

The Battalion

Vol. 92 No. 108 (8 pages)

1893 - A Century of Service to Texas A&M - 1993

Friday, March 5, 1993

U.S. sergeant faces charges for shooting 17-year-old Somali

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MOGADISHU, Somalia - The first court martial hearing of Operation Restore Hope began Thursday in a dusty, flyblown room where Sgt. Harry Conde faced charges for shooting a 17-year-old Somali who snatched his sunglasses.

Conde, a 13-year veteran born

and raised in San Juan, Puerto Rico, could be charged with the military equivalent of an aggravated assault for wounding the teen-ager as well as a bystander hit by buckshot from Conde's gun. If the court martial proceeds, he could face up to 10 years in prison.

A power generator provided a droning background to the testimony from nervous Marines in

the room at Mogadishu's airport. Their words frequently were blotted out by the roar of planes taking off and landing.

Capt. Chris Wesely, the investigating officer, sat behind a battered table. Only a few folding metal chairs were available, so some spectators sat on wooden drawers turned on their sides. Sheets of bare plywood served as a partition.

This was not the sharp-creased world of "A Few Good Men," the movie, starring Jack Nicholson and Demi Moore, about two Marines court-martialed for the death of another Marine.

There wasn't a dress-blue uniform in sight Thursday.

The Marines wore their battered camouflage fatigues with sleeves rolled up and sand-colored boots, standard issue of the

Somalia relief mission that began Dec. 9.

The courtroom Marines lacked cinematic bravado: They were nervous, uncomfortable men who had to be told often to speak up.

There's no dispute that Conde shot a youth, identified only as Omar, who grabbed the soldier's sunglasses through the window of a moving Humvee military vehicle that was returning to the air-

port.

At issue is whether Conde fired on the spur of the moment, fearing for his safety, or if the shot came as Omar was fleeing and was fired in revenge.

Omar, hit in the abdomen by several pellets, was treated at a Swedish field hospital but later vanished. No one is even sure he's still alive.

Aggies observe Lent, Ramadan to honor God

By BELINDA BLANCARTE

The Battalion

Many Texas A&M University Catholic and Muslim students are celebrating their traditional religious holidays despite the fast-pace of college life.

Catholic students observe the 40-day Lent season while Muslim students fast during the month of Ramadan.

Both holidays are celebrated to bring members of each faith closer to the god they worship through fasting and prayer.

Ash Wednesday, Feb. 24, began the Catholic Lenten period that continues through the day before Easter called Holy Saturday. The season is celebrated through fasting, prayer, study and worship.

Carol Riedel, president of the Catholic Student Association, said, "It's a time of reflection, to see what worldly things we depend on. We give them up and depend on God."

Lent does not include the six Sundays between Ash Wednesday and Easter, the Christian celebration of Jesus Christ's resurrection.

"Each Sunday is supposed to be like Easter, and we don't mourn Christ's death," Riedel said.

Magdalena Pala, Catholic Student Association adviser, said Lent is a special time for Catholic people.

"Lent is a preparation for the most significant time - Christ's death and the resurrection," she said.

Although fasting for Lent does not require people to stop eating or drinking, people observing it abstain from eating meat on Fridays and give up other luxuries.

"If you give up something you really enjoy, you are recognizing that you are a sinner and are giving that up for Christ," Pala said. "The death of Christ occurred on Friday, and meat was always considered a luxury."

Traditionally, people give up some material things during Lent

See Aggies/Page 3

Five heads are better than one



JOSEPH GREENSLADE/The Battalion

Gail Colby, a graduate student in anthropology from College Station, displays and discusses four skulls from the genus Homo in Anthropology 202

Thursday afternoon. The skulls are actually plaster castings made from real human skulls.

Former student hangs himself in Walton Hall

By GINA HOWARD

The Battalion

A former Texas A&M University student who was still living in a Northside residence hall, committed suicide by hanging himself in his room Wednesday night.

The former student, who was suspended after one semester, was found by his roommate in Walton Hall shortly after 11 p.m., said Bob Wiatt, director of University police. Wiatt declined to reveal the student's name.

Justice of the Peace Carolyn Hensarling pronounced the death a suicide early Thursday morning.

Freshman violated housing regulations by residing on campus after suspension

Wiatt said an autopsy was still conducted as a routine requirement for any death by unnatural cause.

The results of the autopsy will be released today.

"We do these things to be sure someone can't come out later and say it was a different cause of death," he said. "Parents sometimes have trouble thinking their child could kill themselves."

The former student had been suspended from the University after fall 1992 but had moved back

into Walton Hall in January.

Wiatt said he was likely pretending to be a student.

"Maybe he was just trying to act like everything was still OK," he said.

Bill Kibler, an associate director of student affairs, said former students have lived in the residence halls before even though they were no longer enrolled.

In many cases, students were seeking readmittance, but Kibler said this was not the case with the former student.

"He was well aware that he was not a student, and that he was not going to become one," Kibler said.

Student Affairs learned several days ago the former student was living in the residence hall against University regulations.

Kibler said his office was in the process of taking steps to resolve the situation.

Student counseling services will offer counsel to those Walton residents who request it.

Dr. Wade Birch, director of student counseling services, said two members of his counseling staff

See Student/Page 3

Gov. Richards names three new A&M regents

By GINA HOWARD

The Battalion

Gov. Ann Richards announced Thursday the appointment of three new regents to the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents.

