

Texas A&M The Battalion

Vol.82 No.95 USPS 045360 12 pages

College Station, Texas

Tuesday, February 10, 1987

Beirut terrorists extend deadline for hostages

BEIRUT, Lebanon (AP) — Moslem kidnappers said at their Monday midnight deadline for killing three American hostages and an Indian that they had extended it "until further notice."

A handwritten statement in Arabic signed by Islamic Jihad for the Liberation of Palestine described the decision as a response to pleas from the hostages, their families, Lebanese organizations and the Indian government.

But the statement also said the group would retaliate for the "insult" by U.S. Secretary of State George P. Shultz, who said the people of kidnapping-beset Beirut "have a plague." It did not indicate what form the action might take, or whether it could involve the hostages.

The statement was delivered to the Beirut office of a Western news agency with a picture of Robert Pol-

hill, one of the hostages. Polhill, frail-appearing and bearded, wearing a T-shirt and spectacles, was pictured looking into the camera with a faint smile.

Hostage Alann Steen had said in an earlier message Monday that the hostages would die unless Israel freed 400 Arab prisoners. He said the captors would not reconsider the death verdict or extend the deadline.

"We will be executed at midnight," Steen, 47, of Boston, said in the letter to his wife. It was accompanied by notes to their wives from the two other kidnapped American college teachers.

"Until then, if you do love us and your hearts beat for us, put pressure on Israel to show good will," Steen wrote. "Let Israel promise the organization (of the kidnappers) to show good will."

"Let Israel promise the organiza-

tion plainly and officially that 400 Palestinian mujaheds (holy warriors) will be free. Otherwise, we won't be alive after midnight."

The statement at midnight said the kidnappers found "certain positive points" in remarks by Foreign Minister Shimon Peres of Israel about their demand for the release of Arab prisoners.

Peres said Monday in Jerusalem that Israel had not received a request from the United States to free the prisoners, and that "Israel won't take any initiative on its own."

He declared on Sunday, however, that Israel was willing to discuss trading Arab prisoners for an Israeli airman shot down in Lebanon.

The kidnappers' midnight statement also said its retaliation for Shultz' comment about Beirut would "deter everybody from daring to attribute his own cancerous diseases to the others."

Shultz said in New York Sunday that the "people of Beirut... have a plague there. They're isolating themselves from the world, and the world should isolate them."

Steen's three-page letter was delivered eight and a half hours before the kidnappers' deadline to the Beirut office of a Western news agency with a photograph of Steen.

It implied that an Israeli promise would do and that the 400 prisoners would not actually have to be released Monday.

In Washington, the Reagan administration position, as expressed Monday by both White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater and State Department spokesman Charles E. Redman, was once again to rule out concessions to terrorists.

Steen's wife, students and officials of Beirut University College, where Steen and fellow educators Robert Polhill, Jesse Turner and Mithileshwar Singh were abducted two weeks ago, authenticated Steen's handwriting.

Steen is a communications instructor; Polhill, 53, of New York City, lectures on accounting; Turner, 39, of Boise, Idaho, is a visiting professor of mathematics and computer science; and Indian-born Singh, 60, a legal resident alien of the United States, is a visiting professor of finance.

McFarlane in hospital from Valium overdose

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former national security adviser Robert C. McFarlane, who figured prominently in President Reagan's clandestine sale of weapons to Iran, was hospitalized Monday for a Valium overdose that a broadcast report said was a suicide attempt.

McFarlane, 49, was admitted to Bethesda Naval Medical Center about 9 a.m. CST. Hospital spokesman Lt. Rus Sanford said McFarlane was in good condition.

Peter Morgan, one of McFarlane's lawyers, said the former White House official had taken an overdose of the drug, a tranquilizer that frequently is prescribed to relieve anxiety disorders and tension resulting from stress.

