

# Texas A&M The Battalion

Vol. 82 No. 190 USPS 045360 6 pages

College Station, Texas

Wednesday, August 5, 1987

## Iran: Gulf maneuvers train suicide squads

MANAMA, Bahrain (AP) — Iran said Tuesday its war games in the narrow Persian Gulf gateway were training suicide squads to attack U.S. warships with speedboats converted into bombs. Most commercial ships steered clear.

One shipping official said "almost no ships" were making the east-west journey through the Strait of Hormuz from the gulf, where Iran and Iraq have been at war since September 1980.

Traffic in the other direction, into the southern end of the gulf, was reported down by one-third to half.

Another shipping agent said a "panicky" reaction caused sharp reductions in sailings after reports, apparently exaggerated, that Iran had blocked shipping channels in the strait.

Hormuz is 44 miles wide, with Iranian territory on the north shore and Oman on the south.

Iran's official Islamic Republic News Agency quoted Cmdr. Mohammad Malekzadegan as saying: "Iran's naval forces are fully prepared to take revenge on the United States and its criminal accomplices for shedding the blood of innocent pilgrims."

His reference was to the deaths of hundreds of Iranian pilgrims in battles with Saudi Arabian riot police Friday in the Moslem holy city of Mecca. Iran says police shot them down. The Saudis say the pilgrims were trampled to death or killed in riots.

At the United Nations in New York, Iran circulated a letter accusing U.S. warplanes patrolling the gulf of violating Iranian air space July 11. It said "any unlawful provocative act by the United States" would have "very dangerous consequences."

Iran began three days of naval maneuvers in the strait, the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman at midnight Monday, telling all foreign vessels and aircraft to stay out of its waters.

The reflagged Kuwaiti tanker Gas Prince and its U.S. Navy escort passed through the strait out of the gulf a few hours before the starting time.

On Tuesday, the Pentagon officially professed a lack of concern about the Iranian maneuvers, but several ranking officials said privately the next Navy convoy probably would not sail until next week.

There had been reports that one would start north on Thursday.

Iranian television showed dozens of speedboats docked at a port and others cruising in the Persian Gulf, with crews manning heavy machine guns and rocket-propelled grenade launchers.

Volunteers on shore waved a huge banner that said in Farsi, the Iranian language: "Persian Gulf of Iran, Graveyard of Reagan."

Jeeps and bulldozers moved behind earthen barriers built along the coastline.

Flares and tracer bullets were fired at night. The crackle of automatic and anti-aircraft fire could be heard.

A commentary on Tehran radio said "martyrdom-seeking" volunteers "have become quite capable of approaching U.S. warships in their fast boats and dealing deadly blows."

Among Iran's weapons are "speedboats loaded with explosives" that would ram their targets in suicide attacks, the radio said.

Malekzadegan, the naval officer, was quoted as saying Iranian missile systems were prepared to counter any American action.

## Moslems end pilgrimage to holy city

MECCA, Saudi Arabia (AP) — More than 2 million Moslems "stoned the devil" Tuesday in the climax of their pilgrimage to this holy city, and Iran said the Satan they struck was the United States.

Saudi officials claimed Iran had plotted to take over the Grand Mosque, lock hundreds of thousands of pilgrims inside and force them to swear fealty to Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, Iran's revolutionary patriarch, as leader of the world's 850 million Moslems.

Soldiers and army helicopters shadowed 157,000 Iranians who joined pilgrims, called hajjis, from 122 other countries in stoning the three Devil's Pillars on the Plain of Arafat 16 miles from Mecca. Each pilgrim threw seven stones at each pillar.

A Saudi newspaper, *Okaz*, quoted official sources it did not identify as saying only one-fourth of the Iranians who came for the hajj were real pilgrims.

It said the rest were Revolutionary Guards, "suicidal volunteers" or "revolutionary generation" fanatics.

A Tehran radio broadcast said: "The Saudi killers and their instigator America, the great Satan, will not escape Islamic punishment. Today, the hajjis stone the devil. . . the real devil to be stoned and burned is America and its lackeys."

Moslems believe the site of the Devil's Pillars is where Satan tempted Abraham to refuse the sacrifice of his son Ishmael as God commanded. God provided a huge ram that Abraham sacrificed instead, according to the Koran, Islam's holy book.

