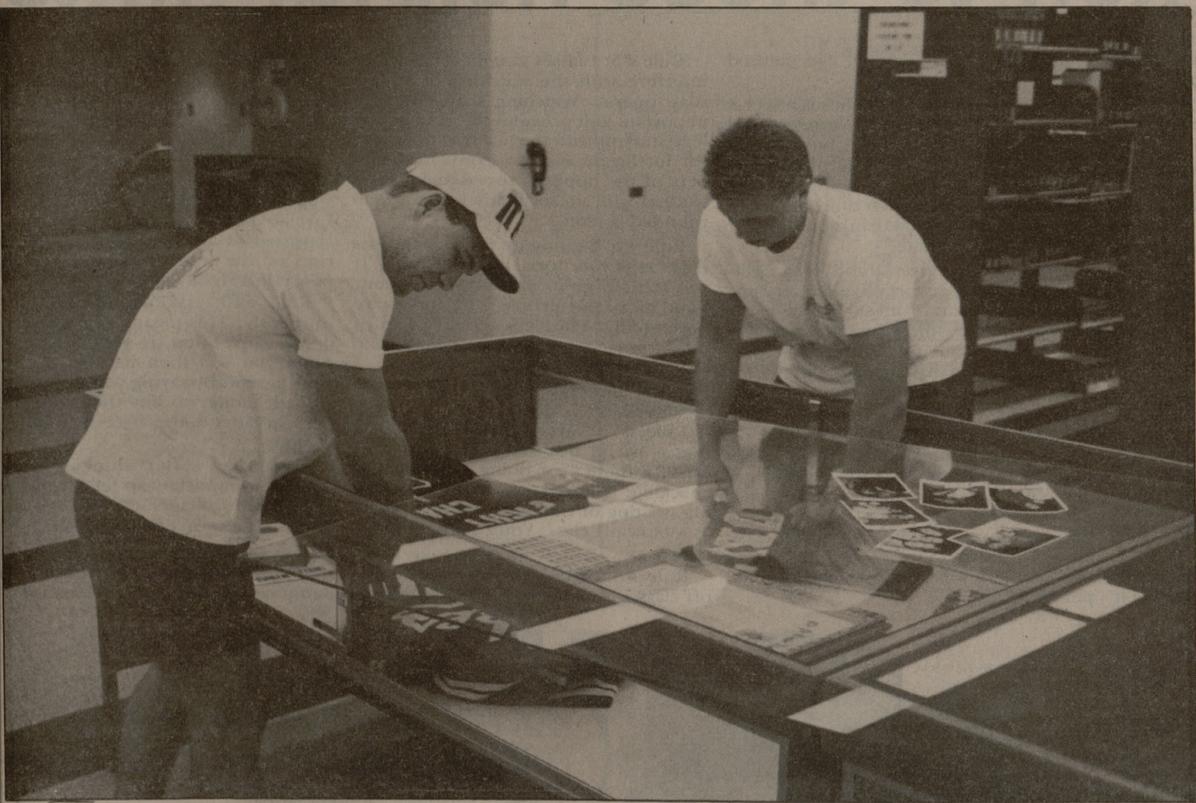


Texas A&M The Battalion

Vol. 87 No. 155 USPS 045360 8 Pages

College Station, Texas

Wednesday, June 8, 1988



On display

Pi Kappa Alpha members Robert Clay, an accounting major, and David Mooney, a physical education major, design a display case at the

Sterling C. Evans Library Tuesday.

Photo by Sam B. Myers

6 die, 40 hurt following blast in south Beirut

BEIRUT, Lebanon (AP) — A car bomb exploded Tuesday near a Syrian military checkpoint in south Beirut and touched off fighting between Syrian troops and pro-Iranian militias, police said. At least six people were killed.

The blast in the seaside district of Ouzai killed four people and wounded 39, including two Syrian soldiers and two Lebanese police officers, police said. Two more people died and another was injured.

