

State / National

New prison bill passes house

United Press International
AUSTIN — House members tentatively approved with stunning speed Monday an emergency \$35 million appropriation to fund the immediate construction of three new prisons to accommodate 2,880 inmates now forced to sleep on the cell floor because of prison overcrowding.

"Most members get up there and talk for 15 minutes, and I just got up and said it and moved that it pass, and it went," said Rep. Rodney Tow, D-Conroe, the sponsor of the bill.

Tow admitted he was surprised that the bill passed its first test on voice vote without discussion or opposition. House members refused, however, to suspend constitutional rules to allow the bill to be finally passed Monday and sent to the Senate, meaning it will face

one more House vote on Wednesday.

Senators, meanwhile, gave their final approval to House changes in a bill designed to prevent persons who voluntarily quit their jobs or are fired for misconduct from collecting unemployment benefits until they find another job.

The bill by Sen. Roy Blake, D-Nacogdoches, would allow workers in such circumstances to collect the benefits only after they have found another job and worked for six weeks.

Blake initiated the bill after complaints an employee of an East Texas donut shop quit her job because she was "tired of working", and collected state unemployment benefits. The proposal now needs only the governor's signature to become law.

Blake said a series of House changes in the

bill had not done significant to harm to the original intent of the bill.

Senators also approved 30-0 and sent to the House a bill by Sen. Walter Mengden, R-Houston, attempting to end social promotions in public schools and requiring students in each grade level to meet a certain level of proficiency in order to be promoted.

The proposal still would permit school districts, however, to promote mentally handicapped students or those with problems speaking English even if they failed to meet the established standards of proficiency.

The prison construction plan tentatively approved by the House had been recommended by Gov. Bill Clements in an effort to meet demands of a federal court decision requiring Texas to relieve overcrowding in prisons.

Reagan tells county leaders of work-fare

United Press International
WASHINGTON — President Reagan told a group of county leaders today his administration is preparing legislation to require "able-bodied" welfare recipients to work for their benefits.

Reagan, who was to sign the revised fiscal 1982 budget later in the day, confirmed reports that the "work-fare" concept, first used on a limited scale during his terms as governor of California, is being developed on a national basis.

"One of the things that we're talking about right now is based on something we did in California in our welfare reforms," Reagan said in remarks to the National Association of Counties.

"As we give the states more authority in administering these programs by way of block grants, we are working on legislation right now that would further give flexibility to the states and allow them to require able-bodied welfare recipients to work in useful com-

