomore animal science major, loads up his gear for a trip home over the Christmas break. Armstrong is a member of Parson's Mounted Cavalry and Squad 11. The break begins Friday, the last day for students to take semester finals.

Photo by Doug La Rue

Reagan urges immunity for Poindexter, North

WASHINGTON (AP) — White House chief of staff Donald T. Regan declared Tuesday that no one was ever authorized to divert money from Iran arms sales to Nicaraguan rebels, while President Reagan urged Congress to grant limited immunity to force testimony from two former administration officials.

Emerging from more than four hours of closed-door testimony to the Senate Intelligence Committee, Regan told reporters he did not know of the transfers of money, and said he did not think the president knew about it either.

He denied that Marine Lt. Col. Oliver L. North, fired as a National Security Council staff deputy, would

have been given top-level authority to conduct a program of assistance to the Contras.

Attorney General Edwin Meese III said Nov. 25 that only North knew precisely of that operation, but that national security adviser, Vice Adm. John M. Poindexter, had been aware of its existence.

Sen. David Durenberger, R-Minn., chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, said after listening to Regan and Secretary of State George Shultz during Tuesday's closed-door session, "It's clear . . . that whoever pulled it off did it without proper, appropriate or other authority, and that person is Ollie North."

Presidential spokesman Larry Speakes said Reagan's appeal for the limited immunity for North and Poindexter would not preclude criminal prosecution for illegal activities.

Sen. Sam Nunn, D-Ga., said that while a special select Senate panel starting next month would carefully consider Reagan's request, there were several important conditions that could not be met quickly.

Nunn said the committee would have to retain an attorney experienced in immunity, would have to investigate far enough to conclude that the immunity grant would produce truthful testimony, and would have to clear any such grant with the

independent counsel, who has not yet been named.

Durenberger said the problem surrounding the secret contacts to Iran, the sales of arms to that country and the transfer of money to Contra rebels was caused by "a deliberate effort on the part of a handful of people, including the president of the United States, to deliberately avoid congressional oversight."

"The contrivance failed," he added. "Now the president is being held to account for it and I think the disaster we're facing right here today should be evidence of the fact

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Minority enrollment up for A&M system

From Staff and Wire Reports

The number of minority students within the Texas A&M University System has increased significantly, officials said Tuesday.

Texas A&M University's enrollment of black students has increased by 59.5 percent, from 489 to 780. Hispanic enrollment also is up on the College Station campus, going from 1,499 to 1,994.

Total enrollment is virtually the same, at 46,570, officials said.

Grace B. Chisolm, assistant to the president at A&M, said there has been a concerted effort to increase the number of minorities at the University.

"There's been a substantial increase in funding available for minority scholarships," Chisolm said.

Galveston had larger statistical gains, but the

numbers are relatively small at the marine-oriented campus.

The Galveston campus experienced a 75 percent increase in number of black students, from four to seven, and 155.6 percent for Hispanics, from nine to 23. Total enrollment dropped from 552 to 524.

Tarleton State University increased its Hispanic enrollment by 41 percent, from 61 to 86, and black enrollment by 14.1 percent, from 85 to 97. Enrollment at Tarleton increased slightly, from 4,605 to 4,636.

The biggest change in enrollment was at predominantly black Prairie View A&M University, where figures show the enrollment of non-black students has increased by more than 100 percent during the past three years.

About one out of every five of the 4,501 stu-

dents now attending Prairie View A&M are non-black, the report shows.

Since the fall of 1983, Hispanic enrollment at Prairie View has increased from 23 to 41 students, for a 78.3 percent gain. The number of non-black students has increased from 370 to 802, an increase of 116.8 percent, the report showed.

The figures were compiled at the request of Chancellor Perry L. Adkisson for a progress report on the four academic institutions within the system.

"The enrollment analysis shows excellent progress in increasing the number of black and Hispanic students at our three traditionally white academic institutions and the number of non-black students at Prairie View A&M," Adkisson said.

Lawyer's book warns hazardous toys can kill

Toy industry accused of endangering kids

By Robert Morris
Staff Writer

See little Joey play with his new Hestor Galactica Space Toy. See Joey put his new toy in his mouth. See little Joey swallow one of the small missiles — and die.

While the name of the child wasn't given, the accident was real.

Many American children will be injured or killed this year as a result of harmful playthings still "polluting" the marketplace and America's homes, says Boston trial attorney Edward M. Swartz, author of the newly released toy buyer's guide book, "Toys that Kill."

Swartz's book opens his national campaign for safer toys, calling on parents and other toy shoppers to be especially vigilant during this 1986 giving season. He warns that hazardous toys are still freely and easily available.

However, not everyone in the toy industry agrees with Swartz.

Edy Levin, public affairs director of the Toy Makers' Association, says Swartz is an inappropriate critic of the toy industry.

"He's a product liability lawyer," she says. "He makes his living prosecuting toy companies. He's also written a number of books I'm sure he'd like to sell. His motives are suspect."

Still, Swartz contends, the truth speaks for itself.

"Toys that could choke, burn, blind, maim or kill the children for whom they are intended remain on the market today," he says, "despite the growing public insistence on toy safety and despite the government's authority to take direct action against dangerous toys."

This is a consequence of the toy industry's failure to deal effectively with the problem of hazardous toys, and of governmental failure to deal strictly, and swiftly and summarily with the hazardous toys found in abundance in toy and department stores, he says.

When contacted about Swartz's allegations, Lou Brott, news media director of the Consumer Product Safety Commission in Washington, said Swartz has other motives besides the safety of children.

"We wrote him (Swartz) Oct. 9

and asked him to contact us in regard to bad toys," Brott said. "He has seen fit to wait until Dec. 5 to have his news conference on toys. My reaction is that he is more interested in his own personal publicity than he is in toys."

Brott refused further comment but said he would have the agency's

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— Edward Swartz, author of "Toys that Kill."

chief of compliance contact *The Battalion*. However, no further message was received from the CPSC.

Some of the toys Swartz has labeled as being deadly have been recalled, yet he claims that many can still be found in toy boxes throughout the United States.

"With the exception of one or two

toys usually involved in high publicity recalls," Swartz says, "most parents aren't aware of recalls or the deadly propensities of recalled toys."

"When the government does take action, it is a case of too little, too late. These harmful toys remain in circulation due to the government's unwillingness to implement a tough toy recall procedure."

He cites the example of the Johnson & Johnson "Soft Triplets Crib Gym."

The toy has been responsible for at least two deaths and was recalled in October 1986, Swartz says. Two years before the deaths occurred, Swartz reported the hazard associated with the crib gym to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, but no action was taken.

"I warned the agency of the lethal nature of this toy fully five times spanning from 1982 to 1985," Swartz says. "The agency did not act until there was an actual body count."

He blames the government's lack of response and the public's lack of knowledge on the actions of the toy

industry, which he says grosses \$15 billion per year.

"Toy manufacturers and retailers are masters at shifting blame for injury from themselves to grief-stricken parents who already feel responsible for their child's injury," Swartz says.

But toy makers disagree.

Levin says the overwhelming majority of injuries are caused by toys that are used improperly, such as a roller skate left on the stairs, or by toys given to a child who is not old enough to play with them. For example, a 2-year-old might be given a 4-year-old's toy in which there are small parts that could cause the younger child to choke, she says.

"I do think that is the parent's responsibility," Levin says. "I can't baby-sit 50 million children from here in New York."

Parents are the final arbiters of what their kids watch on TV, what they eat, where they go to school, and what toys they play with, she says.

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