CBS News, quoting unnamed, informed sources, reported that hospital officials believed the overdose resulted from a suicide attempt. CBS, citing unnamed friends of McFarlane, also reported that he had been depressed and emotional recently.

Morgan, reached by telephone af-

ter the report had aired, said he would have no comment.

Presidential spokesman Marlin Fitzwater noted that McFarlane is a private citizen and said, "We don't have any information on his condition."

Symptoms of a Valium overdose can include sleepiness, confusion, diminished reflexes, depressed blood pressure or coma. Treatment includes close observation and the administration of intravenous fluids, according to medical reference books.

The authoritative Physicians' Desk Reference said that because Valium use can result in physical or psychological dependence, patients should be monitored closely and prolonged use should be avoided. It was not known when McFarlane began using Valium, a trade name for the drug diazepam.

McFarlane is a former Marine lieutenant colonel and combat veteran, which permits him to use the Navy's medical facilities near his home in suburban Maryland.



Photo by Andrew Migliore

Down To Earth

Senior business administration major Rob Bonner and senior education major Jill Hickok parachuted onto the polo field Monday. Both are members of

the TAMU Sport Parachuting Club. Members of the club will be jumping again today at 10:45 a.m. and at 11:45 a.m.

Officials: Texas prisons to reopen again

HUNTSVILLE (AP) — Texas prison officials said the system would reopen today to new inmates as paroles dropped the population below a state-mandated 95 percent capacity level.

At the same time, authorities warned the large number of inmates awaiting transfer from crowded county jails would force the state system quickly to close again.

"I'm thinking we'll probably be deluged by a lot of people," Texas Department of Corrections spokesman Charles Brown said Monday. "Say we open today. We get a bunch in today. But we won't have figures until Wednesday and we'll stay open for business until 5 p.m. Wednesday. We'll probably be closed Thursday."

The prison system closed last Wednesday for the second time in a month.

Although some inmates have been released on parole, none have been accepted since then, forcing some crowded county jails to put mattresses on floors for prisoners.

Monday's count of prisoners — taken at midnight Friday — showed the system at 94.80 percent of capacity, or 81 beds under the limit, said Sarah Dunn, a prison spokeswoman.

"We're open in the morning, then we'll see how many we receive," she said.

She said about 117 inmates were slated for release Monday, meaning the system would have a cushion of about 180 inmates heading into today.

Prisons remained closed Monday on the basis of Thursday's count, which showed the 26 units held 38,412 inmates, or 95.06 percent of capacity.

About 136 prisoners were paroled Friday and about another 58 were expected to be released Monday, Brown said.

The shutdown last week included Thursday, traditionally a busy day for prison admissions from the state's most populous counties. Tuesday is normally a busy day also, Brown said.

A state law adopted in 1983 requires the corrections department to stop accepting transfers from county jails until enough inmates are released to bring the population below the cap set by a federal judge.

Sandinistas, Contras violate human rights, new study charges

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S.-backed rebel forces in Nicaragua carry out "selective but systematic killing" of perceived Sandinista government sympathizers and routinely kidnap civilians, including significant numbers of children, a human rights group said Monday.

The Nicaraguan government, meanwhile, although it generally re-

spects the laws of war, mistreats prisoners, doesn't guarantee due process and has put unwarranted limits on freedom of the press, the group reported.

The 166-page study was prepared by Americas Watch, a liberal New York-based human rights monitoring group, on the basis of a series of fact-finding missions last year.

It is the 10th report by the group on Nicaragua since 1982 and covers February 1986 to December 1986.

Americas Watch, which often has drawn sharp criticism from U.S. officials, accused the Reagan administration of unfairly portraying the Sandinista government in the most negative terms while turning a blind eye to abuses of the Contras.

"No attempt whatsoever is made to moderate such portrayals in the light of actual performance," the report said.

State Department spokesman Charles Redman had no comment on the report, saying department officials had not seen it. The administration's own annual human rights report is expected to be released in a few days.

