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The Weather

Tomorrow	Today
High 86	High 87
Low 70	Low 72
Chance of rain 40%	Chance of rain 30%

'Bill collector' is at the door for U.S.

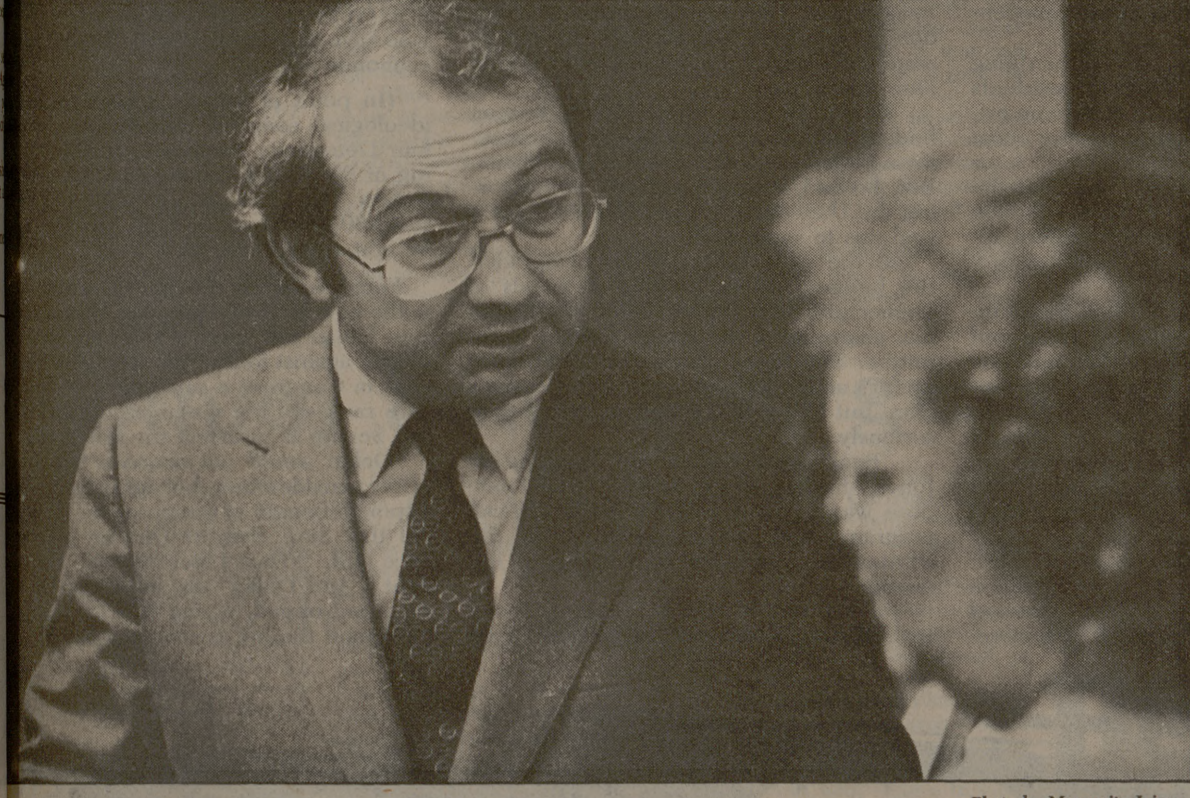


Photo by Margarita Jaime

Citizens speak with U.S. Congressman Phil Gramm after his speech at Texas A&M University Monday. Gramm centered his speech around the U.S.

budget saying "Reagan is right," and that it is time to put the federal government on a budget like everyone else.

By KITTY FRALEY
Battalion Reporter

America is at the end of a 30-year spending spree and the bill collector is at the door for the \$1 trillion federal debt, United States Congressman Phil Gramm said at Texas A&M University Monday.

"I don't know how much \$1 trillion dollars is but the figure is easier to manage when you understand what it means to the average American," said Gramm, D-Texas from the sixth district.

What it means is that each person entering the American labor field is \$40,000 in debt another American or someone living in a foreign country, he said.

The time has come for change, Gramm said. "The federal budget has only been balanced once since Dwight Eisenhower left office," he said, "and in the last decade the U.S. has lived with the most prolonged period of rapid price inflation in history."

The time has come to cut federal spending and put the federal government on a budget, he said.

Gramm said two ideas exist about the federal budget and both are extreme.

"The first view is that the government can cut \$50 billion in federal programs without anyone knowing it," he said. "The government can't be so inept and stupid that they think they can cut \$50 billion without affecting anyone."

Federal budget cuts will affect all Americans directly or indirectly, he said, and the sad thing is that the federal government will spend about \$59 billion more in 1981 than in 1980.

