

Texas A&M The Battalion

Vol. 83 No. 3 USPS 045360 24 pages in 2 sections

College Station, Texas

Thursday, September 3, 1987

War in gulf intensifies as attacks increase

MANAMA, Bahrain (AP) — Iranian speedboats and Iraqi warplanes attacked at least seven ships in the Persian Gulf within 24 hours and U.S. warships prepared on Wednesday to escort more tankers through the war zone.

The Iraqis reported a fifth day of air raids on Iranian shipping, oil fields and other industrial targets. Iran said its artillery shelled military and industrial installations in southern Iraq and Iranian planes struck in the northern area of the 730-mile border warzone.

Eighteen attacks on ships have been reported and 13 confirmed since Iran and Iraq, which have been at war since September 1980, resumed their "tanker war" last weekend after a six-week lull.

Iran's official Islamic Republic News Agency quoted Prime Minister Hussein Musavi as declaring Wednesday that a policy of "blow for blow will be pursued in a calculated fashion."

Iraq began the war on commercial shipping early in 1984 in an attempt to destroy Iran's economy with raids both on its oil installations and tankers carrying its crude petroleum. Iran retaliated by attacking ships, usually in the southern gulf, and stopping others to search for Iraq-bound cargo.

Of 11 raids Iraq has reported since renewing the shipping war Saturday, seven have been confirmed by Lloyd's Shipping Intelligence Unit in London and other independent sources.

Two empty Kuwaiti tankers and their U.S. Navy es-

corts reached the sheikdom at the head of the gulf Tuesday. The warships are expected to make the return trip with three vessels that have been loaded and waiting for days.

Iran accuses Kuwait of receiving arms shipments for its neighbor Iraq, whose ports were closed soon after the war began, and since last September has been attacking ships owned by or serving the sheikdom.

Eleven of Kuwait's 21 tankers have been given the American flag so Navy ships can protect them. Convoys began July 21.

Iran does not acknowledge responsibility for the speedboat attacks, but they are viewed in the Persian Gulf as reprisals for Iraqi air strikes on shipping or other targets.

Shipping sources said an Iraqi target not identified previously was the Sanandaj, a 253,837-ton Iranian supertanker hit Sunday near Kharg island.

Iraqi raiders strike tankers owned by Iran or chartered to shuttle crude from Kharg to a makeshift terminal at Larak Island in the Strait of Hormuz, the gulf's narrow southern entrance. Larak is beyond the range of Iraqi planes unless they refuel in flight.

War communiques from Iraq say its air raids on land and sea targets are intended to keep Iran from using increased oil export revenues gained during the lull to continue the war, and to force it to accept a July 20 cease-fire resolution of the U.N. Security Council.

U.S. warns ex-students to pay defaulted loans

By Mary-Lynne Rice
Staff Writer

Nearly 950,000 former college students who have defaulted on Guaranteed Student Loans or Perkins Loans from the U.S. Department of Education have been warned to pay up.

In letters sent out during July and August, defaulters were notified that debts not paid by Oct. 1 will be multiplied by stiff penalties, including possible prosecution.

Texas A&M's current default rate on Perkins loans stands at 6.79 percent, said Georgeanne Bigham, assistant manager for student financial services.

"The percentage is significantly higher (than in past years)," Bigham said, "but although ours went up, every other institution's rate went up as well."

If an institution's default rate reaches 7.5 percent, Bigham said, the Education Department will reduce the amount of loan funds available to that institution. If this reduction occurs, the financial aid office would have to reduce either the number of loans given or reduce the amount of each loan.

But because A&M students' loan repayments are received regularly and returned to loan funds, student loans are not yet seriously endangered. Bigham said 2,310 former students have a Perkins loan balance this year.

Legislation sponsored by U.S.

Sen. Phil Gramm, R-Texas, is enabling the Education Department to make a stronger effort to reclaim \$1.9 billion in debts nationwide.

"There had been action before," said Larry Neal, Gramm's press secretary. "But it was spotty, scattered. It tended to depend on the enthusiasm of local officials as to how it was done."

"There were often greater priorities to be dealt with, and the defaults just accumulated and accumulated. Now there's a centralized, specific effort being made."

Since Gramm's legislation passed last year, some progress has been made on recollection, in part with the participation of the Internal Revenue Service, Gramm said in a press release last month.

"We collected \$135 million last year by withholding tax refunds from student loan defaulters and so far this year, the Education Department has managed to reclaim \$226 million," Gramm said. "But these amounts are small change compared to the \$1.9 billion that is owed."

Bob Jamroz, special assistant to the assistant secretary for post-secondary education at the Department of Education, cited an increase in repayments, "to the tune of \$1 million a day."

"We attribute this increase to two factors: the IRS offset of income tax refunds and a warning in the letter advising them that the cost of collection will be added to the amount they owe," he said. Collection costs

could add an additional 25 to 45 percent to the debt total, he said.

Federal employees who have defaulted on loans may have their salary garnished to fulfill their debts, Neal said.