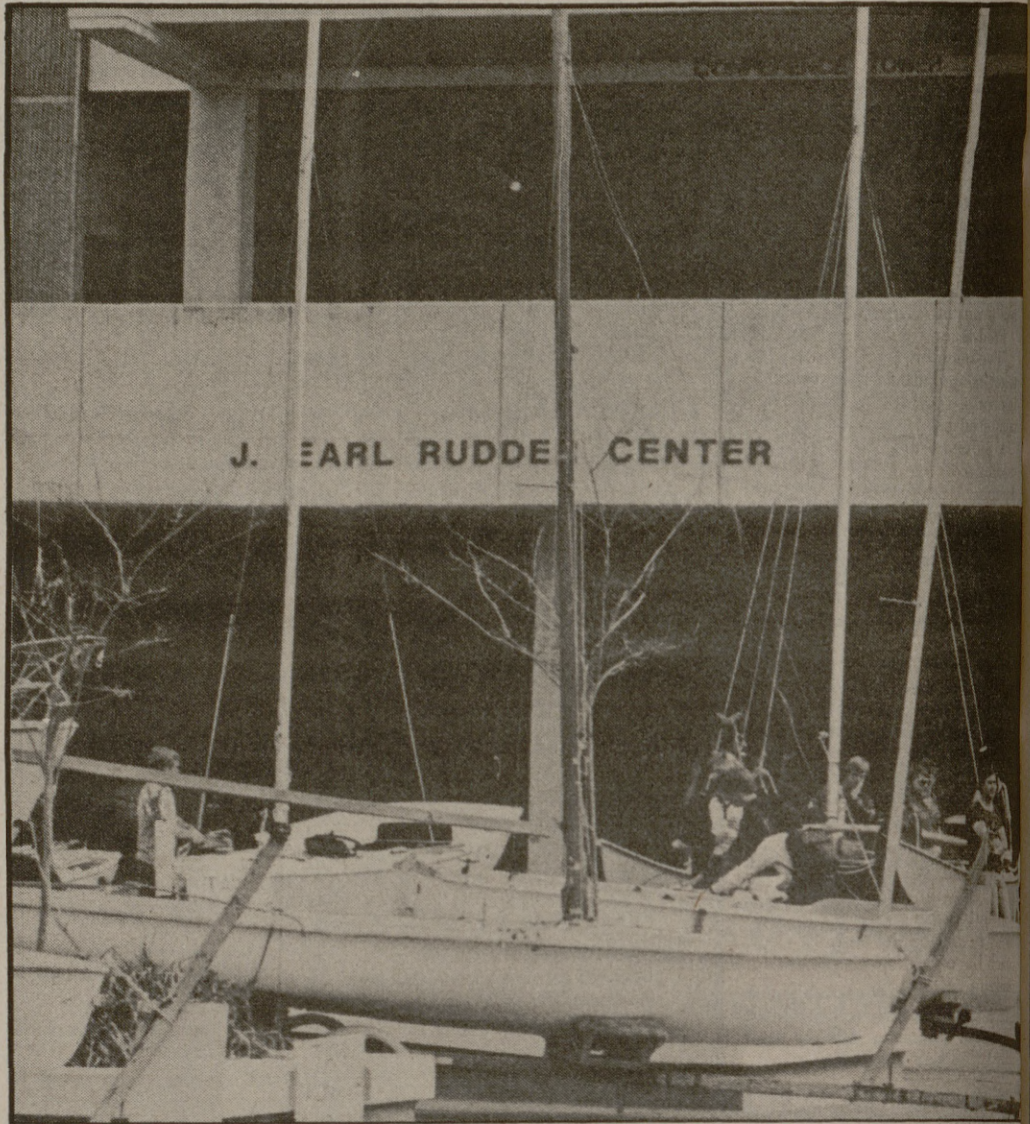
munity projects in return for their welfare grants."

Reagan also announced the formation of a "coordinating task force on federalism" to study ways to increase the flow of authority from the federal government to individual states.

A key ingredient in the idea is the administration's decision to disburse block grants instead of categorical grants. With block grants, discretion for spending is left up to the local government. Categorical grants are targeted by Washington for specific purposes.

The president assured the leaders, "We've tried to be fair and even-handed" in drafting the \$695.5 billion budget. In trimming some \$45 billion out of the proposed Carter fiscal 1982 budget, Reagan said, "We've created a special safety net to protect the truly needy."

The specifics of Reagan's budget will come out Tuesday, when the revised 1982 budget is sent to Congress.



Staff photo by Greg Gamm

Rudder Harbor

The TAMU Sailing Club prepares to hoist anchor by Rudder Fountain Monday afternoon. The club members will be displaying some of the 20 sailboats they own to attract new members. The Sailing Club will begin giving sailing lessons March 23. Membership in the club is open to faculty and students for a semester fee of \$20 dollars.

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Minister begs killer to give up to police

United Press International
ATLANTA — A minister who believes Atlanta's black child killer has called him at least seven times — the last time just hours after the 20th victim's body was found near his church — pleaded on television for his peaceful surrender.

The Rev. Earl Paulk appealed to the killer Sunday to turn himself in before the reign of terror ends in a "barrage of bullets."

"I'm interested in saying to him that if he wants to say something, he doesn't have to say it with a dead body," Paulk said.

Paulk described the caller as "very mature" and a "man who knows what he wants and is in control of himself. We sifted through many calls and there was a businesslike fashion in the way he spoke that lent some credibility."

During the televised church program on Sunday, which Gov. George Busbee proclaimed a statewide day of prayer for all children, Paulk told the killer he would be "protected" and "covered."

He said his last contact with the caller was last Friday, just after the body of 13-year-old Curtis Walker was found in the South River in DeKalb County, less than a quarter mile from Paulk's church, the Chapel Hill Harvester Church.

"He called saying he wanted to see if my telephone lines were tap-

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