"The other view is that these cuts will burrow into the very fabric of American society and destroy the so-called social safety net," he said, "and that people will find themselves totally destitute as a result of these cuts."

The federal government spent \$101 billion in 1980 on programs that were targeted specifically for the poor.

Yet these programs were limited in terms of getting the benefits to the people who qualified, Gramm said.

Currently 5.85 million poverty families qualify for federal aid.

"If you were to divide the 5.85 million households into the

\$101 billion spent on poverty programs, you would find that last year the government spent \$17,305 on federal programs for each poverty family of four," Gramm said.

This tells him two things, he said. "The first is that we have not been exactly tight-fisted with our brothers," he said. "More importantly, it tells me that the money is not getting through to the people who are supposed to be getting the benefits."

"It's (the money) going to people who are not technically qualified, people who are lying and cheating to get these benefits," Gramm said.

Cutting the middleman out of poverty programs will enable the federal government to cut the programs and successfully administer them, he said.

"There are 20 million people in America who are dependent on state and federal governments for their livelihood," Gramm said. "It amazes me that another 10-15 million would be as well off or better off if they stopped working."

Deciding where to target the federal aid will eliminate this and make it easier for working Americans to be better off than those who aren't, he said.

"My compassion for people doesn't end with the poor and those out of work," Gramm said. "It also goes out to the people who are working, those people with aspirations for themselves and their children."

Budget numbers bore anyone except for economists to death, Gramm said, but two philosophies do exist in the numbers.

The first is to change the country and reverse 30 years of a clear and consistent movement towards a greater concentration of power and money in Washington, Gramm said.

The second is that there are a lot of conservative people in America who aren't happy with the way things are, he said, and rather than end certain programs the government is just cutting them.

When people finally look at the president's budget versus Congress' budget and get the facts straight in their heads then the president's budget will pass, he said.

"It'll pass because the people have finally come to the conclusion that something must be done to preserve this country," Gramm said.

6 bills still held in committee

Abortion bills await scheduling

Government to use collection agencies

By LAURA HATCH
Battalion Reporter

The State Legislature is contemplating eighteen bills on abortion but only two are out of committee. The two out of committee, House bills 1245 and 8, sponsored by Rep. Bill Ceverha of Dallas, are in the Calendar Committee and await scheduling before the House.

House Bill 1245 would require the doctor perform an abortion to:

1. Tell the woman about procedures being used and possible detrimental psychological and physiological effects.

2. Give the woman a form, drawn up by the Commissioner of Health, stating the various stages of fetal development and available alternatives to abortion.

3. Offer two alternatives listed as services to assist the woman during pregnancy and adoption.)

4. Sign a form, carrying the woman's signature, saying the first two requirements were carried out.

The bill was approved by the State Affairs Committee 10-3.

The other bill awaiting scheduling would require doctors living at home to receive parental consent to perform an abortion. The bill does allow the minor to go to an abortion clinic for permission to receive an abortion if the parents deny consent. Those living away from home and in charge of their own financial affairs are not required to get consent.

The bill was approved by the States Affairs Committee 11-2.

Seeking consent from parents for an abortion is already advised, Sally Miller of Planned Parenthood of Brazos Valley said. "We've not been mandated by law to do so."

It's also reasonable for doctors to tell their patient of the abortion procedures, she said, and most already do. To require these things is an infringement of the rights of the women, she said.

Senate Bill 249, one of the 16 still in committee, relates to certain abortions in tax supported facilities. Originally, this bill, sponsored by Sen. Walter Mengden, prohibited abortion in tax supported facilities. This would include hospitals and clinics receiving any public funds.

A substitution was made that instead prohibits the use of public funds for certain abortions. This would make it legal to perform an abortion in a public hospital or clinic as long as it is paid for with private funds. In the cases of incest and rape, public funds could be used.

Burt Mires, a spokesman for Mengden, said the jurisprudence committee was presented with six of the bills on abortion. Sen. Lloyd Doggett of Austin moved to send all the bills to subcommittee and was appointed to that subcommittee, Mires said.

Texas currently does not have any state laws governing abortion and hospitals are not required to keep records on them.

Parental consent is not required for a minor to have an abortion either, said Darryl Pool, legislative director of Texas Prolife, an anti-abortion group, and yet they are required to have parental consent before getting their ears pierced. Abortion is the only medical procedure that does not require consent of the parent, he said.

Just about every state has legislation or laws similar to the bills before this legislature, Pool said.

"In our view there is no reason for any abortion whether they're married or not," Pool said. The child is alive from the time of conception, he said, and that child has a right to be protected by law.

