

**FORECAST**

Partly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of rain. High in the 90s.

**OPINION**

"Certainly, live target shooting is less of a social problem than drug abuse. But why should we be asked to trade one social ill for another."  
— Ellen Hobbs on the abuse of animals by some anti-drug organizations

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Young Aggies roll over hapless Tigers 45-7

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# The Battalion

Vol. 91 No. 11 USPS 045360 College Station, Texas "Serving Texas A&M since 1893" 10 Pages Monday, September 16, 1991

## Government expects ranchers, farmers to burn 5,000 square miles of rain forest in Brazil

SAO SEBASTIAO DE TOCANTINS, Brazil (AP) — It's burning season in the Amazon and a thick haze of smoke and ash shrouds the rain forest.

Fires by ranchers and farmers this year are expected to destroy 5,000 square miles of forest, an area slightly larger than Connecticut, according to government estimates. That would be about 40 percent of the amount burned last year.

Already, three children have died from respiratory ailments related to smoke inhalation in northern Para state, and airports can open only sporadically

because of poor visibility. Forest fires have damaged electric lines, causing periodic blackouts.

A smoke cloud stretched almost 4,000 miles in early September, from the northeastern state of Maranhao to remote Acre on Brazil's western border with Peru.

In this small village in the southeastern Amazon the sun rises an eerie red, trapped behind a gray shroud, and sets the same color at day's end. Even on cloudless nights not a single star can be seen.

"Ten years ago this entire region was

covered by virgin rain forest," the Rev. Miguel Elousa Rojo said as he squinted through smoke rolling across the windshield of his pickup truck. "Now it is total desolation."

Rojo drove past mile after mile of blackened land, with only an occasional palm tree still standing. A few skinny cows walked amid the ruins, picking at the little green that remained.

The lovely Tocantins River passes just a few hundred yards in front of the village's Roman Catholic church. But during the burning season, Rojo says, he almost

forgets it exists.

"The river isn't even visible until you are at the water's edge," he said.

Though it is illegal to burn the jungle for farming or ranching, the practice is routine. Fires are set as soon as the dry season begins, normally in August.

More than 250,000 square miles of rain forest — about the size of Texas — have been burned in the Amazon, whose 2 million square miles contain 30 percent of the world's remaining rain forest.

The burning destroys lush vegetation that produces huge amounts of oxygen.

Meanwhile, the smoke is believed to contribute to the "greenhouse effect," which many scientists say is causing a gradual warming of the planet.

Many rare plant species also have been killed off before they could be studied.

Most of the damage is done by cattle ranchers, who torch vast tracts to create grazing land without using expensive equipment and labor. When the rains return in October grass quickly shoots up.

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KARL A. STOLLEIS/The Battalion

### I hoe, I hoe...

Erwin Verlage, a junior horticulture major, works in a field behind the medical school, located on West campus, Sunday afternoon as part of a Horticulture 335 lab. The sun began to shine as clouds that brought brief showers broke.

## Hostage crisis nears end

### Shiite leader calls for comprehensive swap of Arab prisoners for 11 Western captives

BEIRUT, Lebanon (AP) — Lebanon's highest-ranking Shiite Muslim cleric said in an interview broadcast Sunday that a Western hostage would be released in weeks, not days as has been predicted.

Sheik Mohammed Mehdi Shamseddine also called for a comprehensive swap — rather than gradual releases — of Arab prisoners held by Israel in return for the 11 Western hostages missing in Lebanon.

His comments to the British Broadcasting Corp. came amid intense speculation that freedom for one or two of the Western hostages was imminent.

A day earlier, Sheik Ahmed Taleb, a Shiite Muslim cleric with ties to the kidnappers, said a hostage, probably a Briton, would be released in hours or days.

Also, a Tehran newspaper close to Iran's president predicted

that a Western hostage could be freed soon. Iran has helped secure the release of hostages before, and has links to the kidnappers.

But when asked about a possible release, Shamseddine said: "I can't say in a matter of days, but I can say in a matter of weeks — provided that American and Western pressure continues to be put on Israel to release further Arab prisoners from Israeli prisons," he told the BBC.

Israel released 51 Arab prisoners and the bodies of nine guerrillas last week, but still holds an estimated 300 Arab prisoners.

U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar has been trying to arrange to swap them for seven missing Israeli servicemen and the Western hostages.

Shamseddine also said that he couldn't predict the nationality of the next hostage freed.

## Student survives accident, remains in stable condition

A Texas A&M student is in stable condition after being hit by a car early Saturday morning while attempting to cross FM 2818 on foot.

Daniel J. Villarreal, 22, a junior history major, was struck while trying to cross FM 2818 near the Parson's Mounted Cavalry Building at 1:45 a.m. Saturday.

Villarreal was struck by a late-model, white Oldsmobile driven by Peter S. Craig, 23, of Houston.