## Fairness Doctrine scrapped by FCC in unanimous vote

WASHINGTON (AP) — The fairness doctrine requiring broadcasters to present all sides of controversial issues became history Tuesday when the Federal Communications Commission voted to abolish the 38-year-old policy.

In a move that shifts the battle over the issue to Congress, the FCC voted 4-0 to scrap the doctrine on the grounds it is unconstitutional and unnecessary and hinders broadcast coverage of important issues.

"Because we believe it will serve the public interest, we seek to extend to the electronic press the same First Amendment guarantees that the print media have enjoyed since our country's inception," said FCC Chairman Dennis R. Patrick.

Reaction from consumer groups was swift and congressional supporters of the doctrine promised quick action in the House and Senate to overturn the commission's dismantling of the policy and enact the doctrine into law.

Sen. Ernest F. Hollings, D-S.C., chairman of the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, branded the FCC's action "wrongheaded, misguided and illogical."

"The fairness doctrine protects and preserves freedom of speech of the American public at large, by providing the only means for many in the public to be heard," Hollings said in a statement.

Consumer advocate Ralph Nader said the action marked "both the FCC's darkest hour and the beginning of its greatest repudiation."

Broadcasters have long opposed

the policy as an infringement of their constitutional right to free speech. They also say stations' fear of running afoul of the doctrine has inhibited coverage of controversial issues.

Supporters of the doctrine, including members of public interest groups who held up "Save the Fairness Doctrine" signs during the FCC's meeting, say the policy assures that minority viewpoints are aired by television and radio stations.

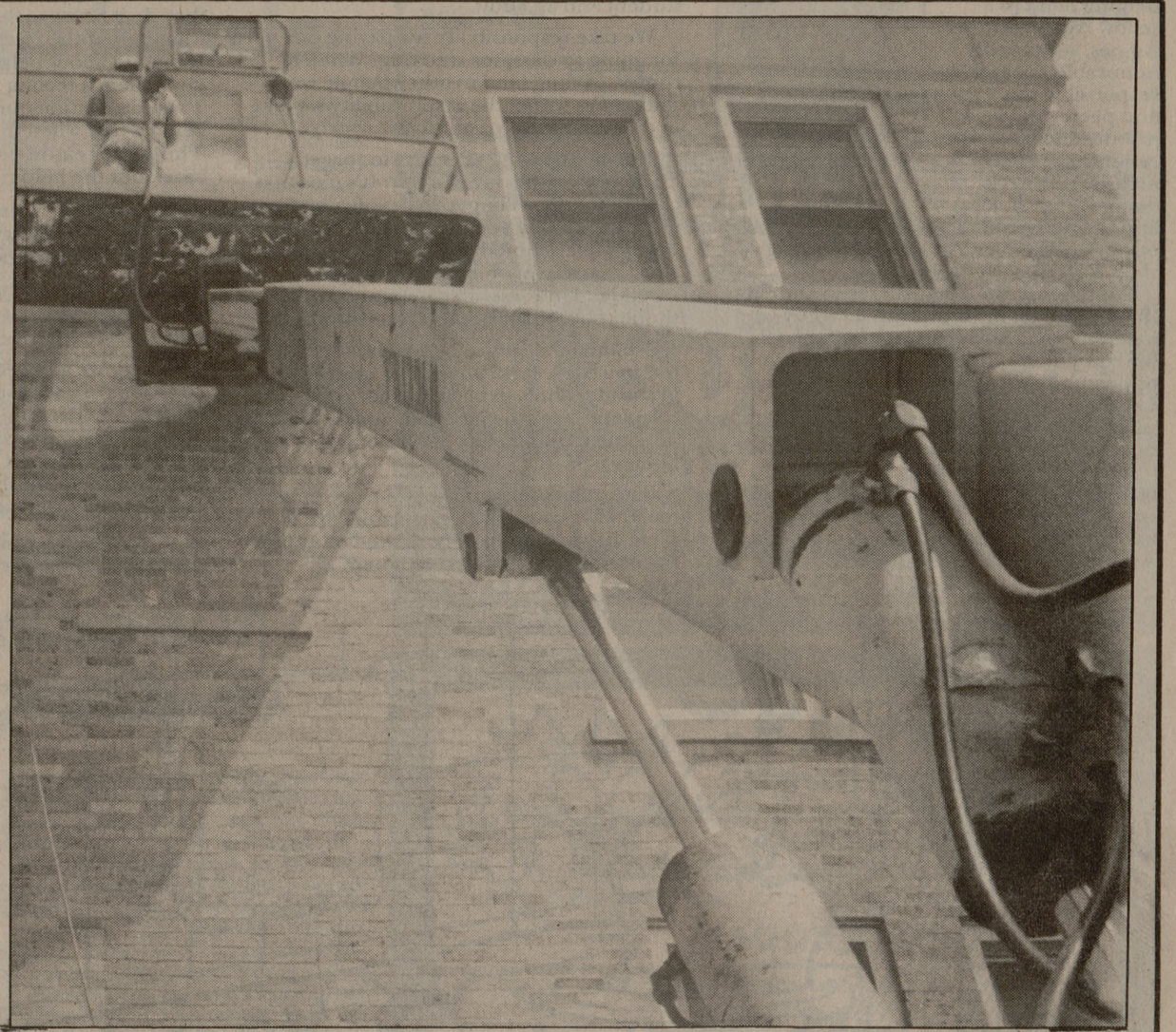
Earlier this year, Congress passed a measure to make the fairness doctrine a law, but President Reagan vetoed the bill in June. Congressional supporters of the doctrine have been unable to gather enough votes to override the veto.

