

# National

## Congress works toward Friday budget deadline

WASHINGTON — House committees have approved reductions in food stamps, housing and postal subsidies in a flurry of activity aimed at meeting Friday's deadline for deep budget cuts. Democratic hearts were often not in it, and Republicans generally were dissatisfied with the results. Sometimes, they claimed the cuts were not real. The actions came Tuesday, as congressional panels worked to meet a self-imposed June 12 deadline for \$35 billion in budget cuts. The reductions were ordered by a fiscal 1982 budget resolution passed last month.

Several House and Senate panels planned to meet today for more cutting, including the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, the House Education and Labor Committee and the Senate Banking Committee. Rep. Phil Gramm, D-Texas, not satisfied the committee work will achieve the austerity called for in the budget, said he was working on an alternative package of reductions. He apparently hoped to take the package to the House floor and tap the same coalition of Republicans and Southern Democrats

who passed a modified version of President Reagan's budget over the objections of Democratic leaders. Gramm co-sponsored last month's budget measure along with Rep. Delbert Latta, R-Ohio. On Tuesday, the House Post Office Committee offered a half-hearted proposal to close or merge thousands of post offices. It also suggested a delay in the nine-digit ZIP code. But the panel made clear it was offering the proposals only out of technical compliance with the budget resolution, and urged the full House to reject them.

The proposals were contained in a resolution that passed the committee on a 19-6 vote, with all Republicans opposed. Among them was one directing the Postal Service to devise a plan to close or consolidate about 10,000 small post offices to achieve \$100 million in savings. On another party-line vote, 26-19, the committee approved spending reductions recommended by its Democratic majority. They included \$642 million in actual outlay reductions for fiscal 1982. But more significant was a \$13.2 billion cut in spending au-

thority for government agencies to enter housing contracts and make loans and commitments for foreign aid and trade assistance. Most of the spending authority cut — \$9.1 billion — came from housing funds. Also, the House Agriculture Committee approved \$2.5 billion in cuts in Agriculture Department programs for this year, including a \$1.46 billion reduction in food stamp spending approved earlier. A large chunk of the reduction — \$449 million — was achieved simply by claiming savings already made when Congress approved a

lower minimum level for dairy price supports. The price supports were reduced in the earlier bill from 80 percent of parity to 75 percent. The Republican-controlled Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee was to have met Tuesday on the budget, but postponed its session for a day at the request of Democrats wanting more time to plot strategy.

## Committee approves federal death penalty

WASHINGTON — The Republican-dominated Senate Judiciary Committee has sent to the floor a sweeping bill to reinstate the federal death penalty and make certain acts of treason or espionage capital crimes even when no lives have been taken. The bill, approved late Tuesday by a 13-5 vote, also would set the death penalty for attempts on the life of the president and for terrorist acts that result in a death. The bill would allow the death sentence for acts of espionage or treason, even if no death occurs, if the defendant knowingly risked a life or substantially damaged national security.

Acts of espionage or treason directed against nuclear weapons, military spacecraft, war plans, intelligence communications, major weapons systems or defense strategy would be "aggravating circumstances" punishable by death. There has been no valid federal death penalty since the Supreme Court in 1972 struck down capital punishment statutes not containing provisions for eliminating racial prejudice or other biases. In a 5-4 decision June 29, 1972, the court ruled the death penalty as usually enforced in the United States violated the Eighth Amendment prohibition against cruel and unusual punishment.

Congress has enacted a death penalty for hijackings that result in death but has not replaced the invalidated federal death penalty. Thirty-five states have passed their own death penalty laws. The committee bill is modeled after a Georgia statute that calls for a separate hearing on punishment. It adopted an amendment expressly forbidding racial or sex bias in those hearings. Committee sources were unsure when the Senate would take up the bill, but most believe the Republican leadership will insist the administration's budget and tax-cut proposals come first. The committee approved the bill after a long wrangle over how