The only time a life can legally be taken is in the case of self-defense, he said, so if the woman's life is endangered by having the baby it would be justified.

Rape and incest, Pool said, account for less than one percent of the total number of abortions nationwide, so those cases a very isolated.

The League of Women Voters has not taken a stand on the issue yet, Terry Hale, Houston chapter secretary, said.

Jeanne Saletan, coordinator for the Women's Lobby Alliance '81, said they are opposed to all the abortion bills in the Legislature. Those who would be faced with the problem might then turn to other alternatives such as self-induced abortion or an illegal abortion, she said.

"She should have a choice," Saletan said. Women make the decision to have an abortion for reasons personal to them, she said, they shouldn't try to put it into a law.

United Press International
WASHINGTON — The public owes the federal government \$139 billion, and the government is going to use private collection agencies to get some of it back.

Under new rules, the Justice Department said Monday federal agencies can hire private collection agencies to work on uncollectable debts.

The new rule went into effect Friday after Attorney General William French Smith and the comptroller general signed an amendment to the Federal Claims Collections Standards.

Until now, the General Accounting Office considered such activities illegal, except in certain areas where Congress provided specific authority to use collection agencies, such as with debts owed the Department of Education.

But the Justice Department said the GAO reconsidered its position because of mounting losses.

With the amendment, the rule allows such action and recommends it where federal officials consider it appropriate, the Justice Department said.

"This amendment is an essential step in increasing the efficiency of the government's debt collection efforts," Smith said. "The use of collection agencies should assist significantly in reducing losses and also reducing the volume of referrals to the Department of Justice for collection in the courts."

At the start of fiscal 1981, federal agencies reported to the GAO \$139 billion was owed to the government, and a \$7.6 billion loss was expected. That loss would represent a 49 percent increase in the last two years.

With the new rule providing a mechanism for using private sources, such as collection agencies, to supplement federal collection programs, a reduction in losses is expected.

"Use of such contractors where cost-effective and otherwise practical should reduce such losses, and reduce the volume of referrals to the Department of Justice for litigation," the rule said. Under the rule, contractors may be used to supplement, but not replace, the basic collection program of a federal agency. The authority to resolve disputes and initiate legal action remains with the agency.

The private contractor also will be subject to the Privacy Act.

Current federal claims collection activities involve routine administrative actions such as locating debtors, arranging for repayment schedules and billing and posting payments, which could be provided by private sources, according to the rules.

Window platforms under scrutiny, may be banned

By BETH GIBSON
Battalion Reporter

Window platforms — they provide Texas A&M dormitory students with opportunities to grow their plants, brew their solar tea and tan their bodies.

But these homemade platforms, wooden boards held outside dorm windows by wire or rope, have been under considerable scrutiny by University officials for the past three years, Ron Sasse, associate director of Student Affairs, said. In the beginning, restrictions were put on the platforms for safety, but now University officials are thinking about eliminating the platforms altogether, Sasse said.

"No official decision has been made yet, but that's the way things are leaning," Sasse said.

Sasse said the University first became concerned about the window platforms three years ago because students were building them without concerns for safety precautions.

"They were ridiculous," he said. Some were so big that you could get a party of four out there and play dominoes."

Sasse said officials agreed at first to set safety guidelines for building the platforms. The University's loft construction policy says a student may build a platform outside his window provided it extends no more than two feet, is no taller than the window and is securely attached. Cooking is forbidden on the platforms.

But Roger Ferguson, assistant coordinator in the North Area office, said the platforms are supposed to hold plants and not the residents themselves.

"Admittedly, the policy is vague," he said. "But I won't be surprised to see it a little more stiffly defined next semester."

However, Sasse said dorm students don't cooperate with the present building restrictions and the University can't go around checking every dimension of every platform built.

"So, we're fixing to draft up something and eliminate the platforms," he said.

Sasse said the potentially dangerous situation created by the platforms is "getting us into a crack, liability-wise."

In fact, Col. James Woodall, Corps commandant, said last fall a cadet fell

In the beginning, restrictions were put on the platforms for safety, but now University officials are thinking about eliminating the platforms altogether.

out of a third story Corps dorm window onto his back while installing a platform.

"I think it's a dangerous practice," he said. "I'm surprised the University has tolerated it this long."

"Not only do people fall out of windows, but things can fall and hit people on the head."

Dr. Carolyn Adair, director of student activities, agreed: "There's no way to make sure they're built right. If you're out there one morning messing with a plant and it falls off, it could hit somebody in the head."

Sasse said the best way to avoid lawsuits stemming from accidents with the platforms was to draw up a regulation outlawing the practice.

"Before we get sued, we're going to zap 'em," he said.

