

Two U.S. soldiers wounded in assault

MOGADISHU, Somalia — Two U.S. Army Rangers were slightly wounded Tuesday in a pre-dawn airborne assault on a suspected command and control center of fugitive warlord Mohamed Farrah Aidid.

About 50 of the elite troops stormed a dozen buildings within a walled compound the size of a city block, engaging in several brief exchanges of gunfire with armed Somali guards.

Two Somalis escaped after being wounded and 17 others were captured and detained for questioning, said Capt. Tim McDavitt, a spokesman for the U.N.-led multinational force in Somalia.

The wounded soldiers were not identified, but McDavitt said one was treated and released from a military hospital and the other was expected to be released later in the day.

McDavitt and other officials would not say whether Aidid was believed to be in the compound at the time of the raid, but acknowledged that no high officials of the warlord's faction were among the detainees.

Troops have been trying to hunt

down Aidid since June, when his fighters killed 24 Pakistani soldiers in an ambush. On Sunday, seven Nigerian soldiers were killed in an ambush blamed on Aidid's forces.

Since the United Nations took over the humanitarian effort in Somalia from a U.S.-led military coalition in May, 47 peacekeepers have been killed in clashes — including four Americans — and 175 wounded.

The Somali National Alliance, the political wing of Aidid's clan-based militia, claimed five unarmed civilians were killed in the raid and 14 wounded.

That could not be independently confirmed. U.N. officials insisted that only adult males were found in the compound, most of them armed, when the rangers assaulted it from Blackhawk helicopters.

The compound is near an old military parade ground used by Aidid's faction to stage almost weekly anti-American and anti-United Nations demonstrations. U.N. troops have



come under small arms fire in the area on several occasions.

McDavitt said a number of small arms were confiscated in the raid, but declined to say whether any communications gear, documents or other evidence was found to support the suspicion the compound was a command center.

Pair convicted in burning

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — Two white laborers were convicted of all charges Tuesday in the burning of a black tourist who said they taunted him with racial slurs, doused him with gasoline and set him on fire.

Mark Kohut and Charles Rourke showed no reaction when the jury of five whites and one black found them guilty of attempted murder, kidnapping and robbery. The jury returned its decision after a 10-day trial and 12 hours of deliberations.

Burning victim Christopher Wilson sat looking straight ahead next to his mother, Enid Plummer, who looked upward as the first guilty verdict was read and nodded her head yes. She wiped away tears as Wilson whispered to her.

The two day laborers from Lakeland face life behind bars.

Gov. Lawton Chiles has monitored the trial because of fears it could spark racial conflict in the Tampa area, where the attack occurred. The case was moved to West Palm Beach after unsuccessful efforts to seat a jury in June amid heavy publicity in Tampa.

"I am satisfied that our judicial

Hate is a terrible thing and so are the crimes it spawns.

— Chiles
Florida governor

system worked and that justice has been done," Chiles said. "Hate is a terrible thing and so are the crimes it spawns."

Kohut and Rourke, both day laborers from Lakeland, face up to life in prison. Sentencing was set for Oct. 22.

Wilson made no comment as he left the courthouse, but his mother said, "We are very happy to know justice was served."

"As a black mother, I would like to say that never would I wish for anyone, whether black or white, to have to undergo the pain and agony and frustration we have been through and are still going through."

"We will survive," she added.

Elders confirmed as surgeon general

WASHINGTON — Dr. Joycelyn Elders, President Clinton's choice for surgeon general, was confirmed by the Senate Tuesday night, surmounting vigorous opposition from conservatives. The vote was 65 to 34.

Senators debated her nomination for more than six hours on the first day of their return from a summer recess.

Republicans had acknowledged

in advance of the vote that the former Arkansas health chief would be elevated to the position of surgeon general, the nation's No. 1 doctor.

Sen. Wendell Ford of Kentucky, the second-ranking Democrat in the leadership ranks, voted against Elders. Three other Democrats, including Sen. James Exon of Nebraska, joined 30 Republicans in opposing her confirmation. Thir-

teen Republicans voted for Elders.

"It is time to look forward to a time when all American children are planned and wanted, when all American children are immunized, when all American citizens have the security of quality health care, and when all dreaded diseases are a distant and haunting memory," said Elders, in a statement released by the Department of Health and Human Services.



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Grant boosts illiteracy battle

By Jody Holzworth
Staff Reporter

The U.S. Department of Education recently awarded a Nebraska group \$42,000 to help continue to wipe out illiteracy in the state.

The Nebraska State Literacy Resource Center, which opened last January and is partially funded by UNL, received the grant for another year of services. The center assists 26 literacy programs across the state as part of the Nebraska Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy.

Terri Laswell, the center's project coordinator, said the University of Nebraska-Lincoln paid the director's salary, provided office space at Nebraska Hall and gave the center in-kind contributions.

The grant, which kept the center from closing this year, could help thousands of Nebraskans to learn to read in a state where illiteracy is a bigger problem than most people realize, Laswell said.

"We tend to automatically assume everyone can read and that they have basic skills," she said. "Illiteracy is a bigger problem than anyone would estimate."

Laswell said 60,000 Nebraskans could not read or write, including several thousand people in Lincoln. The majority of those people are in lower income profiles, but illiteracy exists in all social backgrounds, she said.

"It continues to be a real stigma to be

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— Laswell
project coordinator, Nebraska State Literacy Resource Center

illiterate, and people in higher income profiles are more reluctant to come forward," Laswell said. "But I have no doubt it exists."

Laswell said learning to read was only a small part of literacy.

"Basic skills aren't enough," she said, "you need the ability for problem solving and critical thinking."

The funding for the center, she said, would help many learn these skills.

Laswell said the money would be spent on staff training and expansion of the center's library. Most importantly, she said, the funding would help improve state-wide community literacy programs.

Union arcade gets new carpet

By Jan Calinger
Staff Reporter

Students who wanted to spend spare change in the Nebraska Union's game room Tuesday had to wait until the arcade's old carpet was replaced.

Installers spent Tuesday morning and afternoon scraping the old carpet off the cement floor and laying new material.

Frank Kuhn, assistant director for the Nebraska Unions, said the carpet was replaced because it was heavily worn.

"We replaced it when we couldn't clean it any more," he said. "It had a lot of cigarette burns, Coke spills, ... It's a small, heavily used area."

Juan Santos, a carpet installer with Floors,

Inc., agreed the carpet was badly in need of repair.

"There were burns, all kinds of stuff," he said. "It was real dirty."

Kuhn said the ban on smoking in Nebraska Union would slow future wearing of the carpet.

While union workers try to take care of spills as soon as possible, Kuhn said, problems inherent in a crowded area made maintenance difficult.

"The best way to keep stains off is to go in right away, but that's almost impossible," he said. "We do maintenance in there, but carpet is carpet."

Kuhn said the carpet had to be replaced periodically because of damage. He said the total cost of the arcade carpet replacement was about \$800.