Americas Watch Vice Chairman Aryeh Neier told a news conference the report did not specify whether the Sandinista government or the Contras were responsible for the most abuses. To take such a stand, he said, would tend to diminish the abuses of the side deemed less guilty.

But the report leaves the impression that the most serious rights abuses were committed by the Contras. Last week, Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams said the Sandinista government is carrying out a "reign of terror" on Nicaraguan citizens.

The Americas Watch report calls for an end to U.S. funding of the rebels on grounds that such support "associates the U.S. government with a pattern of gross human rights

Afghanistan's development, decline traced by speaker

By Melanie Perkins
Staff Writer

Though Afghanistan throughout history has been a war-torn culture, Afghans had never fought a modern war until the invasion of the Soviets on April 27, 1978, said Rosanne Klass, director of the Afghanistan Information Center and vice president of the Afghanistan Relief Committee.

Klass' presentation, sponsored by the MSC Jordan Institute For International Awareness, gave a detailed history of Afghanistan and its cultural development and subsequent decline to a group of approximately three dozen people Monday in Rudder Tower.

"They (the Afghans) have never fought a modern war," Klass said. "They fought with troops who grew up on a battlefield — when men went out and fought each other."

She said the people of Afghanistan weren't prepared, because they missed World Wars I and II, many were uneducated and all of their leaders were executed in the first months after the invasion. They had to learn how to fight and sometimes they didn't know what to do with



Photo by Dean Saito
Rosanne Klass

kinds, booby traps disguised as toys, civilians taken as hostage and rounded up and tied together and doused with gasoline and set on fire or buried alive."

Klass said Afghan people, who are a combination of many ethnic and linguistic groups, were beginning to have a sense of nationhood when the Soviet invasion began, and since the invasion, they have become more welded together.

She said Afghanistan used to be a main artery of commerce between Europe, the Mediterranean, China and India before Magellan sailed around the world, making the overland routes in Afghanistan virtually obsolete.

"That began its decline and its stagnation into a backwater of the modern world," Klass said. "It was only in the 20th century or the mid-20th century that the restoration began."

Then came the Soviet invasion, another halt to progress.

"If Afghanistan is remote today to us, it was not always remote," Klass said. "And it is not remote today either because it remains what it has always been — the road from Central Asia to the Indian Ocean."

Student service fees, SCONA lead MSC Council meeting

By Carolyn Garcia
Staff Writer

Texas A&M students will find out Wednesday if the student service fees they pay will have to go up to support growing demands by campus organizations.

Brian Banner, vice president of the Student Senate, told the MSC Council members that the issue will be addressed at the next Student Senate meeting.

"We'll find out Wednesday if student service fees will have to go up," Banner said.

Students currently pay \$61 per semester in student service fees.

Also on Wednesday, this year's Memorial Student Center Student Conference on National Affairs gets underway, but absent from the event will be any Russian speakers.

Sandra Goerking, chairman of SCONA, told the council that invitations to all potential speakers were sent out in September. SCONA received the Russian reply last week, but all the positions had been filled, Goerking said.

"We're really disappointed we had to turn away the Soviet Union," she said. "It would have been fun to have them here, espe-

cially since we're going to have some heated debates."

Goerking also said that the number of schools participating is down this year.

"We are down 10 from last year," she said. "It's because of the budget problems."

Although SCONA had more than enough applicants for its speaker positions, another portion of the MSC — the MSC Council itself — has 37 administration positions left to fill, and today is the last chance to complete an application, Council President Bobby Bisor said.

Among the multitude of positions open are vice presidents for recreation, cultural programs and entertainment.

"At the first orientation (tonight) of this round, students can fill out applications," Bisor said. "An applicant must be present at both orientations."

During Monday's meeting, the Council went into closed session and filled six vice president positions.

To alleviate the crowded conditions of the student programs area, the Council is hoping to get

See Council, page 12

See Contras, page 12