

The Battalion

Vol. 92 No. 72 (6 pages)

"Serving Texas A&M Since 1893"

Thursday, December 10, 1992

Marines arrival opens air traffic to Somalia

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MOGADISHU, Somalia — U.S. Marines freed the capital from the grip of warring gunmen Wednesday, and opened the way for mighty air convoys of soldiers and supplies to revive Somalia's starving interior.

The first mercy flight to Mogadishu hours after troops stormed ashore brought in powdered formula for famished children and adults.

The Marines' next goal was to seize inland airstrips from bandits so that big U.S. transports can fly tons of life-giving grain where it is needed most. The first of thousands of Army troops for the

mission were to arrive Thursday, Defense Secretary Dick Cheney said in Washington.

Somalis crowded hillsides and jammed into the airport to welcome the 1,800 Marines who brought Mogadishu one of its most peaceful days since civil war broke out two years ago.

Reporters saw youths riding in one pickup truck dismount two machine guns and stow them on the floor as the pickup approached a Marine checkpoint.

Mogadishu was in a festive mood for Marine Landing Day. Youths perched on stacks of red, white and blue grain sacks to watch Marines dig foxholes.

After seizing the seaside airport and the harbor in uncontested

landings at dawn, the Marines took up positions at three checkpoints leading into the city.

Three Marines entered the dented iron gates of the deserted U.S. Embassy and hoisted the flag on a wobbly pole amid a litter of rusting typewriters. The \$50 million embassy was looted down to the rope on its flagpole after being evacuated last year.

Officials also raised U.S. flags on both sides of the Green Line separating the two warring clans in the capital. Old Glory went up over a liaison office in south Mogadishu and over the former U.S. ambassador's residence in the north.

For the first time in weeks, a World Food Program-chartered

plane flew in 17 tons of a powdery mixture of sugar, beans, flour and vitamins given to babies and malnourished people. It was quickly unloaded and taken to warehouses.

Before the Marines' arrival, such food convoys were guarded by militiamen. Often there were clashes with other clans, or the food was stolen.

"I've been waiting for this day for so long," said Victor Tanner, a UNICEF worker. "This airport usually is a pretty nasty place, but the town today is like after a Sunday football game."

About 300,000 Somalis have died of starvation, disease and warfare in the past year, and 2 million are threatened with

famine.

A last-minute orgy of looting and shooting early Wednesday forced the United Nations to evacuate 15 foreign aid workers from the closed port of Kismayo, 270 miles to the south.

In the capital, a civilian employee was shot in the arm outside U.N. headquarters in Mogadishu. There was no word on who was responsible.

Marines fired some warning shots, detained several Somalis and seized a few machine guns or rifles, but American officials had no reports of troops firing at anyone or being fired upon.

One of the main warlords, Ali Mahdi Mohamed, urged his followers "to cooperate with our

guests from the outside world to save our people."

"To cooperate," he said, "We need not hold guns in the streets."

The Marines' immediate goal was to secure the airstrip at Baidoa, 200 miles northwest of the capital.

About 70 people died in fighting in Baidoa earlier in the week, but the fighting died down and 19 flights have gone into the city in the past two days, according to Pentagon spokesman Pete Williams.

At the seaside Mogadishu airport, Air Force troops installed runway lights for a round-the-clock stream of cargo and troop transport flights that was expected to start soon.

O' CHRISTMAS TREE



ANGELA MCAULEY/Special to The Battalion

City of Bryan electrical distribution workers, Jack Lemmon, bottom left, Otis Turner, bottom

right, Rick Tobiaz, top left, and Dave Bransh, top right, decorate utility poles in downtown Bryan.

Congress rejects Yeltsin's pick for prime minister

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MOSCOW — President Boris Yeltsin suffered a bruising defeat Wednesday when Congress rejected his reform-minded nominee for prime minister, clearing the way for new hard-line attacks that could slow reforms.

The vote does not immediately force Yegor Gaidar out of office. Gaidar said he would remain as "acting" prime minister, the position he has held for six months.

