

THE BATTALION

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One week 'til Centerpole arrives



Guys from Aston Hall swamp logs at Bonfire site Wednesday afternoon. Centerpole will arrive at 4:03 p.m. on Oct. 21, and Push begins on Nov. 10. During Push, students work on Bonfire 24 hours a day until it burns on Nov. 24.

Tommy Hughs/The BATTALION

Haitian military chief offers to resign post

Cedras shows willingness to return power to Aristide, avoid sanctions

The Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti — The chief of Haiti's military promised Wednesday to step down only after lawmakers approve a general amnesty and said U.N. troops thwarted from landing in Haiti could enter if they left their automatic weapons behind.

Lt. Gen. Raoul Cedras also called President Clinton "very ill-informed" about efforts to restore democracy in the country.

Cedras spoke at a news conference where he signaled a willingness to return power to ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, but set conditions for the transition that were unlikely to be accepted by the United Nations. Cedras led the army in a September 1991 coup against Aristide.

His statement came as the United Nations prepared to hit Haiti with new economic sanctions next week unless military leaders live up to a U.N. plan to restore democracy.

"I am ready to resign for the good of the nation," Cedras said at army headquarters.

Asked whether that would be by Friday, he answered softly: "I hope."

Cedras had agreed in July to the U.N. plan, in which he would quit and Aristide would return on Oct. 30.

As part of the agreement, Aristide decreed an amnesty for officers accused of human-rights violations, but Parliament has not yet made the decree into law.

"Yesterday I heard President Clinton say that Aristide had fulfilled his part. President Clinton is very ill-informed," Cedras said.

He also said the U.N. plan guaranteed that any foreign troops arriving here as part of a U.N. force must carry only handguns, not the M-16 assault rifles that U.S. medics, military engineers and civil affairs specialists reportedly were to pack.

A senior U.N. official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said none of the 53 foreign military personnel or about 50 Canadian police trainers now in Haiti have M-16s.

The U.N. official said Cedras had created the M-16 issue to seek a way out of the international agreement.

Storms, tornados rip through Texas towns

The Associated Press

Four members of the same family were hospitalized Wednesday after a twister tore through their home and damaged or destroyed a dozen others in a Northwest Texas farming community.

Overnight storms Tuesday across the state spawned several other twisters along with large hail that briefly closed an interstate highway.

"We grabbed the mattress off the bed and headed for the bathroom and were going to get in the tub and put the mattress over us, except we didn't quite make it before it hit," said Rhonda Bibby of Duster, who suffered a broken finger and cuts when the twister tore through town.

"It hit pretty hard," she said.

Three homes were destroyed and 10 others heavily damaged when the tornado dipped down late Tuesday night in Duster, according to the Comanche County sheriff's office. A total of eight residents were taken to a hospital after they were hit by flying glass and other debris.

Two Duster residents were listed in serious condition, with two other members of the same family in stable condition at DeLeon Hospital, said Mike Hare, an administrator.

Hare said all suffered facial and other cuts in the twister. Four members of another family were treated for minor injuries and released.

The tornado also downed telephone and power lines and toppled trees shortly before 11 p.m. in the community 16 miles north of Comanche, said Sue Ormsby, a Comanche County dispatcher.

"Crews are out now there now assessing all the damage," Ormsby said. "We've had phone lines down and power out. There were trees over some roadways."

High winds in Gustine, 15 miles southeast of Comanche, damaged carport roofs and downed trees, Ormsby said. But she said the debris was later cleared and no roads remained closed. Comanche is 125 miles west of Fort Worth.

Another twister touched down northeast of Throckmorton, destroying a mobile home, three vehicles and several smaller buildings and killing at least four steers.

Damage from the Throckmorton County tornado was estimated at \$100,000 but no one was hurt, according to Don Balthrop, a sheriff's department dispatcher.

The Atascosa County sheriff's department reported another twister near Poteet in South Texas, with damage to mobile homes.

Near Graham, two tornadoes and large hail were reported but no one was hurt, Young County authorities said. The National Weather Service placed 48 Texas counties under a tornado watch overnight, with several funnel clouds spotted in the Panhandle.

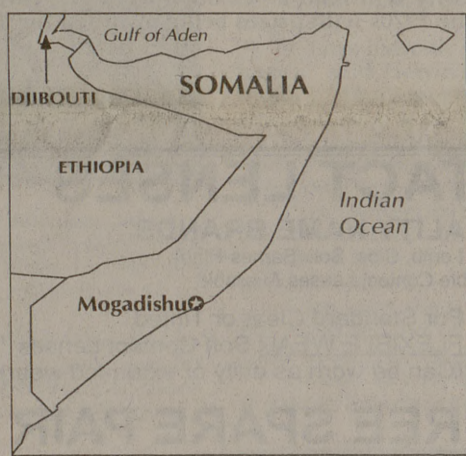
Miami's tornado warning siren was activated by county officials who did not receive any damage reports.

Dime -to softball-size hail pelted a wide area of the state. Interstate 20 was briefly closed in northeastern Eastland County when up to 2-inch diameter hail piled almost two feet deep on pavement, the weather service said.

U.S. demands Somalia release pilot

'We will not buy prisoners,' presidential envoy says

The Associated Press



Jennifer Pettey/The BATTALION

Some U.S. soldiers say that they want to stay in Somalia and complete their mission and Americans should understand that making peace costs lives. Others say they won't leave until they rescue captured Chief Warrant Officer Michael Durant.

