

Ags see inside D.C. operation

By PATTI SHOQUIST
Battalion Report
Letting off to Washington, D.C., over spring break is becoming a tradition for some Aggies. This month Political Forum sponsored its second annual Washington, D.C. Extravaganza, and 35 politically-minded Aggies went to see the federal government in action.
The operations of government were not all they saw, for most of the participants found time to sight-see, visit friends and relatives, attend musicals, job hunt, and spend many nights out on the town.

Nevertheless, everyone managed to head in the same direction each day to meet senators, congressmen, lobbyists and members of the press. Noted speakers included Sen. Lloyd Bentsen of Texas, Sen. William Proxmire of Wisconsin, Benjamin C. Bradlee, executive editor of the Washington Post, Thomas DeFrank, a Texas A&M University graduate, now White House correspondent for Newsweek, and U.S. Rep. Phil Gramm of College Station.

The students agreed that Washington is a dynamic city. Those who

also had gone on the trip last year said they saw how the city changes as fast as the issues.

When last year's group visited the Israeli Embassy in the midst of severe Middle East tension, they were under strict surveillance by members of the embassy. The students entered the embassy in alphabetical order and all were stripped of purses, cameras, coats and other belongings as they went through the door.

However, with the latest peace accords, this year's group merely had to show their ID's before entering the embassy. Three Lebanese students were admitted with no hassles.

On the other hand, some of the students said they were uneasy about going to the Soviet Embassy. They said they were suspicious that

they were being watched by hidden cameras.

As the students sat in a gold-trimmed room talking to a Soviet attache, someone kept opening and closing a door behind a floor-length curtain in the room. The students said they heard someone speaking Russian behind the curtain, but none of them understood what was said.

Though the group did not learn of any secrets at the Soviet Embassy, one student accidentally overheard some top secret information when he wandered into a closed congressional meeting. He said he sat in the room listening to some congressmen talk for about 20 minutes before anyone realized that he was there.

Finally, he was escorted out of the room by a U.S. representative,

and told to keep secret any information that he might have obtained from the meeting. The student admitted he really didn't understand what the congressmen were saying anyway.

Other students happened to be in the right place at the right time. One Aggie was walking down the street when she saw Sen. Alan Cranston of California. Since she is also from California she introduced herself to the senator. He took her on a brief but personal tour of the capitol.

"There's always someone from home to see in Washington," one student said. However, the Aggies were treated like foreigners by some people they met.

Peter Goldfarb, an aide to Sen.

Lowell Weicker of Connecticut, answered one of the students' questions by saying, "I'm sorry, will you repeat your question, I don't speak Southern." Senator Weicker announced his candidacy for the Republican presidential nomination on the day the students met with his aides.

One student said, "It was strange to turn on the television in the hotel room each night and see how close we were to the center of all the national news stories."

Most of the students said they were in awe of all they saw and did in Washington. They said there was never a dull moment, and barely enough time to stop and rest.

Most of them sacrificed sleep to enjoy Washington's night life. In

Georgetown they found everything from a down-home Texas style kicker joint to an exclusive French restaurant, where pictures of celebrities and politicians who often eat there decorate the lobby.

On the last night of the trip the Aggies celebrated by having a party in the hotel. Highlights of the party included a traditional Aggie yell practice and an awards ceremony for the participants of the trip.

One student was given the "Most Attentive" award for falling asleep at every meeting. Another student received the "Lost in State" award for missing the bus when the group left the State Department one day.

Finally, one Aggie Band member was given a special award for being the "World's Best Aggie Joke."

Change in rape law gets an OK

United Press International
AUSTIN, Texas — The Senate Jurisprudence Committee Tuesday approved 8-0 a bill that would permit prosecution of a husband who rapes his estranged wife.

Current Texas law protects a husband from being prosecuted for rape of his wife even if they are separated.

Sen. Gene Jones, D-Houston, originally proposed a law change to drop any distinction in rape statutes for married men but in the face of opposition agreed to rewrite his bill to continue an exemption from prosecution for married couples who are actually living together.

The rewritten version won committee approval without debate Monday.

"You can still rape your wife in Texas and not be prosecuted," said Sen. H. Tati Santiesteban, D-El Paso. "You can still rape your roommate and not be prosecuted."

Jones' bill drew opposition from the American Civil Liberties Union on grounds the measure will extend the death penalty to cases where a male rapes another male and the victim is killed.

Under current law, the offender is subject to a possible death sentence in a rape case only if the victim attacked and murdered is a female.

Jones' bill eliminates gender references in the statute and renames the offense an "attack" instead of a "rape."

"It's an attempt to take away the degradation and social shame attached to the word 'rape,'" Jones said. "It's the most unreported offense that we have in the penal code. Even those that are reported are prosecuted with some reluctance."

On the other side of the Capitol, a San Antonio prosecutor testified for a bill to remove age and gender limits from the state's fondling statutes.

The House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee approved the change in state law to make sexual contact with a child's breast a criminal offense. Current laws on child molesting apply only to females who are 10 years and older.

Rep. Ron Bird, D-San Antonio, said he introduced the bill after being told of a case in San Antonio in which a grand jury could not indict a man who allegedly fondled his stepdaughter's breasts because the girl was 9 years old.

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