

State and Local

Ex-inmate at prison camp enjoys U.S. freedom

By Holly Becka
Staff Writer

Imagine a country that would imprison its citizens, send them to labor camps with criminals and armed guards with ferocious dogs just for having "unorthodox" beliefs. Think of the Soviet Union.

Georgi P. Vins, who spoke through translator Natasha Vins, his daughter, Wednesday evening at the annual Aggie Corps Christian Muster, lived this life.

His father, who was an American missionary in Siberia, also lived this

life. He was arrested and died in a Soviet prison camp.

"You are fortunate to live in a free country," Vins said. "I think that maybe some Americans don't realize how fortunate they are to have freedom."

Vins said this freedom especially includes the way Americans are allowed to think freely and form Christian ideas.

"I lived in the Soviet Union for 50 years," he said. "I have no military service but I know the Soviet military well. For eight years I was a prisoner in Soviet prison camps."

Vins said he was transferred to at least 10 labor camps in Siberia during the years of his incarceration. His only crime was that he had "different" ideas that went against his society's rules and he preached to others about them.

He said in 1961 there was a spiritual awakening in the Soviet Union and as a result, more people began think about Christianity. They were not allowed to organize formally though.

"In 1962 I worked in Kiev as an evangelist," Vins said. "My occupa-

tion was an electrical engineer and I ministered in my free time.

"I was arrested for the first time in 1966 for preaching and accused of organizing a worship service. I was sentenced the first time for three years and for 10 years the second time."

He said one of the camp's directors tried to persuade him to change his mind about his beliefs.

"The director thought I was a fanatic," he said. "I would not rebuke Jesus Christ."

In fact, he said he usually min-

istered to fellow prisoners, most of whom were criminals. Once or twice he did meet other Christians who had been imprisoned, but they were together only a short time, he said.

Vins did make a friend at the first camp he went to and has written a book about him, titled "Konshaubi," which is the man's name. Konshaubi is still in prison.

Vins said he served the first prison term and five years of the second before being stripped of his Soviet citizenship and exiled to the United States in 1979 in an exchange of prisoners.

Vins currently resides in Elkhart, Ind., where he works with International Representation for the Council of Evangelical Baptist Churches of the Soviet Union Inc. The group represents the persecuted church in the USSR and organizes aid for Russian Christians.

"I love Russia," Vins said. "I never had a hostile feeling toward Russia, even when I was in prison. The people there are very nice, kind and friendly but unfortunate because they are not free to believe in Jesus Christ."

In Advance

Council discusses utility rate change

The College Station City Council will discuss possible changes in utility rates at 7 p.m. today.

If the changes are adopted, total electric revenues will decrease by about six percent and total water and sewer revenues will increase by about 13.5 percent for residential areas and about 34 percent for commercial areas, Glenn Schroeder, deputy director of finance, said.

"Over the last couple of years we have gone through a cost of services analysis on all utility rates," Schroeder said. "There are some shifts between different classes of customers and different types of services."

"These adjustments are reduc-

ing the total amount of electrical revenue and increasing the amount of water and sewage (revenue). This more accurately reflects what it cost to provide those services."

The rate changes would increase College Station utility bills by about \$1.50 per month, Schroeder said.

Monthly utility bills for residential areas would include a \$3.50 decrease for electricity and increases of \$2.30 for water, \$1.50 for sewage, \$1.05 for sanitation and \$.20 for a drainage charge, he said.

If accepted by the city council, the rate changes will go into effect after Oct. 1.

Ugandan ambassador to visit A&M

Uganda's ambassador to the United States, Stephen Katenta-Apuli, visits Texas A&M today as part of a four-day Texas tour.

He will be hosted by A&M President William H. Mobley at a luncheon that will be attended by several University and University System officials. While on campus, he also will meet with several professors from the Colleges of

Agriculture, Engineering and Veterinary Medicine and tour selected facilities.

Before and after his College Station excursion, Ambassador Katenta-Apuli will meet with various state officials and officials and faculty members at the University of Texas, in addition to participating in several programs planned by Austin organizations.

Politicians team to stop shipments of dangerous dirt

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — Republican Gov. Guy Hunt and Democratic Attorney General Don Siegelman, often at odds politically, formed a rare partnership today to fight the shipment of PCB-contaminated dirt from Texas to Alabama.

Hunt and Siegelman said they would cooperate on a federal court suit aimed at blocking plans by the Environmental Protection Agency to ship contaminated dirt from a Super Fund cleanup site near Houston to Chemical Waste Management's hazardous waste landfill at Emelle, Ala.