The Congress of People's Deputies, dominated by ex-Communists elected before the Soviet collapse, rejected Gaidar's nomination on a secret-ballot vote of 486-467.

The result was 54 votes short of the majority needed for approval by the 1,041-member Congress.

Twenty-two ballots were invalid and the remaining 26 lawmakers did not vote.

Lawmakers reacted almost nonchalantly to the pivotal vote after nine days of sometimes violent debate in the Grand Kremlin Palace.

Although Yeltsin can reappoint Gaidar as acting prime minister, the rejection amounted to a resounding vote of no confidence in the president's reforms, which hard-liners say are impoverishing the nation.

As the architect of Russia's reforms, Gaidar has become the symbol of Yeltsin's determination to dismantle seven decades of Communist central planning and state ownership.

The 36-year-old economist also has become the No. 1 target for Yeltsin's opposition, which has grown in strength in recent months along with the free-market scourges of inflation and unemployment.

"We will continue to work calmly until the president decides differently," Gaidar told reporters outside the hall. "The Russian people (do not) treat the results of the Congress with deep approval."

The Cabinet was clearly concerned about the results. Ministers planned to meet after the session Wednesday, and the main parliamentary opposition



Yeltsin

bloc, Civic Union, also was huddling after the Congress adjourned.

Yeltsin's aides insist the president is empowered to keep Gaidar in the job for three months under current Russian law, extending the title he has held since June without parliamentary approval.

"We're going to do everything we can to make sure Gaidar is not the prime minister."

He has become completely bankrupt in the position," declared Mikhail Aksyuchits, a leader of the Russian Christian Democratic Party.

By rejecting Gaidar, the hard-liners also burned Yeltsin on a compromise he offered Tuesday under which the Congress would confirm Gaidar and the president would give up his right to appoint the ministers of defense, foreign affairs, security and interior without legislative approval.

The conservative majority likely will push for changes in those ministries and others. Hard-liner Sergei Baburin said lawmakers, in a last-ditch move, may try to saddle Yeltsin himself with the politically risky job of prime minister.

"If the president has trouble accepting alternate candidates, the Congress can order him to fulfill the duties," Baburin said.

Gaidar conceded to reporters that he would make "certain" changes in the Cabinet, but gave no details. In addition to Gaidar, the hard-liners have targeted Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, Minister of Foreign Economic Relations Pyotr Aven and Deputy Prime Minister Valery Makharadze.

Even if Gaidar's Cabinet survives, it may have trouble enforcing its decisions as a lame-duck administration.

And it will have little time to show better economic results before the next Congress in April.

The political landscape could shift by then. Reformers in the Democratic Russia movement have started collecting signatures to hold a referendum in March to disband the Congress.

"The opposition at least hasn't succeeded in halting reforms," Deputy Prime Minister Anatoly Chubais said.

"The president has chosen trench warfare tactics at this Congress, and one can hardly deny that it has brought real results. This is not the end, but the beginning."

Committee rejects university plan

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUSTIN — The Select Committee on Higher Education rejected a proposed recommendation Wednesday for a moratorium on university expansions and new professional schools.

"I think it sends a bad statement... when we're just going crazy building prisons with no restraints," said Sen. John Montford, Lubbock, of the proposed recommendation to the Legislature. It was deleted from the committee

report. Sen. Carlos Truan, D-Corpus Christi, argued against the moratorium as detrimental to South Texas, which he said has been "historically neglected" when it comes to higher education programs.

The Texas Supreme Court is considering whether the state's higher education system discriminates against Hispanics along the border.

But Montford, who is head of the Senate Finance Committee, also cautioned that money will be tight during the next legislative

session. "I think this is going to be the toughest session since I've been here," said Montford, who has been in the Senate since 1983.

Several committee members expressed concern about deleting the recommendation.

The proposal said the Legislature should not approve new professional schools or new higher education institutions — or elevation of schools to four-year status — until there is money to adequately fund existing institutions and support new ones.