Villarreal was transported to Humana Hospital where he is being treated for multiple fractures, contusions and lacerations. He was listed in stable condition as of 6 p.m. Sunday.

No charges have been filed in relation to the accident, but College Station police are continuing the investigation.

## Vet school breaks ground on facility

### College hopes to regain full accreditation with addition

By K. Lee Davis  
The Battalion

The College of Veterinary Medicine broke ground Friday on the largest and most expensive academic project in Texas A&M's history.

Two mules plowed up a short furrow of land in front of the new site to symbolically launch the construction of the \$38 million, 245,000 square-foot project that will add more laboratory, clinical and teaching space to the Texas Veterinary Medical Center.

"This is a key and exciting day in the history of the College of Veterinary Medicine," said

Dr. John Shaddock, dean of the college, as he welcomed all those in attendance at the ceremony.

The ground breaking of the new facility serves as a highlight of the college's year-long observance of the 75th anniversary of its founding in 1916.

The addition to the college includes a 100,000 square-foot, four story research building adjacent to existing veterinary facilities and a new 95,000 square-foot large animal medicine and surgery complex. Almost 20,000 square feet of space in existing facilities will be renovated as part of the new project.

The most expensive building project in

University history before the new vet medicine construction was the \$34 million spent for the University Center Complex almost 15 years ago.

The record for total cost of a new facility may be held for only short time by the new complex, however, because the cost for the new coliseum project is expected to approach or exceed the \$40 million mark, said Gen. Wesley Peel, vice chancellor for facilities planning and construction.

The college of veterinary medicine was placed on limited accreditation in the fall of

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## Gates faces confirmation hearings

WASHINGTON (AP) — Robert M. Gates began his intelligence career 25 years ago in a quintessentially Cold War role: as an intelligence officer minding Minuteman nuclear missiles at Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri.

Today, he will try to persuade the Senate Intelligence Committee that he is the man to become the new leader of the Central Intelligence Agency, to lead America's spy institutions beyond the Cold War.

But before he can look to the future, Gates must defend his past. It is a long record that includes prominent roles in a CIA that has experienced notable intelligence failures and engaged in questionable activities.

President Bush said Sunday he feels "very strongly" about Gates' nomination and pre-



Gates

dicted, "He'll pass."

Committee Chairman David Boren, D-Okla., said the nominee's changes "will depend on how he conducts himself in the hearings."

It may not be smooth sailing, however.

There are new indications that Gates played an important role in the U.S. tilt toward Iraq during its 1980s war with Iran — a tilt that left Saddam Hussein's military stronger going into the Persian Gulf War with the United States and its allies.

And not the least of Gates' problems is the Iran-Contra affair, which led him to give up his 1987 nomination for CIA director.

One member of the Senate committee, Bill Bradley, D-N.J., has suggested that Gates may have been involved in activities in support of Iraq that were "not fully or properly authorized" at the time.

The United States supplied intelligence to Baghdad during the 1980s to help ensure it

would not be overrun by Iran. There have been published reports, as well, of U.S. arms shipments to Iraq through third countries and of the direct sale of so-called "dual-use" items which can have civilian and military purposes.

It has been four months since Bush nominated Gates, now deputy national security adviser at the White House, for the CIA post. At the time, the specter of Iran-Contra, the Reagan administration's worst scandal, had largely faded from public consciousness.

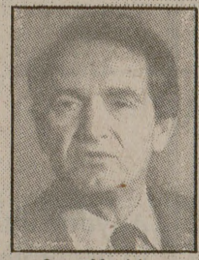
But a lot has changed. Lawrence Walsh, the special prosecutor pursuing criminal investigations in the case, has obtained a guilty plea from one former CIA official, Alan Fiers, and an indictment against another, Clair George.

The guilty plea by Fiers brought out new evidence that four top CIA officials besides then-director William Casey knew about the diversion of Iran arms sale proceeds to Nicaragua's Contra rebels, but did nothing to stop it.

## Iowa senator joins race for Democratic bid

WINTERSSET, Iowa (AP) — Iowa Sen. Tom Harkin, a fiery populist proclaiming "a new vision of America," was formally joining the Democratic presidential field Sunday with a call for the party to return to its roots.

Harkin spelled out a campaign aimed at "the people who pull the load and pay the taxes" who, he said, have been betrayed by "the greed and



Sen. Harkin

selfishness of George Herbert Walker Bush and J. Danforth Quayle."

He dismissed his long-shot odds against President Bush, even as he touted his bid to "start investing here in America."

"There are those who say that we're a longshot, that we can't win," Harkin said in remarks prepared for delivery. "I'm here to tell you that George Herbert Walker Bush has feet of clay and I intend to take a hammer to them."

His announcement was a sharply liberal call for a return to

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