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U.S. soldiers train to use Patriots

EL PASO (AP) — Pvt. 2 William Harris toggled the keyboard while his eyes remained fixed on the circles, squares and lines on the radar screen before him.

The screen's graphics are no match for those of today's video games, but this is not child's play. The missiles Harris fired on his screen, and the targets he killed suddenly have become life-like.

"Before it was a learning experience, now it's like something you might actually have to use someday," Harris, a student at the Army's Air Defense Artillery School at Fort Bliss, said.

"Everyone takes this a lot more seriously," Harris is one month away from

graduation from the 33-week course the Army teaches for students who will be part of Patriot missile crews like those in Saudi Arabia shooting down Iraqi Scud missiles.

Fort Bliss is the Army's training center for air defense weapons, including the Stinger, Chapparral, Hawk, Vulcan and Patriot systems. The school has not only trained soldiers in the Navy, Air Force and Marines, but has trained soldiers from 30 foreign countries, said Col. Vincent Tedesco, deputy assistant commander of the Air Defense Artillery School.

"Essentially folks who have bought U.S. air defense artillery weapons, they come here and receive training," he said. That in-

cludes the Royal Jordanian Army and Israelis. El Paso Mayor Suzie Azar said at one time the school trained Iraqi students.

Air defense is considered one of the Army's more difficult specialties, known as Advanced Individual Training. Most specialty training classes last about eight to 10 weeks, Harris said.

"Shooting a missile is the easy part," Jim Pool, a Patriot System Simulator instructor, said. "I can teach you to shoot a missile in five minutes that's how easy it is. What I need to do is teach you when to shoot and what to shoot."

The console of green lit radar screens simulate all of the operations of the Patriot system, which have

been shooting down Soviet missiles fired by Iraq at Saudi Arabia and Israel.

Soldiers are taught to identify the graphics on the screen, for example, a circle with a lightning bolt in it signifies a hostile target with radar jamming equipment.

While the targets appear on the screen, information on that target such as its speed and identification number appear simultaneously. The soldier must be able to digest that information instantaneously and make the same split second decision what to do about it.

In one example, Pool showed hostile aircraft moving at 777 knots or about 854 mph.

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Soviet

The Soviet Internal Ministry is responsible for the latest Lithuanian action. Hatchett said Bakatin opposed the use of force in Lithuania when he controlled the ministry's troops.

Hatchett said Gorbachev's involvement is unknown, due in part to the fragmented Soviet power structure. He added that Red Army troops are not involved in the crackdown.

"We don't know what the loyalty of the Red Army will be in the long-run, if called upon to take action," Hatchett said.

"Even though it looks like the hardliners are carrying on a coup, if it comes to a showdown the security forces could be overwhelmed by the Red Army," he said.

Dr. Alex Pacek, an A&M professor of political science and specialist in Soviet politics, said Soviet forces historically have acted in unison during a crisis.

Though the Lithuanian incident is "less organized," Hatchett said the Soviets are sticking to their long-standing tradition of cracking down on rebellious republics during a time of world crisis.

For example, Soviet forces repelled a Hungarian revolutionary movement in 1956 when British and French troops went into the Suez Canal area. The Soviet Union also annexed the three Baltic republics at the end of World War II.

Pacek, however, said the Soviets are not taking advantage of the Middle East crisis to crack down on Lith-

uania.

The 1968 Czechoslovakian crackdown was one of many well-planned Soviet operations not triggered by world crisis, Pacek said.

"The Baltic crackdown is just confusion with no plan," Pacek said. "Troops are acting under local commanders with no clearly defined goal."

He said it is clear Gorbachev has less power than previous Soviet leaders and now is surrounded by hardliners.

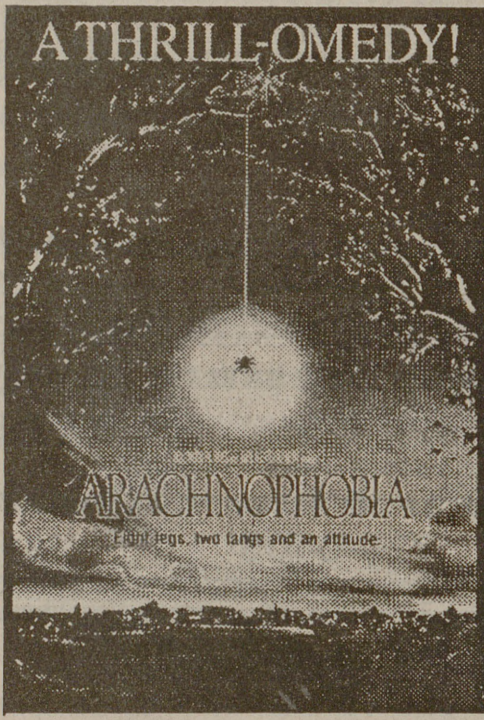
Hatchett said the only thing that can stop the Soviet Union from sliding back to conservative communist leadership is a large-scale coup d'etat.

"I don't see that happening," he said.

Continued from page 1

AGGIE MSC CINEMA

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Microbes

be difficult, or even impossible, to combat.

"It may be left up to natural means to take care of the spill," he says. "People don't realize we have had oil in the environment for hundreds of years, and there are many natural processes that can take care of a spill, including evaporation, dissolution in water, and even naturally occurring microbes."

Hobby

week during a semester with faculty members and students.

"He or she shares their views of public service, public policy problems, by visiting classes and participating in informal discussions," says Dr. Kim Hill, director of the master's program in public administration.

Hobby's four-day agenda includes informal roundtable discussions, a University tour and guest appearances in A&M classes and seminars.

The program gives A&M an opportunity to bring distinguished individuals on campus, offsetting the negative impact of the University's relative isolation. Hill says.

Kennicutt says the problem with these natural processes is they can take a long time to deal with so large a spill.

"There is a natural resiliency in nature," he says. "But there is a point where there is just too much oil to handle. At this point, I doubt if even the best technology can effectively address the situation."

Kennicutt says from what he has

Continued from page 1

seen, the policy for dealing with the spill is a defensive one.

"I've seen a concentration on protecting vital areas and falling back where the spill can't be controlled," he says. "Obviously the intakes for the desalination plants which provide much of the water for Saudi Arabia are being protected, as well as key environmental areas."

Bird populations, breeding areas and shallow water parts of the ecosystem are the most likely environmental defense areas, Kennicutt says.

"My best guess is this is not an all-out attempt, but it is probably the only option at this point," he says. "Once the oil has been there a few days, it is difficult to clean up in an effective way."

Kennicutt says the best scenario would be for the oil to remain at sea for a few days where the spill can be lessened by weather.

Terrorism

still exists.

"We're watching the situation and will make a decision if something new develops," she says. "If there is enough interest in the trip, it will happen."

Luke Altendorf, MSC associate director, says the Jordan Institute for International Awareness has experienced similar reactions with its Germany and Dominican Republic exchange programs.

"We've noticed the people that have applied have been concerned," Altendorf says. "Everyone has asked about the situation in the Middle East, and there have been concerns from parents as well as the students themselves."

He says if the U.S. State Department announces a travel alert, the institute will cancel its trips.

"We're working with the University administration to see what's in our best interests," Altendorf says.

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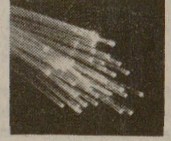
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