The FCC's action to end enforcement of the doctrine came on a lawsuit brought by the Meredith Corp., a broadcast group based in Des Moines, Iowa, after the commission found that Meredith's Syracuse, N.Y., television station had violated the doctrine by airing a series of advertisements advocating construction of a nuclear power plant.

A federal appeals court remanded the case to the FCC and directed the agency to consider Meredith's constitutional arguments.

In its reconsideration of the case, the FCC determined the doctrine violates the Constitution's First Amendment guarantees of free speech.

The FCC's action does not apply to the provisions of the law requiring broadcasters to give candidates for the same office equal access to the airwaves.



## On The Rise

Danny Fotenot, who works for Landmark Restoration, is replacing the bricked-in windows with new

bricks that will match the rest of the bricks of Hart Hall.

Photo by Sarah Cowan

## Homosexual student urges others to be tested for AIDS

By Yvonne DeGraw  
Staff Writer

"What if . . . ?" I've been taught to ask lots of questions. Who? What? When? Where? Why? But the full impact of "What if . . ." hit me last week.

A male student walked into the newsroom with a letter to the editor. He looked like hundreds of other

Aggies, but the letter he carried was different. His eight-page letter had

no signature. "John" wanted to remain anonymous.

Page two of *The Battalion* says each letter to the editor must be signed, so we couldn't print the letter. But John had something important to say.

His letter began, "I was tested." John is homosexual, and he had just been tested for AIDS.

He is concerned that many homosexuals are choosing not to be tested for AIDS.

I talked to him for almost an hour behind the closed doors of the editor's office. I never learned his full name.

John said he has been homosexual for as long as he can remember. It wasn't always an easy thing for him to deal with. He was engaged to a woman at one time, but it was frustrating to deny what he felt, he said.

By all rights, he should be happy now. He said he has found the man with whom he wants to spend the rest of his life. They've been dating for six months and plan to continue living together after they graduate this month.

"It almost sounds like you are ridiculing the situation to say we are married, but that's how I feel," he said.

But John has worried about acquired immune deficiency syndrome for the past three to four years.

"I think everyone worries about it to some degree," he said. "I'm not sure I'm really in a high risk group. They always say homosexuals with multiple partners (have the highest risk), but that isn't my case at all."

In fact, he said the reason he wants to remain anonymous is not that he is ashamed of being homosexual. Instead, he doesn't want people to get the impression that he worried about AIDS because he was promiscuous.

But the spectre of the disease was never far. John knows three people who have died of AIDS and two who are dying.

Those "What ifs . . ." kept cropping up for John.

"What if I have AIDS?" he asked himself. "What if I gave it to someone I love? What if I die? What if I kill him?"

At first glance, it seems easy to stop asking these questions — just

get tested for the HTLV III virus that causes AIDS. At least eight clinics in the Bryan-College Station area either perform the test or send blood samples to another lab.

But John said many homosexuals decide not to be tested for the virus.

"I don't think you ever want to know when you are going to die," he said. "Even when you are 80, you still don't want to know when it will happen."

Of the 40 homosexual males he knows well enough to know whether they have been tested, he said only he and his partner have been tested.

They, too, decided not to be tested at first.

