

IN BRIEF

Pressure forces Sudan to yield to mandate

UNITED NATIONS — Sudan's foreign minister pledged Thursday to allow more African troops and police to help end the conflict in Darfur, responding to international demands for quick action to protect civilians.

Mustafa Osman Ismail told

reporters after addressing a closed-door meeting of the Security Council that he discussed the issue of an expanded African Union force in Darfur with African Union officials.

His comments came after the Security Council approved a resolution authorizing a beefed-up African force with a broader mandate and a call Thursday by U.N. Human Rights Commissioner Louise Arbour for international police to work in tandem with Sudanese police.

When the new A.U. troops arrive, he said, "they're going to bring more than a thousand police together with the monitors in order to work with the Sudanese police officers for protection and checking and so on."

The Sudanese minister spoke to the council hours after members heard a report by two top human rights experts, Arbour and Juan Mendez, U.N. special adviser on genocide.

— The Associated Press

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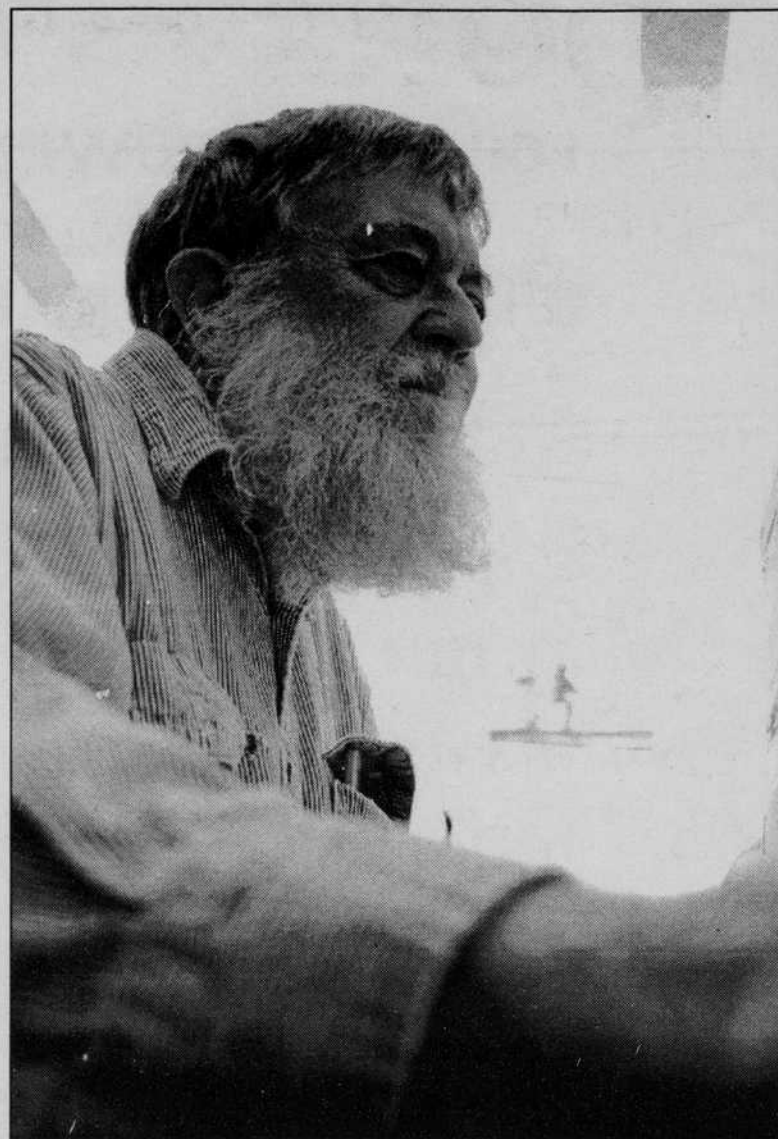
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TIM BOBOSKY | PHOTOGRAPHER

Since having his brain tumor removed in 1989, Richard Pickering has had to relearn skills such as using e-mail. Although he once taught for the University's art department, he said he considered himself more of a student than a professor.

Research: Federal agencies contribute majority of funds

Continued from page 1A

bringing in funds," he said, adding that "our younger faculty ... has been very successful in attracting external support as well."

Other factors contributing to last year's record-breaking figures include declining state funding, which currently makes up about 10 percent of total funding, and the increased budgets of certain federal agencies, Linton said.

Most of the money came from federal agencies, including the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the National Science Foundation.

The University's research projects range from a study that examines the motor skills of people with traumatic brain injuries to a program in which graduate students help teachers develop marine biology curricula. Many of the projects have a direct impact on the community, such as Sohlberg and Fickas' project.

Fickas and Sohlberg's team started the project three years ago when they received a \$1.5-million U.S. Department of Education grant. Their goal was to develop e-mail software that could be used by people who suffer from brain damage and have cognitive disabilities. These people often have severe short-term memory loss and vision problems.

