



THE BATTALION

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U.S. hostage freed from Somalia after 11 days

The Associated Press

No deal was made with Aidid for release of pilot Durant, Nigerian private

MOGADISHU, Somalia — U.S. helicopter pilot Michael Durant, battered but buoyant, returned to freedom Thursday on a stretcher after 11 days as a captive of a Somali warlord.

The United States said no deal was made for the release of Durant, captured in an Oct. 3 battle between U.N. troops and Mohamed Farrah Aidid's fighters, and of a Nigerian private captured in a Sept. 5 gunfight.

Aidid emerged with an enhanced stature as a result of the release, which he came out of hiding to announce at a news conference.

The freeing of Durant spurred

more calls from Congress for speeding up the departure of U.S. troops from Somalia, and President Clinton indicated he might be flexible on his March 31 deadline for withdrawal.

Durant, 32, clenched his teeth and his eyes teared as he was carried out on a stretcher from a walled compound and handed over to Red Cross representatives. He clutched a note from his wife and parents that the Red Cross gave him just before his release. He declined to speak to reporters.

Dr. John Holcomb of the 46th U.S. Army Field Hospital said the pilot suffered a broken leg, broken cheekbone and a fractured back,

but appeared to have been treated fairly well by his captors. The leg was in a splint, but had not been set and was quite painful, Holcomb said.

"Mike is fine, basically," Holcomb said, adding that Durant "cried a little bit."

He said most of Durant's injuries probably were sustained when a rocket-propelled grenade blasted the tail off his helicopter, although Durant said in an interview while he was in captivity that he had been badly beaten by a crowd and stripped naked after his capture.

Officials said Durant would be flown Friday to a U.S. military

base in Ramstein, Germany, and then taken to a military hospital in Landstuhl, where his wife, Lorrie, would join him.

Aidid has eluded capture since June despite a U.N. ransom of \$25,000.

Aidid called for the unconditional release of 32 Somalis detained by the United Nations, including three top aides and his chief arms supplier.

Clinton said it was "up to the U.N." whether Aidid's lieutenants would be released. "We made no deals to secure the release of Chief Warrant Officer Durant," Clinton said at a news conference in Washington.

Asked whether he still wanted Aidid's arrest, the president did not give a clear "yes" or "no." He said a U.N. resolution had called for the general's capture "and we ought to pursue it, (but) there may be other ways to do it and I'm open to that."

Clinton called Durant's release one of the "hopeful actions" he said indicated U.S. policy in Somalia was "moving in the right direction and making progress."

Aidid was confident enough to invite journalists to a news conference, a sign he no longer felt threatened by U.N. forces. He said he would remain in hiding.

Maj. David Stockwell, a U.N.

military spokesman, said the United Nations stopped actively searching for Aidid several days ago to encourage the diplomatic initiative.

Retired Adm. Jonathan Howe, the U.N. secretary-general's special representative to Somalia, said Thursday he could not meet Aidid's demand for assurances that the United Nations would not hunt him down.

"No, I can't give him an official assurance," Howe, an American, told a news conference in Mogadishu. "But we are focusing our efforts on a peaceful conclusion."

Howe called for talks with Aidid's Somali National Alliance, and said that U.N. relations with Aidid were like "sniffing dogs, circling each other."

Faculty criticized for preaching religion

Students find some professors' views offensive, inappropriate for classroom

By Michele Brinkmann

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Several students have criticized some Texas A&M professors for expressing their personal religious beliefs in the classroom.

Dr. Philip S. Noe, an associate electrical engineering professor, has been criticized by a student in his class for talking about religion in class.

"The first day of class Dr. Noe said something to the effect that if you accept Jesus, then everything will be fine," said the student, who asked not to be identified. "He is notorious for preaching in class."

"A lot of people in my class are going to other professors' lectures so they don't have to listen to him," he said.

However, Noe said, he has a right to say what he wants. "I think professors should be able to say what they please in class. I think our constitution protects us to do this," he said.

Though he finds Noe's comments offensive, the student said he would feel uncomfortable confronting him.

"I am afraid of how this might affect my grade," the student said. "After this class, I will definitely confront him."

However, Noe said he has an open door policy with his students. "My students are welcome to come to me with anything," he said.

"I don't preach on the podium," he said. "I let students know what I do, and I give testimony of the impact the Lord has had in my life. I do not hide the fact that I am a Christian."

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—Dr. Philip S. Noe, associate electrical engineering professor

Noe, who has never had a student complain to him, said the head of his department has talked to him about this before.

"It is a great concern of mine that I might offend a student. I have no desire to do this," Noe said. "I don't use class time to preach. I do make announcements at the beginning of class sometimes."

Janet Thomas, a senior Spanish major, has also had problems with a professor.

"I had a professor that would go into a tirade about Christians," she said. "He would say that people who believed in Christianity were stupid. It had absolutely nothing to do with the class."