The explosion occurred about 100 yards from an office of the Iranian-backed fundamentalist Hezbollah, or Party of God. It was the third car bombing in Lebanon this year.

A gray Renault loaded with Hezbollah gunmen raced to the scene after the explosion, but dozens of Syrian soldiers and Lebanese police surrounding the site stopped the car and ordered its occupants out, police said.

The Syrians and Lebanese were manning a nearby Syrian military checkpoint.

"When the gunmen refused to step out, troops and policemen tried to haul them out by force," a police spokesman said. "One gunman fired his pistol, and a shoot-out erupted in which two gunmen were killed and a

civilian passer-by was wounded."

Syria deployed about 2,400 troops in south Beirut last month to quell fighting between Hezbollah and the rival pro-Syrian Shiite Amal militia for control of the area. Most of the 18 foreigners kidnapped in Lebanon are believed held in south Beirut.

One of the slain gunmen was identified as Abu Ali Assaf, a Hezbollah official.

Reporters and photographers watching from a distance saw troops and police beating the gunmen with rifle butts through the car's open windows before the shooting began.

One gunman was seen drawing a pistol and firing at the officers, who opened fire with submachine guns. Panicked onlookers fled.

The brown Datsun, loaded with 33 pounds of explosives, was parked outside an automobile repair shop.

The shop owner, Hussein Jammal, who was wounded in the blast, told police the young man who left the car told him he wanted his radiator repaired and he would be back to pick it up.

Jammal said, "The man walked away. Minutes afterwards, the car exploded and I saw blood all over me. I looked around for the man, but there was no trace of him." hostages.

Dukakis, Bush start search for running mates

WASHINGTON (AP) — Primaries behind them, Michael Dukakis and George Bush now turn to unifying their parties and picking running mates — chores that are complicated for Dukakis by the persistent claims of Jesse Jackson.

The next big dates on the election-year calendar are the national conventions — the Democrats July 18-21 in Atlanta and the Republicans Aug. 15-18 in New Orleans. By then, Dukakis and Bush both hope to have vice presidential candidates chosen if not actually announced.

Party unity is a big theme this week for the likely general election opponents as both Dukakis and Bush reach out to their vanquished opponents.

Republican Bush headlines a "Unity '88" party meeting in Denver on Friday with at least four of his former rivals. The session is the first of three to set the stage for the Republican National Convention.

Dukakis heads to St. Louis on Wednesday to pick up the endorsement of Rep. Richard Gephardt, while Sen. Paul Simon of Illinois will add his support of the Massachusetts governor as well, Dukakis aides said.

Both Dukakis and Bush will also be wrestling with the choice of run-

ning mates as they try to set in place the themes for the fall.

For Dukakis, that means grappling with the challenge of Jackson, who stuck it out to the end of the primaries and threatened to continue his presidential challenge until the convention.

In the closing hours of the campaigning for Tuesday's primaries in California, Montana, New Jersey and New Mexico, Jackson also talked of challenges on the convention floor on such issues as South Africa.

He gave his most definitive answer yet to the question of whether he would like to be Dukakis' running mate.

"We've earned the option," Jackson told the *New York Times*.

Asked about that Tuesday, in an interview, Jackson said of Dukakis, "If he were to win, extending the invitation to me is his option." He said he did not know whether he would accept, but then added, "It is an option my constituency has earned."

Dukakis has said he will spend three days on the road in each of the coming six weeks, touching base in key states for the fall. The rest of the time he will spend in his Statehouse office in Boston or in campaign briefings.

Dukakis battles Jackson in primary

Michael Dukakis, ready to salt away the 1988 Democratic presidential nomination, battled Jesse Jackson on Tuesday in a coast-to-coast finale of a grueling primary campaign. Jackson sought a strong showing to reinforce his position for the inevitable pre-convention bargaining.