"It seems everybody just wants us home. But us, as soldiers, as American soldiers, we can't leave until we have our own back, until we have our brother back."

-Ralph Scott, specialist Ranger

"Every one of us here, man, the whole platoon, would volunteer to go save him."

-Lt. Curtis Crumb, first platoon commander

The Associated Press

MOGADISHU, Somalia — A U.S. presidential envoy made it plain Wednesday that Washington wouldn't bargain for captured U.S. pilot Michael Durant, as his Somali captors retreated to consider the demand that he be freed at once.

"We will not buy prisoners," said Robert Oakley, the former U.S. ambassador to this Horn of Africa nation.

Oakley did not rule out a U.S. rescue mission to free Durant. But he hinted that Durant's ordeal was almost over.

Somali fighters seized the chief warrant officer after his helicopter was shot down during a fierce Oct. 3 battle that killed up to 18 U.S. soldiers.

Oakley met earlier with members of the Somali National Alliance, the clan-based political group holding Durant and a Nigerian peacekeeper.

The political group is loyal to warlord Mohamed Farrah Aidid, whose arrest is sought by the United Nations for killing 24 Pakistani peacekeepers in ambushes last June. Aidid's people are blamed for killing at least 121 peacekeepers.

Bush: U.S. policy may be 'messed up'

The Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO — Former President George Bush said Wednesday he worries the U.S. policy on military involvement in Somalia may be getting "messed up" by the Clinton administration.

"I vowed when I left the White House that I wasn't going to criticize our president because he's the president," Bush said, answering a pupil's question at Castle Hills Elementary School.

But Bush, asked what he would be doing if he were still president, said he would be handling the Somalia situation differently than Clinton.

"If you're going to put somebody else's

The Somali National Alliance met to discuss Oakley's request for Durant's freedom and was expected to make a statement shortly, alliance sources said.

The Alliance was reported split over freeing Durant and the Nigerian or insisting the United Nations first free 32 Somali prisoners, including four key Aidid aides.

Oakley, who arrived Sunday in quest of a peace settlement in Somalia, insisted Wednesday that Durant be freed without conditions. He said there would be no bargaining or exchange of prisoners to secure the release of Durant or the Nigerian private captured earlier.

He added, "I believe that the release of both prisoners would indeed be a very positive sign ... There are some optimistic indications out there." He would not elaborate.

The United States has recently sounded a more conciliatory tone toward Aidid, apparently in hopes of reaching a political settlement here.

A guerrilla war with Aidid's forces has kept about half the U.N. force bottled up in southern Mogadishu. The rest of Somalia is generally quiet and is recovering from the civil war and famine that killed an estimated 350,000 Somalis last year.

son or daughter into harm's way, into battle, you've got to know the answer to three questions: What's the mission, what are we supposed to do? ... Then you've got to know how they're going to get out of there," Bush said.

Bush initially deployed U.S. troops to Somalia to assist in humanitarian efforts. He said he believes his own approach was correct.

"In Somalia, we knew what the mission was. The mission was to go in and save lives. People were starving, and American troops went in there and they opened the supply lines and they took food in. They weren't fighting," Bush said.

National Teach-In honors efforts of graduate students

By Lisa Elliott

The BATTALION

Outdoor classes may be in store for some students today as Texas A&M University participates in the first annual National Teach-In, a day designated to honor graduate students for their contributions to the educational process.

Gerry Elphinstone, Teach-In coordinator, said the day will be marked by graduate students holding classes outdoors and wearing maroon and white to demonstrate the prominence of teaching assistants on campus.

"The purpose of the Teach-In is to recognize the contributions

T.A.s to conduct 'class on the grass'

of graduate students to the educational process at Texas A&M," he said.

Interim President E. Dean Gage; Dr. A. Benton Cocanougher, interim senior vice president and provost; and Dr. Robert Kennedy, vice president for research and associate provost for graduate studies will hold a barbecue lunch honoring graduate teaching assistants today in the MSC.

During the luncheon, Gage will make a special announcement concerning the re-establishment of a recognition program honoring teaching assistants.

Dan Robertson, director of the

office of graduate studies, said Texas A&M has more than 700 graduate students who teach classes, which is a small number in comparison to other universities.

The Teach-In is sponsored by Texas A&M University in cooperation with the Texas A&M Graduate Student Council and the National Teach-In.

Eric Laine, president of the Graduate Student Council, asked members of the Faculty Senate to recognize graduate students during Teach-In.

It is important for faculty members to verbally express their appreciation of teaching assistants as

well as make it easy for them to celebrate the day by providing them the opportunity to hold class outdoors, he said.

In a letter to department heads, Elphinstone said teaching outdoors should not interfere with the high-quality of instruction that normally occurs indoors, therefore chalkboards with wheels and other materials will be provided.

The "class on the grass" concept was developed at the University of Pennsylvania where graduate students teach their classes outside on a specified day in order to make their presence known to the campus community.

The Teach-In will occur nationwide for the first time this year.

Inside

Aggielife

•A&M student Aval Allen brings campus culture to life Page 3

SPORTS

•Lady Aggie Volleyball team defeats Houston Cougars, 4-1 Page 9

OPINION

•Editorial: Clinton waffles on international policies Page 13

WEATHER

•Thursday: clouds in the morning, sun after noon

•Forecast for Friday: mostly cloudy, highs in the 80s

TEXAS LOTTO

•Wednesday's winning Texas Lotto numbers: 1, 3, 6, 13, 22, 32