"I have no problem with a professor expressing his beliefs, but it is wrong to say someone is a lesser person," she said.

Dr. Daniel E. Bornstein, an assistant history professor, teaches a western civilization class that includes the history of religion.

"I do not press any particular religious view," he said. "The only way I bring up religion in class is as an example of what it can feel like to be a religious minority at this campus."

He said he recognizes that religion is the most sensitive part of the course.

"A number of students say that I handle my class very fairly, and respectfully, some disagree," he said.

"On the course evaluations, I get an even mix of students who think I am overly kind and those who think I am overly harsh on the early Christians," he said. "I try to stick as close to the text as possible. People have to deal with evidence in the text, and a number of those statements are very challenging."

Shannon Smith, a junior theater arts and international studies major in Bornstein's class, said he made an inappropriate comment in an inappropriate manner at the beginning of the semester.

"Last week, he apologized for any offensive comments he might

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RUSSIAN DIGNITARIES VISIT BRAZOS COUNTY

Sister Cities program hosts Kazan officials

By Jacqueline Mason

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Lauren Donahue/THE BATTALION

Bronislav Fattakohov (left), a Russian dignitary from Kazan, exchanges gifts with Dr. Ben Crouch, an A&M sociology professor, at the University Center Galleries Thursday afternoon. Fattakohov and Crouch have been doing correspondence work for over a year. Fattakohov's interpreter, Erian Ramanaculov, stands between the two.

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Concessions committee proposes MSC vendor restrictions

By Kim Mc Guire

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A committee operating under the Department of Student Services has created a proposal restricting on-campus vendors from offering their products year-round in the foyer and main hallway of the MSC.

Under the proposal, vendors would take part in a "Back To School Student Services Fair" in the Rudder Tower Exhibit Hall. The fair would begin three days before

classes and end five days later.

The Concessions Committee, a committee overseeing all on-campus solicitation, created the proposal in an attempt to increase students' convenience in selecting services and to resolve problems with the current solicitation system.

Under the current system, vendors must fill out a concession permit and may offer their services during the first two weeks of class in the MSC main hallway and foyer. After the first two weeks, vendors must have a stu-

dent organization's sponsorship to solicit their sources on campus.

Dr. Bill Kibler, interim assistant vice president and chairman of the concessions committee, said the proposed student services fair will be more convenient for students when selecting services.

"If all the tables are set up in one place instead of being spread everywhere, it will be easier for students to locate and select the services in which they might be interested," Kibler said. "As it is right now, we have too many ta-

bles being set up and spread out everywhere."

Kibler said another factor determining the creation of the proposal was complaints from students about salesmen's behavior.

Dennis Busch, assistant manager of the University Center Complex and administrator of the Concessions Committee, said the onslaught of more competition has led to vendors practicing overaggressive sales techniques.

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Ross Volunteers announce new junior members

Drill Team is oldest student organization in Texas

By Jennifer Smith

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Seventy-two juniors in the Texas A&M University Corps of Cadets joined the Ross Volunteers Thursday night, becoming members of the top military honor drill team on campus and the oldest student organization in Texas.

The Ross Volunteers are the official color guard for the governor of Texas and represent A&M at official functions.

A banquet inducting the new members was held Thursday at the Clayton Williams Alumni Center, and each member was given a yellow and white chord to wear on their uniform. Marc Bertamini, executive officer of the

Ross Volunteers and adjutant of the Corps, said they try to pick cadets who possess the values the Ross Volunteers was founded on.

"We try to pick soldiers, statesmen and knightly gentlemen," Bertamini said.

This is the inscription on the statue of Lawrence Sullivan Ross, the namesake of the Ross Volunteers.

Josh Lechowick, Ross Volunteer company commander and a senior history major, said these traits make the members worthy of being Ross Volunteers.

"Every student should uphold these traits, but only 72 juniors out of each junior class are picked," Lechowick said.

To be eligible for the Ross Volunteers, a junior must have a 2.3 grade point average, have

no record of discipline problems and be in good standing with the University.

Applicants must complete a two-part essay listing their extra-curricular activities and honors and their reasons for wanting to become a Ross Volunteer.

The 72 senior members of the Ross Volunteers then read each application, and a secret ballot ballot is used to select the new members.

Bertamini said the applicants are not permitted to list which of the four major units of the Corps they belong to, so seniors will not be biased to pick someone in their unit.

"We try to keep the selection process as unbiased as possible," Bertamini said. "We look at all of the qualified juniors in the Corps, and then we select based on a ratio of all of those that are qualified in each major unit."

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- Aggies prepare for battle of the Brazos with Baylor Bears
- A&M soccer kicks off weekend of home games

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WEATHER

- Friday: morning clouds, otherwise partly cloudy, highs in the upper 80s
- Forecast for Saturday: some clouds, slight chance of thunderstorms
- Your Battalion extended forecast: mostly cloudy with a chance of rain

OPINION

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- Mail Call! MSC traditions and howdy letters

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