"We believe the EPA has violated their own rules" by not incinerating the contaminated dirt in Texas, Hunt said at a news conference with Siegelman.

"We're getting tired of everybody everywhere trying to dump their stuff in Alabama," Hunt said, referring to the growth of the Emelle landfill as well as other states looking to Alabama for possible garbage dumps.

Polychlorinated biphenyls, which are found in the Texas dirt, were

once commonly used in electrical transformers as a coolant, but have now been linked to cancer.

Siegelman said winning the suit will be difficult because his office's two attorneys specializing in environmental issues will be up against a multi-million dollar legal staff at the EPA and Chemical Waste Management.

"While we would like to present a rosy picture for the people of Alabama, that would not be correct," Siegelman said.

Siegelman said the federal court suit will be filed this week or next, probably in Washington. He also said he would file an appeal today with the EPA concerning its settlement with Chemical Waste Management Inc. over what Siegelman contended was the illegal dumping of 202 truckloads of a cyanide derivative at the landfill.

In an agreement signed Monday, EPA and Chemical Waste Management agreed the company would pay a \$150,000 fine and keep close records on the hazardous wastes it dumps at Emelle.

First day of blood drive nets 259 pints at A&M

By George Watson
Staff Writer

The Red Cross collected 259 pints of blood during the first day of the TAMU-BU APO Challenge Blood Drive Wednesday, Lynda Falkenberg, Red Cross assistant administrator, said.

Blood is being taken at Rudder Fountain from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily and at the Commons from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Thursday and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday.

"It's a long way from the goal of 1,766 donors," Falkenberg said.

This year's drive is the second challenge drive between A&M and Baylor. Baylor won last year's drive with a turnout of 4½ percent compared to A&M's a turnout of just over 2 percent. Last year's drive was also the most successful Red Cross drive ever held at either campus.

This year's goal at both schools is a 4½ percent turnout. Trophies will be presented at the Baylor-A&M football game October 15 to each school that meets the goal.

The challenge goal was obtained from national averages. Nationwide, only 4½ percent of the population donates blood. A&M has an enrollment of 39,254, which translates into a goal of 1,766 donors.

The blood donated is sent to the Central Texas Region of Red Cross

Blood Services in Waco, which supplies more than 30 hospitals in 28 counties of Central Texas. The Red Cross' processing fee is the lowest in Texas at \$33 per unit.

All students and faculty who donate are covered by the Central Red Cross Blood Program because of their residence in Brazos County. The blood drive is sponsored by Omega Phi Alpha and the Aggie Blood Drive Committee of Student Government.

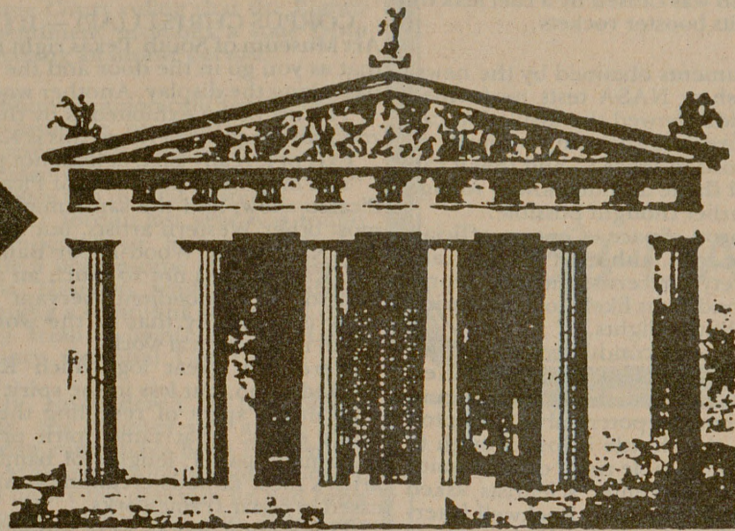
Correction

It was incorrectly reported in Tuesday's *Battalion* that the Aggie Blood Drive is a semiannual event. The Red Cross does collect blood only two times during the year; however, the Aggie Blood Drive is held five times during the year. The other three drives are held in connection with the Wadley Blood Center of Dallas.

Also, Omega Phi Alpha was not noted as a sponsor of the event. The main sponsor is the Aggie Blood Drive Committee of Student Government.

Margie Lasek, secondary advisor of the committee, said the committee hopes to have 4½ percent of the student body donate blood during the drive.

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