Gramm said that a large percentage of defaulters are professionals, doctors or lawyers who relied on student loans to finance the educations that are now paying off in good jobs and high salaries.

"There is no reason that the large majority of these loan defaulters should not be required to pay their bills," Gramm said. "These are people who have, in effect, stolen money from the taxpayers and drained the student loan fund of cash that should be going to help current and future college students."

Although Guaranteed Student Loans are available to anyone who wants one and can show sufficient need, Neal said, defaulters make it harder for some students to get a loan.

"There is a self-perpetuating fund, so there will be money," Neal said. "But the problem has grown by leaps and bounds. What we're dealing with is the fact that in failing to repay loans, they (defaulters) are cheating the taxpayers of today and the students of tomorrow."

Some states have chosen to confiscate cars or other property until debts are resolved.

"A classic situation is the seizing of autos until the loan is paid," Neal said. "Confiscating a Mercedes-Benz usually gets results."

Students must move cars before Saturday's game

Students who park their cars on campus overnight must move them from several parking lots near Kyle Field by 10 a.m. Saturday, Director of University Police Bob Wiatt said Wednesday.

The lots must be vacated to provide parking for the A&M-Louisiana State University football game on Saturday.

The lots that must be vacated are by the tennis courts, Kyle Field and by Olsen Field on A&M's west campus.

University enrollment rises approximately 5.8 percent

The fall student enrollment at Texas A&M has increased to a record 38,685 as of Wednesday morning, Texas A&M Registrar Donald D. Carter said.

This unofficial figure is a 5.8 percent increase over the 36,561 students enrolled last year.

Official figures will not be available until Sept. 15 when they are reported to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

The new enrollment shows a 4.9

percent increase over the previous high of 36,846 in the fall of 1983. Higher admission standards were instituted after 1983 which contributed to slight declines in enrollment. The new increase also has prompted the Texas A&M Board of Regents to present plans to restrict enrollments.

The specific lot numbers are 37, 46, 48, 49, 56, 60, 62, 63, and 69, Wiatt said.

Cars not removed from these lots will be towed to other locations on campus, he said.

Wiatt said most students already are aware of the need to move their cars because it is part of the parking regulations.

He also said leaflets will be placed on cars in these lots by Friday as a reminder to students.

TDC gets one month to reform

HUNTSVILLE (AP) — The Texas prison system, plagued by overcrowding and forced to close its doors to new inmates for the 21st time this year, has another month to meet court orders reducing the inmate population at 15 units.

The Texas Department of Corrections remained closed Wednesday after more than 1,300 inmates were admitted last Friday and Monday, prison spokesman Charles Brown said. The department is mandated by law to maintain its population at 95 percent capacity.

Attorney General Jim Mattox had asked U.S. District Judge William Wayne Justice of Tyler for the 30-day extension of the judge's order to reduce prison populations. The extension was requested because of problems with construction of the 2,250-inmate, \$67 million Michael Unit in Anderson County.

Justice, who in 1982 found the Texas Department of Corrections to be unconstitutionally crowded, granted the delay until Oct. 1. The order was filed Tuesday in Houston.