"We did not want to know that we were going to die," he wrote in his letter.

"We were going to be together anyway for what we perceived to be the rest of our lives, however long or short that was, so it didn't matter," he explained. "If one of us had it we figured we both had it. We were both either going to live or become sick and die, we thought."

Now John believes differently. He said no matter what the results, it is better to know than to live with the fear.

Both he and his partner tested negative; they don't have the disease.

It was his relief at learning this

See Homosexual, page 6

## Local TV executives hesitate to air condom ads

By Kathryn McMinn  
Reporter

Condom advertisements may soon be making regular television appearances, but many health care experts worry that the commercials will heighten public fear of AIDS rather than stir up awareness of precautions to take against the disease.

Local media executives hesitate to run the ads because they fear the explicit nature of the material won't be readily accepted in the Bryan-College Station community.

"Although our station doesn't encounter many ads we don't run, as of our present situation, our corporate policy of this station is not to accept these advertisements," said Todd Carroll, sales manager for KBTX-TV in Bryan.

A presentation from a condom producing company was made to the station to show what type of commercials were being proposed, but Carroll said the station's directors didn't think it was ready to handle condom ads.

"There are no written guidelines as to what type of commercials are accepted by the station; it's more a subjective-type thing," he said. "We must remember, however, that we're helping these industries sell their products so we don't want to associate our station with anything the

### Reactions to TV condom ads Part two of a two-part series

community might not be ready to handle.

"I think the commercials definitely would raise some eyebrows. It's a pretty conservative town, and I'm sure there would be objections from many community leaders. We get objections when the Contra hearings are bumping the soaps; we would definitely hear about these ads."

Television stations don't take responsibility for advertisements, but they are, nonetheless, the medium through which most of the complaints are filed.

"The individual business has the ultimate responsibility as to what these ads promise and portray, but we generally take the business at their word," Carroll said. "For something like condoms, I think we'd get negative responses, but I also think there would be those pro to these commercials."

The birth control issue is what Carroll believes many of those opposed to these ads are afraid of, more so than AIDS.

"By airing these ads, maybe it will force the issue of birth control to those parents who are hesitant to discuss it with their children," Carroll said. "Putting the moral issue aside, I can't think of anything more horrid than unwanted pregnancies or contracting AIDS because of a lack of knowledge."

According to an article in the May 12 issue of the *New York Times*, the first condom commercials were funded by the New York City Health Department, which now is promoting a fund-raising drive to raise \$6

million from corporations to buy air time and advertising space.

For now, condoms are being advertised on television with no brand names being used. But condom sales probably will become selective, eventually airing brand names.

Newsweek estimated that the condom market is worth more than \$300 million a year, with about 80,000 sold daily.

The Minneapolis-based Mentor Corp., which produces a line of health care products, recently added condoms to its product line.

Product manager Jane O'Meara said, "Our company started developing the product four years ago when AIDS wasn't that much of an issue. We had a trial market in November of 1985 and the condoms have been a national product for one year now."

AIDS didn't prove a primary factor for Mentor's decision to add condoms to its line, though, O'Meara said.

"Medical research and the

relationship between condoms and our other medical products made it seem like a logical step to follow," O'Meara said.

Mentor has targeted their product toward heterosexual women.

"Our magazine ads are aimed at single, educated women between the ages of 22 and menopause, because it is estimated through our initial research that 40 to 70 percent of the product is bought by this market."

Although Mentor has not developed advertisements for television for its condom line, O'Meara said the company would before the end of the year.

"The problems we seem to be facing with commercials are the time slots offered by the television stations, which occur at 11 p.m. to 11:30 p.m., the limits placed on ad content, and the refusal of certain stations to take commercials," she said.

The viewer objections were the primary reasons why the stations would not air the commercials, O'Meara said.

"If we do produce a commercial for our condoms, we will not use fear tactics to try and increase sales," she said. "Fear tactics will not have a positive affect on viewers no matter what products you are promoting. By putting the issue on television and bringing it into the home, however, the message can be more widely spread."

Some of the main concepts O'Meara said Mentor would stress in its commercials would be product awareness and public education about birth control. The AIDS issue would not be one of the primary factors in its advertisements.

"As far as condoms are concerned," she said, "I would rather see our company a public service-type announcement with a slug on the end saying it was sponsored by our company."

"I think the community would more readily accept this type of advertisement and benefit from it as well."