

# The Battalion



**WEATHER**

FORECAST for TUESDAY:  
Cloudy and much colder, with gusty north wind and a 50 percent chance of rain.

HIGH:60

LOW:40

Vol. 88 No. 114 USPS 045360 12 pages

College Station, Texas

Monday, March 20, 1989

## Salvadorans vote for new president under fire

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador (AP) — Salvadorans voted for a new president Sunday as leftist revolutionaries opposed to the election attacked military posts and army troops countered with rockets and rifle fire.

At least five guerrillas and two soldiers were killed in fighting in nine provincial towns, military officials and witnesses said. Two journalists and a Dutch television cameraman also were reported killed.

Early voter turnout appeared diminished by the combat and a rebel-imposed transport ban. But Roman Catholic churches were crowded with Palm Sunday worshippers, at least some of whom planned to vote later. By midday, there were long lines at the downtown polling stations.

Turnout was light in smaller towns.

"With these problems, it's better to stay

home," Jose Carlos Ortiz, 23, said. He spoke in front of his home in the capital as guerrillas retreated from an assault on a military post three blocks away.

Sporadic rifle fire echoed from the slope of the Guazapa volcano north of the capital, a guerrilla stronghold, as troops from the army's elite Bracamonte battalion pursued the insurgents. Two air force helicopters raced toward the volcano and fired rockets into the mountainside.

Guerrillas of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front are waging a 9-year-old war against the U.S.-backed government.

Salvadorans voted to elect a president from among seven candidates. Fidel Chavez Mena of the incumbent Christian Democratic Party and Alfredo Cristiani of the

rightist Nationalist Republican Alliance, or Arena led the field in polls. But neither was likely to receive the more than 50 percent required to avoid a runoff next month.

Cristiani, favored to become the country's next president, pledged free-market policies and reduced state intervention in the economy. His party promised to step up the war if the guerrillas do not agree to lay down their arms.

Surrounded by a mob of supporters, Cristiani voted Sunday morning on the capital's central Roosevelt Avenue.

"I hope the United States realizes that (Salvadorans) want democracy, with this effort they're making to vote. We don't want any more bombs," he said.

President Jose Napoleon Duarte's five-year term ends June 1. Duarte, barred by

law from running for re-election, is Washington's staunchest ally in the Western Hemisphere. He is dying of liver cancer.

Chavez Mena is a lawyer and leader of the Christian Democratic Party's conservative wing.

The centrist Christian Democrats contend Arena has not changed much since it was founded in 1981 by individuals allegedly linked to death squads.

Arena denies links to death squads. Cristiani says the party's ideology is similar to that of the U.S. Republican Party.

The leftist Democratic Convergence, whose leaders maintain formal links with the guerrillas, is running third in the election, according to polls. It was the first elec-

tion since 1977 in which socialist candidates have competed.

About 1.83 million people out of a population of 5 million were eligible to vote. Polls opened at 7 a.m. in 243 of the country's 262 municipalities and closed at 5 p.m.

Nineteen towns in the north did not set up voting stations because election officials deemed those rebel-held zones too dangerous.

Ricardo Perdomo, chairman of the Central Elections Council, said preliminary results would be available early Monday. Rebel sabotage to telephone lines and electricity, which has cut or restricted power to 80 percent of the country, were likely to slow the vote count.

## Discovery crew returns home after flawless flight

SPACE CENTER, Houston (AP) — The Discovery space shuttle astronauts, back from a five-day mission in which they deployed a vital communications satellite, spent Sunday with their families but were to return to work the next day to discuss their nearly flawless flight.

The crew's 1.9 million-mile journey ended Saturday morning with a picture perfect landing at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., that was watched by a near-record 460,000 spectators.

Discovery's flight lasted 4 days, 23 hours and 39 minutes. It was the 28th shuttle mission overall and the third since Challenger exploded, claiming the lives of seven astronauts and halting manned spaceflights for nearly three years.

The next flight is the planned April 28 launch of Atlantis, which will deploy a planetary probe that will map the surface of Venus. NASA hopes to complete seven flights this year and 12 a year by 1992.

Space agency officials Saturday praised the five Discovery astronauts and the orbiter as well as the efforts of employees who have worked to get the shuttle program back on track.

"I think the country realizes we're back," Rear Adm. Richard H. Truly, NASA's associate administrator for space flight, said at a post-flight news conference Saturday at Edwards.