M. Guadalupe Lopez Rangel of Corpus Christi, John H. Lindsey of Houston and T. Michael O'Connor of Victoria should begin serving immediately upon confirmation by the Texas Senate, said Dr. E. Dean Gage, Texas A&M University senior vice president and provost.

"They will probably begin serving before the next meeting in March," he said. "It depends on how quickly the Senate acts."

The new regents will replace William A. McKenzie of Dallas, Douglas R. DeCluitt of Waco and Wayne Showers of McAllen. Their terms expired Feb. 1.

Gage said he was pleased with the appointments whose terms will run until Feb. 1, 1999.

"I have the utmost respect for them," he said. "I believe they will provide the kind of leadership that Texas A&M needs. We are pleased to have them and think they will be extremely effective."

Richards said in a prepared release that the three regents are ready to handle the challenges of the A&M System.

"All three have a proven commitment to higher education in Texas, and they understand the budget constraints this state is operating under in 1993," she said.

Rangel, 43, has taken a leave of absence as an English instructor from the Corpus Christi State School. She earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Houston and a master's degree

See Regents/Page 3

21 student leaders demonstrate support for non-voting student regent position

By REAGON CLAMON

The Battalion

University student leaders from across the state testified before the state's higher education committee Wednesday night to help keep alive a bill that will create a non-voting student position on the Texas A&M Board of Regents.

Steve Beller, Texas A&M student body president, joined 20

other students to demonstrate their support for the bill. Beller also spoke before the committee.

Todd Sluder, chairman of Texas A&M University's Legislative Study Group, also attended the committee hearing and said the representatives seemed receptive.

"There were a few representatives who voiced concern," said

See Leaders/Page 4

FBI makes arrest for N.Y. bombing

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK - A man described as a follower of a radical Muslim cleric was arrested Thursday in last week's World Trade Center bombing when he coolly tried a third time to reclaim a rental deposit on a van wrecked in the blast.

Other suspects were being sought. Law enforcement sources said the bombing appeared to be a terrorist act.

Papers that the suspect presented the rental agency were covered with nitrates, a government source, speaking on condition of anonymity, told The Associated Press. Nitrates are found in some explosives; traces of nitrates were found at the blast site.

The arrest was a sudden, major break in the most notorious U.S. bombing in years. Just a day earlier, the FBI had said it could take months to crack the case.

Friday's enormous blast in a garage beneath the twin towers killed five people, injured more than 1,000, left one missing and sent fear through the nation's largest city. The 110-story towers - the world's second-tallest buildings, home to hundreds of

businesses with thousands of workers - aren't expected to reopen for a month.

WNBC-TV in New York identified the suspect as 26-year-old Salama Mohammed of Jersey City, N.J., but the station wasn't sure exactly how the name was spelled. His arraignment, initially scheduled for Thursday evening in New York City, was postponed.

The arrest came after an army of investigators spent the past week combing through piles of rubble at the blast site, fielding thousands of phone calls and pursuing scores of leads. Detectives systematically checked garage payment stubs and viewed videotapes of entering vehicles.

Investigators turned up charred pieces of the rental van around the perimeter of the blast site, indications that the van might have held the explosives, a source said on condition of anonymity.

The suspect had rented the van from a Ryder truck agent in Jersey City on Feb. 23 and returned less than two hours after the explosion Friday afternoon to say it had been stolen from him in Jersey

See FBI/Page 8

Corps conflict

Professors disagree about in-house investigation of sexual assault charges

By GINA HOWARD

The Battalion

Philosophy and political science professors offer different points of view about whether the Texas A&M Corps of Cadets has a conflict of interest in its internal investigation of sexual assault and sexual harassment charges.

Some professors say the Corps is properly handling an internal problem while others say it is investigating and judging on a matter in which it cannot be impartial.

Dr. Peter A. French, professor of philosophy and ethics at Trinity University, said an organization cannot serve as its own judge and jury and remain impartial.

"A standard principle of American justice, or any law, is the principle of judicial impartiality," he said. "This says you can't be a judge in your own case."

A female cadet, whose name has not been released, filed a complaint with the University Police Department Dec. 14, 1992, stating she had been sexually assaulted last April and sexually harassed this fall by a senior member of the Aggie Band. She did not file criminal charges.

Following the complaint, the Corps initiated its own investigation and hearing.

Dr. Judy Baer, associate profes-

sor of political science at A&M, said a conflict of interest may exist, but since the female cadet has not pressed charges, the investigation can stay within the Corps.

"These complaints go through University grievance procedures first and then if the victim is willing to bring a case, only then will the case necessarily go outside."

French said both the female cadet and the accused male cadet are at a disadvantage if the judge has an interest in the investigation's outcome.

"In any case, there must be separation between the litigants, which are the disputing parties, and the persons making the judgment," he said.

He said although the Corps may conduct a fair and impartial investigation, the appearance of bias exists.

"Because the Corps clearly has an interest in the outcome, this suggests suspicions of bias or lack of impartiality," he said.

However, Dr. Paul Thompson, professor of philosophy at A&M, said the Corps' investigation is not a source of bias.

The Corps has an internal review policy that makes judgments about cadets and Corps policies, he said.

"I'm not sure there's a conflict

See Corps/Page 2

Inside

SPORTS

- Baseball: 'BT' carrying big stick for A&M
- Volleyball: Corbelli chosen to replace Givens

Page 5

OPINION

- Abracadabra! Budget plan magic: Numbers don't lie but Clinton's smoke, mirrors do

Page 7