"We needed a system where they wouldn't have to rely on their memory," Sohlberg said.

Graduate Research Fellow Jim Allen helped develop the interface for the program.

"One of the guiding principles in the design is that you can't have anything hidden," he said.

Fickas said that in developing the software, the main glitch was that it was too complicated for the test subjects to use.

"I have the same problem with the software I use," he said, somewhat comically. "It's much too

complicated."

The new interface features a "buddy list," complete with the names and photos of people the user can correspond with via e-mail. The only other item on the interface is the space where one can write the messages.

Such a program could have a huge impact on people with cognitive disorders because it can help prevent the social isolation that often comes with their disabilities, said Sohlberg.

"Because of disorders they may acquire, it sometimes happens that their friends drop out," she added. "Our theory is that it would keep them socially connected."

For Richard Pickering, this has most certainly been the case. Not only has he kept in touch with friends and family, he has also reconnected with his half brother, whom he had not spoken to in many years. He also keeps in touch with people from the project.

Pickering added that he enjoyed the challenge of learning to use the e-mail interface. Even with his disabilities, he seems to have maintained his voracious appetite for learning. He reminisced briefly about his days as a ceramics instructor.

"I always felt like I was one of my own students and there were twenty teachers," he said.

Pickering said he is optimistic about his progress and looks forward to learning how to use regular software someday.

"It seems important to me to see it as an opportunity, not as a frustration," he said.

Linton praised the project.

"It is a wonderful example of UO innovation that explores the applications of technology to enhance the quality of life, in this instance for those that may suffer difficulties in memory, attention, and communication," he said in an e-mail.

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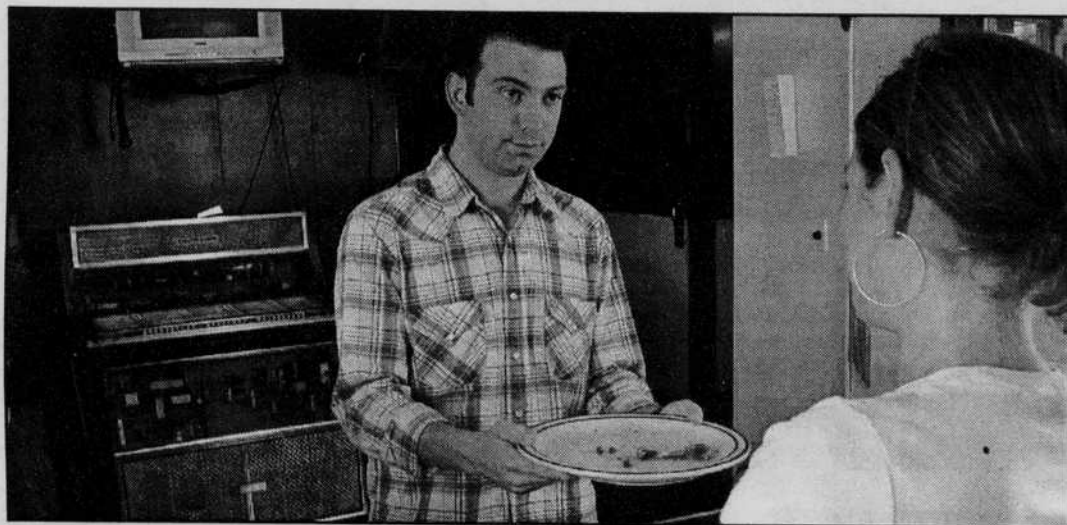
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College student tries to return uneaten food for partial refund



Andy Pernsteiner, above, cautiously approaches counter with chicken bone and a few peas.

By POLLY BROWN

Checking his dignity at the cash register, college student Andy Pernsteiner recently presented a local diner cashier with a plate of picked-over food, demanding money for the vittles he didn't ingest. The cashier—who wishes to remain anonymous—was flabbergasted by the whole incident. "It was both sick and sad at the same time," she said. Pernsteiner had a different take: "I didn't eat the bone, so why should I pay for it?" Pete Woychick—a childhood friend of Pernsteiner's—said it was monthly fees tacked on to his friend's checking account that drove him to the shameful act. "Andy has been pounded for months by fees on his

checking account. He's pathetic. I never really liked him when we were kids either." Woychick—who says he personally was financially saved by Washington Mutual's Free Checking Deluxe—thought his childhood friend needed to get his act together and visit a Washington Mutual Financial Center or go to wamu.com. Then he, too, could sign up for Free Checking—an account with optional Deluxe services like free online bill pay. "Until Andy decides to get Free Checking," said Woychick, "I'm never eating out with him again. I'm pretty sure I won't return his phone calls either. I might even change my name."

"I didn't eat the bone, so why should I pay for it?"

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