Ferguson said the platform-building problem is predominantly with the Corps-style dorms — corridor-style with window sashes and casements.

Residents in the Commons can build small platforms for plants, but the small window openings do not provide enough room for sunbathing.

Modular dorms are not involved — the bottom 16 inches of the windows that open to the outside would sweep anything on a platform over the edge. Nor are the balcony-style dorms involved — sunbathing platforms would be useless for anything but shadow tans under the overhanging balconies.

If window platforms are outlawed in general, students would be ill-advised to try the dorm roofs as an alternative for catching the sun's rays.

University Rules and Regulations say unauthorized entry onto University property, including dorm roofs, will result in disciplinary action.

Ferguson said maintenance does not like for students to be up on the roofs, which are made of a special kind of foam and can be easily damaged.

Ferguson said this generally has not been a problem.

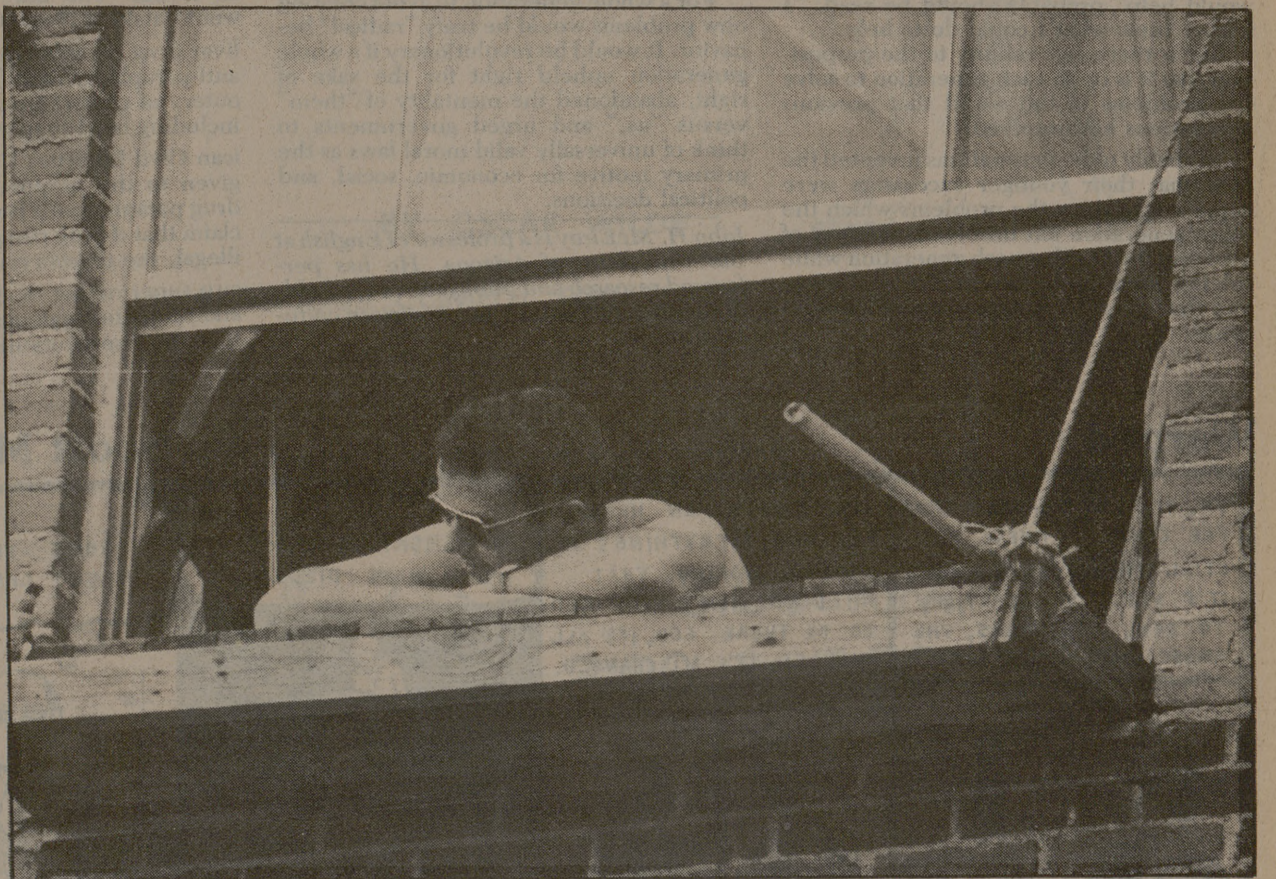


Photo by Margarita Jaime

A Texas A&M student takes a nap on a homemade ledge of his dorm. These window platforms have

been under investigation by University officials and may be banned for safety reasons.