Jury finds ex-CIA chief guilty; knew of Iran affair

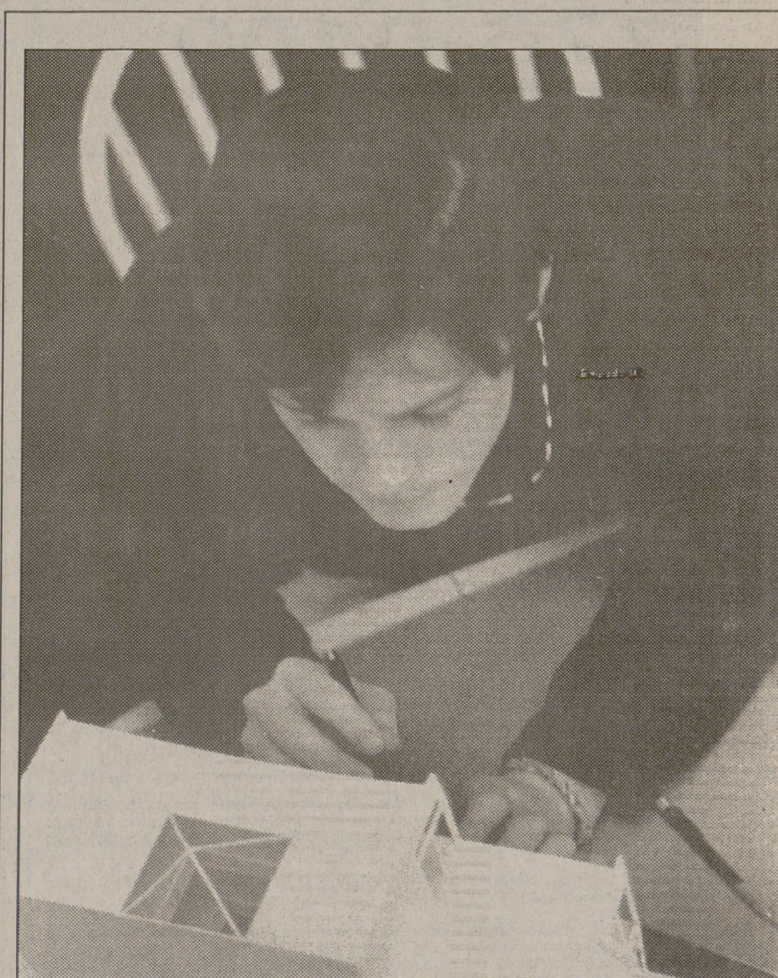
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Former CIA spy chief Clair E. George was convicted by a federal jury today of lying to Congress about his knowledge of the Iran-Contra affair, but was cleared of charges that he lied to a grand jury that investigated the scandal.

George was convicted on two of five counts in a trial that peeked into the CIA's operations as Oliver North's secret arms program for the Nicaraguan Contras unraveled in late 1986. It was the second trial on George's role in the Iran-Contra affair; the first ended in a mistrial. The jury found George guilty of two counts of lying to congressional committees that investigated the Iran-Contra affair in 1986.

But they acquitted him of three other charges that he lied to congressional committees that year, as well as two other counts that he lied to a grand jury that questioned him in 1991.

The verdict came on the 11th day of deliberations. George was found guilty of lying to the House Intelligence Committee about his knowledge of the secret network.



ELIZABETH D. CASTRO/Special to The Battalion

As the end of the semester draws to a close, junior environmental design major

David Marshall finds himself working diligently putting finishes touches on a model.

Advance

Free tickets to hear Bush available Friday

Free tickets for President Bush's foreign policy address on Tuesday at Texas A&M University will be available on a first-come, first-served basis beginning Friday, Dec. 11 at 8 a.m.

Individuals may obtain up to four tickets at either the MSC Box Office in the Rudder Tower lobby or at the Bryan-College Station Convention and Visitors' Bureau at 715 University Drive East (across from the Hilton Hotel.)

The box office will be open 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Friday; 9 a.m.-noon Saturday; 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday; and from 9 a.m. to presentation time on Tuesday.

The Convention and Visitors' Bureau will be open 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday.

Both locations will distribute tickets as long as they are available.

Everyone must have a ticket to be admitted.