Truly also said the shuttle "is just as clean as it can be." Although NASA television close-ups showed numerous white marks on the black thermal tiles that protect the shuttle's underside during the fiery re-entry through the atmosphere, Truly described them as "a few minor chips."

A little more than seven hours after touchdown, the astronauts and their wives arrived home in Houston where they were greeted by their children and

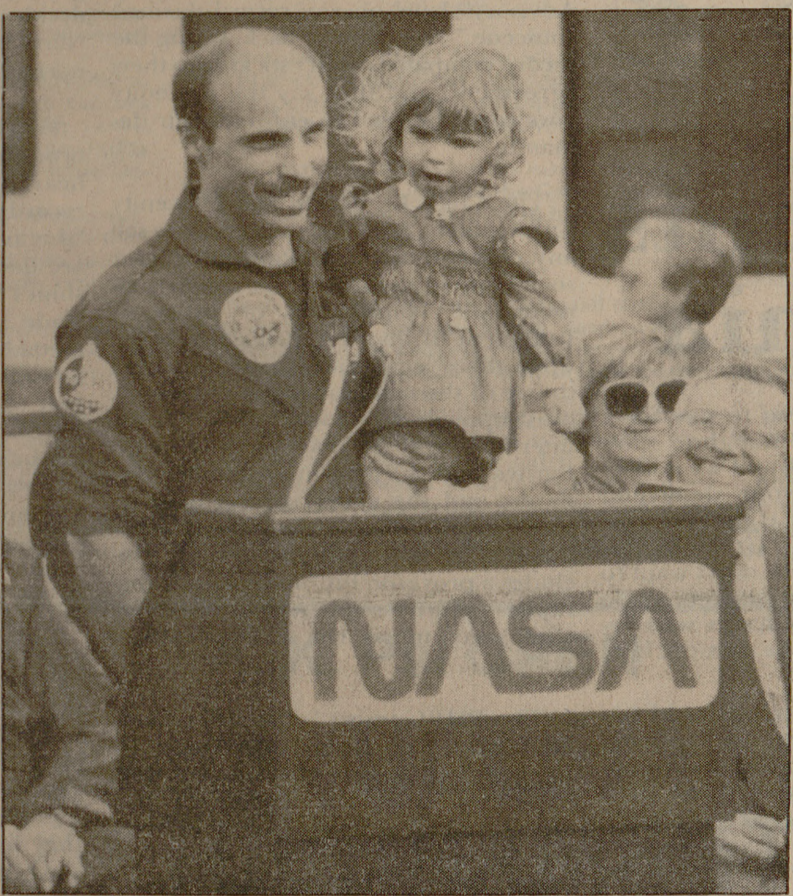


Photo by Ronnie Montgomery

Discovery astronaut James Bagian and his daughter Krista enjoy a welcoming party at Houston's Ellington Field.

about 500 friends, fellow workers and space fans.

Discovery commander Michael L. Coats, who guided the 97-ton spaceship to its centerline landing, said his crew worked hard both before and after blastoff Monday.

"I'd like to thank all of you and American people for the opportunity to fly in space," Coats added.

The other Discovery astronauts are pilot John E. Blaha and mission specialists Robert C. Springer, James F. Buchli and James P. Bagian. Blaha, Springer and Bagian were all space rookies.

Just six hours after liftoff from Cape Canaveral on Monday, the astronauts deployed a \$100 million Tracking and Data Relay Satellite.

## Protesters threaten to strike over 'sabotaged' campaign

MOSCOW (AP) — Thousands of Soviets took to the streets Sunday to accuse the Communist Party of sabotaging Boris N. Yeltsin's election campaign and to threaten a general strike if the maverick reformer fails to win office.

Police and KGB agents along the route channeled the marchers but made no attempt to halt them, even though their protest violated Moscow city regulations that require seven days' notice of any demonstration.

The march through downtown Moscow by 3,000 Soviets chanting "Hands off Yeltsin!" was an extraordinary outburst of passions aroused by Sunday's election for a new national parliament, the Congress of People's Deputies.

Yeltsin, 58, is running to represent the Soviet capital, where he headed the local party apparatus for almost two years before President

Mikhail S. Gorbachev fired him.

At pre-election meetings and in a televised debate with his opponent, automobile factory manager Yevgeny Brakov, the stocky, white-haired Yeltsin has charged the party machine he once led of conspiring against his candidacy and restricting voters' access to his campaign appearances.