to trim \$60 million from the Justice Department's budget to conform with spending limits approved by both houses. As the session ended, Sen. Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, said he was concerned about how the public would view the committee's priorities, since it debated budget cuts for three hours and the death penalty for 20 minutes. "The public will conclude we really don't have any priority," Grassley said. But Chairman Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., a strong advocate of the death penalty, said the issue

has been the focus of numerous hearings. "Two-thirds of the people favor the death penalty," he added. Casting opposition votes (some by proxy) were Sen. Charles Mathias, R-Md., Senate Democratic leader Robert Byrd of West Virginia and Democratic Sens. Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts, Howard Metzenbaum of Ohio and Patrick Leahy of Vermont. The committee voted 9-4 to include assassination attempts against the president after debating whether such a move would be constitutional.

## Weapons cutoff is unlikely, White House spokesman says

WASHINGTON — The Reagan administration has until Friday to decide whether to suspend weapons deliveries to Israel for using American warplanes in its pinpoint destruction of Iraq's major nuclear installation. Four more F-16s — the aircraft that bombed the Iraqi facility Sunday — are scheduled for delivery to Israel Friday. And equipment worth hundreds of millions of dollars is in the pipeline for future delivery, the Pentagon said. Pentagon spokesman Henry Catto said Tuesday it was "too early to tell" whether the F-16s will be delivered. "I can't rule it in and I can't rule it out," he said. President Reagan met for 75 minutes with his chief foreign policy advisers Tuesday to discuss whether Israel violated U.S. law by using American planes offensively or whether the bombing might be construed as defensive in nature.

Acting White House press secretary Larry Speakes declined to say whether any decision had been reached. Congress has the final word on the weapons delivery, but a cutoff was deemed unlikely. "I don't see us taking a position as an administration on a cutoff of arms," a White House spokesman said. Catto said Reagan could continue sales even if he determined Israel violated the law. Israel's pilotting eight F-16 fighter-bombers and six F-15 fighters traversed 600 miles of hostile Arab territory and entered Iraq through Saudi Arabian airspace to drop 2,000-pound bombs on the nuclear

facility 12 miles east of Baghdad. The United States condemned the air strike. Secretary of State Alexander Haig said Israel "possibly" violated U.S. law but declined to comment on whether there would be an aid stoppage. "I'm not going to get into that at this point," he said. Catto said the attack marked "a new dimension" in Israeli combat activity in the region. It was Israel's first attack on Iraq. The single-engine F-16s, camouflaged in earth, sand and blue-green colors for use as attack aircraft, dropped the bombs while the more powerful twin-engine F-15s, colored blue-gray, flew cover against Iraqi interceptors, Catto said. U.S. satellite photos showed extensive damage to the installation with every bomb scoring a direct hit, administration sources said. "There was not one crater around that place. Every bomb went where it was supposed to go," one source said. Catto expressed admiration for the "technical precision" demonstrated by the Israelis. "But we strongly condemn the act," he added quickly. The State and Defense departments and the National Security Council were investigating whether Israel violated the 1976 Arms Export Control Act by using U.S. weapons in an offensive capacity. The Reagan administration and its predecessors have accepted Israel's arguments that its repeated raids against Palestinian guerrillas in Lebanon are defensive in nature and thus do not violate the act. The administration will forward its findings to Congress.

## Soviet married by proxy

BUTTE, Mont. — It was a subdued wedding for the stepson of exiled Soviet dissident Andrei Sakharov, because his bride remains in Russia. The marriage was conducted Tuesday by proxy in hopes that Liza Alexeyeva, 24, would finally be allowed to leave for the United States. She has been denied permission to emigrate. Alexey Semyonov, 24, stood Tuesday with proxy Ed Kline before District Judge Arnold Olsen. Court records show the bride gave Kline power of attorney Feb. 3 in documents witnessed by Jane Leahy Miller, vice consul of the United States in Moscow. Chief Deputy Clerk of Court Lori Maloney said the ceremony "lasted maybe 10 or 12 minutes at the most." About 25 persons watched. Montana was chosen for the wedding because it is one of the few places in the United States to recognize marriage by proxy, Miss Maloney said.

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