Dukakis was heavily favored to defeat his sole remaining Democratic rival in each of the final contests, from New Jersey to California with New Mexico and Montana in between. His aides confidently predicted the night's delegate harvest would put the Massachusetts governor over the 2,081 needed to guarantee a first ballot victory at the party convention next month in Atlanta.

The Massachusetts governor will travel this weekend to Utah to speak to the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

Republican Bush finds his campaign strapped for cash, but aides are planning a variety of strategies to

keep the vice president on the road and in the news at party fund-raisers and conventions across the country. The aides said he can spend only about \$1.3 million more before hitting the federal ceiling on pre-convention campaign spending.

placing himself at a disadvantage in two important battleground states in the fall campaign.

Advisers predicted that the vice president would begin sharpening his attacks on Dukakis as soon as the Democratic nominating war was officially settled, perhaps beginning at the Texas GOP Convention on Thursday and a party unity event in Denver on Friday. Bush sounded like he was ready, telling reporters he "can't wait for this primary season to end."

Dukakis was looking beyond the primaries, as well. He arranged to pick up endorsements on Wednesday from former rivals Richard Gephardt and Paul Simon, and said he hoped Jackson would also work for the ticket.

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African strike causes violence, eight deaths

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (AP) — Widespread violence and eight deaths were reported Tuesday, the second day of a nationwide general strike that organizers claimed involved 2.5 million people.

Employers and transport companies said support for the strike had dwindled and that more workers were on the job in many areas.

In Durban, however, the Federated Chamber of Industries said the strike had intensified around the nation's third-largest city.

Black labor unions and anti-apartheid groups called the three-day protest, which the government says is illegal, to oppose the 2-year-old state of emergency and proposed legislation to restrict the rights of unions to strike.

The Congress of South African Trade Unions, the largest black labor federation, said at least 2.5 million people were staying away from jobs and schools. It called the strike the most significant to date.

General secretary Jay Naidoo denied government claims that the protest was being sustained by intimidation.

He told reporters the strike was "a reflection of the wide-scale resentment and anger" about orders issued in February that barred his organization and other anti-apartheid groups from political activity.

President P.W. Botha's govern-

ment imposed the emergency June 12, 1986, to combat a black uprising against apartheid, the policy of race discrimination that preserves privilege for South Africa's 5 million whites and denies the 26 million blacks a voice in national affairs.

In Lusaka, Zambia, the exile headquarters of the outlawed African National Congress guerrilla movement declared "unequivocal support" for the strike. The ANC is the main group fighting white domination in South Africa.

In Washington, State Department spokesman Phyllis Oakley said: "The strike appears to enjoy the overwhelming support of the disenfranchised majority in South Africa and has so far been peaceful."

"We hope all parties will continue to avoid violence. The strike underscores the urgent need for negotiations among South Africans to replace apartheid with a democratic constitutional order."

The three-day strike is the largest black protest under the emergency.

A report by state-run South African Broadcasting Corp. said participation declined by 45 percent Tuesday but gave no estimate of the number of people involved. It said in an editorial that the strike represented the strategy of "radical activists who want to make South Africa ungovernable."

Study shows students perform poorly in math

WASHINGTON (AP) — A government-sponsored study concluded Tuesday that American students are doing miserably in math, and experts laid some of the blame on the redundant, slow-paced way math is taught in most schools.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress reported that almost half of the 17-year-old students tested in 1985-86 proved incapable of handling math commonly taught in junior high, and nearly 27 percent of 13-year-olds were stumped by basic computations.

"Our ninth graders are taking what other people's seventh graders are taking," Chester Finn Jr., the assistant U.S. secretary of education for research and improvement, told a news conference.

"We've got to get it going faster, repeated less and make sure that it's learned more."

The study was based on exams given to nearly 15,000 students ages 9, 13 and 17 in 1985-86, and to a total of nearly 35,000 students in grades 3, 7 and 11.

This was the fourth national assessment in math.