Thousands of Yeltsin supporters planned to rally after noon Sunday at southwestern Moscow's Gorky Park, where a Russian folklore festival was under way. When they were told permission for the meeting had been refused, they set off for the city's downtown.

Their anger also was kindled by a recent decision of the party's policymaking Central Committee, announced Thursday, to form a special commission to investigate charges that Yeltsin, who is still a Central Committee member, opposes some

party policies.

The campaign against Yeltsin appeared to enter another phase Sunday when the party's *Moskovskaya Pravda* printed an account about Yeltsin's character and politics. The newspaper claimed it was a "myth" that he was more faithful to principles than others.

Yeltsin won the hearts of many Muscovites with a campaign against corruption and spirited attacks on the privileges, from special food stores to chauffeured limousines, available to the government and party elite.

"He's against the party mafia, and that's why the party mafia is against him," declared one of Sunday's marchers, Taras Osipov, 65, a retired engineer. "Yeltsin is with the people and for the people."

## Poll finds Americans unsure about keeping money in S&Ls

NEW YORK (AP) — The nation's beleaguered savings and loan industry lacks the confidence of nearly half the American public and a third of its own depositors, a Media General-Associated Press poll has found.

Respondents to the national survey also doubted the government's ability to find a lasting solution to the S&L crisis. And while half favored government intervention, most opposed having the public bear the main costs.

Only 53 percent of the 1,108 adults polled regarded S&Ls as a safe place to keep their money, compared with 93 percent who saw banks as safe. Of those with thrift accounts, 33 percent said they feared losing their savings.

Relatively few said they were reducing their accounts because of the S&L crisis, but a fifth said they were considering that step and as many said they were holding off on new deposits.

While S&Ls have sustained record withdrawals lately, federal analysts chiefly blame the higher interest rates that are available elsewhere. In the poll, 35 percent of respondents had S&L accounts and just 9 percent of them said they had withdrawn money because of the industry's problems.

Federal insurance is insufficient to cover accounts at the estimated 350 savings and loans that are failing, and the government has taken over 166 of the worst-off thrifts while Congress and the administration devise a plan to rescue the industry. The nation has 2,955 savings and loan associations.

President Bush has proposed using \$50 billion in government-backed bonds to help cover the accounts, in addition to \$40 billion pledged last year to sell or prop up failed thrifts. In the poll, however, just 27 percent said the government should pay most of the costs of salvaging the industry.

Instead, a 42 percent plurality said the S&L industry should bear the brunt of the costs by paying higher insurance premiums on its accounts — a lesser feature of the Bush plan. Just 14 percent favored levying a fee on S&L depositors, an idea the administration considered and dropped.

In any case, only 31 percent said they believed the government would come up with a long-term solution to the savings and loan crisis. Thirty-nine percent expected "only a temporary solution."

## War financier's heir requests amends Stafford woman could get \$141 billion for 212-year-old debt

HOUSTON (AP) — A Stafford woman and other descendants of a man who loaned money to help finance the Revolutionary War have filed a lawsuit against the federal government for repayment of the 212-year-old loan plus interest, a bill that could run as high as \$141.6 billion.

In the winter of 1777, the Continental Army — starved, freezing and short on supplies — was hanging on by its fingernails at Valley Forge. Thomas Paine described the winter as "the times that try men's souls."

Congress sent out the word to patriots: Send money to keep Gen. George Washington's army in the field. It promised to repay the loans plus interest.

One of those who responded was Jacob DeHaven, a wealthy Philadelphia merchant.

DeHaven lent the government almost everything he had, gold and supplies worth about \$450,000. Washington's army pulled through the winter and eventually won the Revolutionary War.

DeHaven's descendants contend the government stiffed him.

DeHaven died childless and in poverty in 1812. He is buried in an unmarked grave in Swedeland, Penn., Peter Murphy, the family's lawyer, said.

Murphy, a professor at South Texas College of Law, and his former student, Jo Beth Kloecker of Stafford, filed a class action lawsuit Friday in the U.S. Claims Court for the \$450,000 loan — plus 212 years of the 6 percent compounded interest the Continental Congress promised.

Loan officers at Texas Commerce Bank calculated last week that the

**"Jacob DeHaven loaned the government what was in effect the Pentagon budget. He virtually underwrote the war at Valley Forge."**

**— Peter Murphy, lawyer for DeHaven descendants**

principal and interest on the loan would be \$98.3 billion if the interest is compounded annually or \$141.6 billion if it is compounded daily.