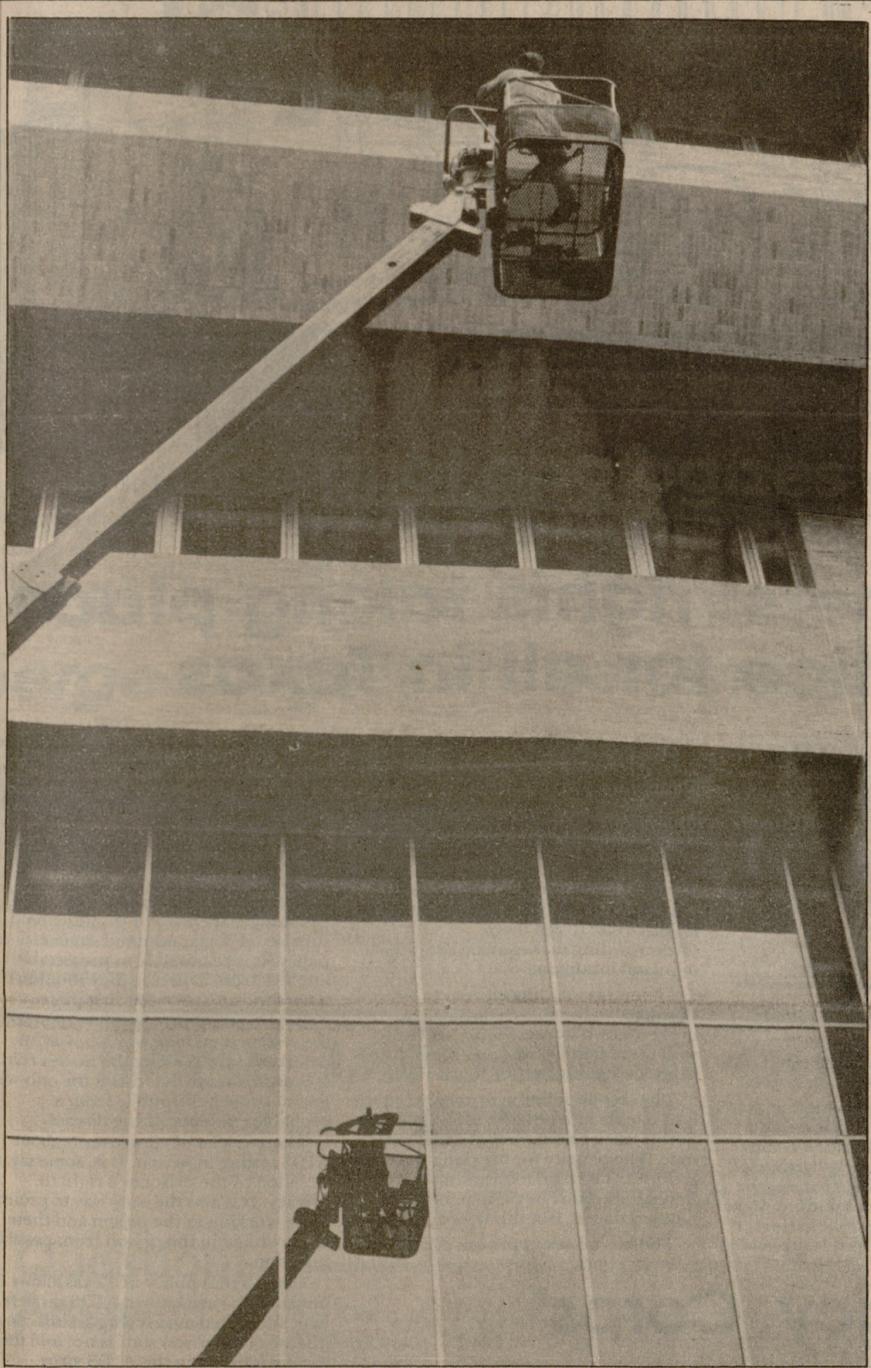


Photo by Robert W. Rizzo

Towering Above The Rest

A workman for Anatek, a Midland, Mich. engineering company examines the damage on Ster-

ling C. Evans Library. The company found it needs to replace more sections than anticipated.

Teen-age pilot apologizes for his life's 'great mistake'

MOSCOW (AP) — West German teen-ager Mathias Rust apologized to a Soviet court Wednesday for flying a single-engine plane into Red Square. He said it started as a mission of peace but ended as the greatest mistake of his life.

"My flight was not the best action to bring this about," Rust, a 19-year-old resident of suburban Hamburg, said during nearly five hours of testimony on the first day of trial at the Soviet Supreme Court.

"I'm very sorry," he said. It was his first public appearance since he piloted a Cessna 172b across the Soviet border on May 28 and set it down amid hundreds of astonished pedestrians on Red Square near the Kremlin, the seat of Soviet power.

The flight led to a shake-up of the Soviet military establishment. Rust faces charges of hooliganism, illegally crossing the Soviet border and violating international flight rules, and he could get 10 years in prison.

The trial is expected to last three days. Dressed in a blue suit, a light blue shirt and tie, Rust called himself "a very sentimental man" who meant no harm to anyone.

Rust said he wanted to meet with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to

discuss a new political system that would bring east and west together in "full democracy, democracy in the fullest sense of the word."

"I sought the source of peace, and the source of peace is not in Washington, but in Moscow," Rust said.

Pale but poised, he spoke in a

"I sought the source of peace, and the source of peace is not in Washington, but in Moscow."

— Mathias Rust, West German teen-age pilot

Supreme Court Judge Robert Tikhomirnov and prosecutor Vladimir Andreyev repeatedly reminded Rust that he could have killed or injured many people by landing on crowded Red Square.

Rust first told Tikhomirnov after the charges were read that "I am aware of my guilt."

But later Rust said he did not acknowledge guilt on the charge of malicious hooliganism because he never had any intention to harm anyone.

"My flight did not have any aggressive intentions," he said.

Under questioning from his Soviet lawyer, Vsevolod Yakovlev, and prosecutor Andreyev, Rust told the court that with the perspective of the last 14 weeks in Lefortovo Prison, he realizes that his approach was wrong.

"I threatened the lives of people," he said. "That's my opinion today."

"I will never repeat it."

"It's the greatest mistake I've made in my life."

Asked why he chose to fly illegally to Red Square rather than ask Soviet officials for permission for the flight, he said, "I had to have the echo of world public opinion."

"That was possible, according to my opinion then, by a flight that didn't correspond with any norms."

Rust sometimes smiled at the questions from the judge and Andreyev.

Rust began his journey with a flight in mid-May from Hamburg to Iceland, the site of last fall's summit meeting between Gorbachev and President Reagan.

After he brought the plane down between the Kremlin wall and St. Basil's Cathedral, "I waited for what would happen next."

"I only thought about landing in Moscow."

"What would happen after I practically didn't think about."