The study, "The Mathematics Report Card: Are We Measuring Up?," said all three age groups made mod-

est improvements in recent years, but mostly on low-order skills. Fewer were capable of advanced work in 1986 than in 1978.

"Despite signs of their progress across time, the 1986 performance of 17-year-old students was dismal," the report said.

"Only half the high school students demonstrated an understanding of even moderately complex mathematical procedures" usually introduced in junior high.

The report said math classes are "dominated by paper-and-pencil drills on basic computation. Little evidence appears of any widespread use of calculators, computers or mathematics projects."

More than a quarter of the 17-year-olds reported they usually do not understand what is talked about in mathematics class.

Math instruction is "dominated by teacher explanations, chalkboard presentations, and reliance on textbooks and workshops."

More innovative forms of instruction, such as . . . small group activities, laboratory work and special projects, remain disappointingly rare.

"The early emphasis on practicing computations may serve to divorce mathematics from real-world obser-

ventions," the report said.

"Once students learn to rely on procedures, they tend to give up on common sense. . . . This can lead to preposterous answers."

The report said 98 percent of the 9-year-olds and 100 percent of the older students knew simple arithmetic facts, but virtually none of the younger students and only 6.4 percent of the oldest could solve multi-step problems and algebra questions.

Black and Hispanic students, as well as those living in the Southeast, gained ground, but remain far behind the white majority.

The National Assessment, administered by Educational Testing Service, tests a sample of American students in basic subjects every other year.

Finn, whose department pays for the testing, said that despite minority gains, only one black 17-year-old student in 300 and "barely 1 percent of the Hispanic kids" scored at the advanced level, compared with 7.6 percent of the whites.

The tests indicated girls and boys "had identical average mathematics proficiency" at age 9, but boys outscored girls at 13 and 17.

Texans fight to keep aliens part of census

AUSTIN (AP) — Texas asked Tuesday to join the fight against a lawsuit that would bar the government from counting illegal aliens in the 1990 census, a move it says could cost the state federal funds and congressional seats.

Texas Attorney General Jim Mattox said the U.S. Census Bureau has always been required to count all "persons," not just citizens, in the national head-counting conducted every 10 years.

The census report is used for several purposes, including the apportionment of U.S. House seats.

Texas, which now has 27 House members, could gain as many as four more in the 1990 census, Mattox said, adding that a court decision ordering the Census Bureau not to count illegal aliens could mean fewer additional seats for the state.

"It is essential these people be counted as they have been for the last 200 years," Mattox said of illegal aliens. "The term 'persons' is all inclusive. We want everybody counted."

The Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund also asked to intervene as a defendant in the federal lawsuit, filed Feb. 18 in Pittsburgh, brought by 41 congressmen.

And Mattox said the state of New York and the cities of Chicago and New York have asked to intervene as defendants as well.

He said there could be as many as 1.2 million "undocumented workers" in Texas that would not be counted if the plaintiffs prevail. They are people for whom the state has been ordered to provide a variety of services, including free education.

"This lawsuit would threaten our ability to do that if it is successful," he said at a news conference.

MALDEF lawyer Jose Garza said the lawsuit, if successful, could have a "devastating" effect on the Hispanic community.

"We've had a great deal of difficulty convincing the Hispanic population that they should cooperate (with the Census Bureau) and that it is in their best interests to cooperate," he said.

Garza added that some illegal aliens have feared information they gave to census officials would be turned over to immigration officials.

The lead plaintiff in the lawsuit is U.S. Rep. Thomas Ridge, R-Pa., who is concerned his state will lose U.S. House seats as a result of the 1990 census if illegal aliens are counted.

Projections by the bipartisan Congressional Research Service Study show that Texas and California are certain to gain House seats if illegal aliens are counted, while Pennsylvania and Connecticut will lose seats.

Alabama, North Carolina, Michigan and Missouri also are at risk of losing seats, according to the study.