The lawsuit was filed on behalf of a Stafford woman, Thelma Weasendorf Lunaas and the other descendants of DeHaven's nine brothers and sisters and two half-brothers.

"Jacob DeHaven loaned the gov-

ernment what was in effect the Pentagon budget," Murphy told the *Houston Chronicle*. "He virtually underwrote the war at Valley Forge."

Without DeHaven's loan, the Continental Army might have collapsed and the United States would have been stillborn, Murphy said.

"Lunaas and other DeHaven family members aren't interested in taking the government for a ride," Murphy said.

"They just feel that Jacob DeHaven made a significant contribution to the war effort, then died in poverty after being one of the richest men in America. It (the loan) wiped him out."

He said DeHaven and his descendants have tried several times to persuade the government to pay back the loans.

During an attempt in the 1920s, President Calvin Coolidge acknowledged the debt and said it should be paid, Murphy said.

As recently as 1966, a congressman introduced a bill to repay the DeHaven loan, Murphy said. That bill died in committee.

After the Revolutionary War, the question arose over whether the debts should be paid in full. Both the Articles of Confederation and the

U.S. Constitution say the Revolutionary War debts are debts of the central government.

In a 1790 report on the public debt, Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton recommended that the war debt be paid in full, Murphy said.

Hamilton said the government should pay off the loans because the future of America's credit depended upon it, Murphy said.

Some owners of the loan certificates were paid in gold. Old documents imply that others got land and many were paid in worthless Continental currency, Murphy said.

"If that happened, you looked upon it as a gift to the government," he said.

DeHaven and his descendants could not sue the government after the war because the government could not be sued, Murphy said.

The United States at the time was following English law that forbade lawsuits against the Crown, he said.

In 1853, Congress created the court of claims and allowed lawsuits against the government in that court.

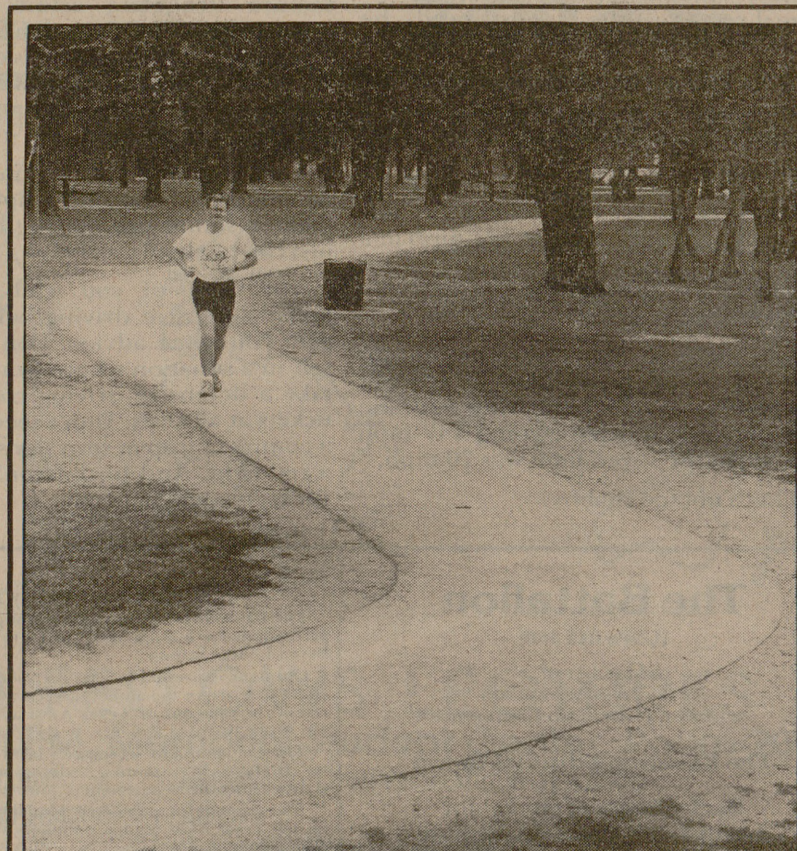


Photo by Phelan M. Ebenbach

### Make a run for it

Brian Mihlbachler, a graduate range science major, runs on A&M's fitness and jogging trail on the final Sunday of the break. Mihlbachler says he tries to run six miles everyday.