

# National

## Warped

By Scott McCullar



## White House is optimistic

# Budget negotiations go on

WASHINGTON — The White House is optimistic about negotiations on a new federal spending bill, but will not rule out another government shutdown to combat "budget busting" by Congress, a spokesman said Tuesday.

"We get a feeling in our meetings on (Capitol) Hill that there is reason for a good feeling about it," Larry Speakes, deputy press secretary, told reporters. "We hope that we will be able to work it out to the satisfaction of all concerned to avoid any midnight madness with the budget on Dec. 15."

But, he added: "If the bill is unacceptable, we cannot take

business as usual from the Hill. We've got to hold it down."

President Reagan "feels strongly enough about budget-busting bills" to close down the government again if his demand for fiscal restraint is not met, Speakes said.

Reagan ordered a partial shutdown of government agencies last week after vetoing an emergency bill needed to restore spending authority that ran out with the expiration of an earlier budget resolution.

Reagan labeled the \$428 billion measure "budget busting."

Speakes also said Reagan does not share the view of Sen. Paul Laxalt, R-N.M., his closest ally on

Capitol Hill, that social programs may be cut too deeply if control over them is shifted to the states.

After a speech to the National League of Cities, Laxalt told reporters the states may have been handed too much responsibility and not enough funding under Reagan's "New Federalism" program, the Washington Post reported.

"I don't think the president agrees," Speakes said.

GOP congressional leaders met with administration officials Monday to discuss ways of averting another dramatic rejection of their work on the order of last week's

veto. The work continued Tuesday at the staff level.

House Speaker Thomas O'Neill said the Republicans had excluded Democrats from the talks because "the art of compromise is not in their lexicon."

The government is being funded by stopgap resolutions because Congress has failed to pass its 13 regular appropriations bills on time.

After the Reagan veto, Congress passed a simple resolution continuing spending at the previous annual level of \$400 billion. That resolution expires Dec. 15 and another will be required to keep the government in business.

# Senate delays expulsion trial

WASHINGTON — Senate Republican leader Howard Baker Tuesday postponed the expulsion trial of Sen. Harrison Williams, D-N.J., until next year. Williams' conviction could make him the first to be ousted from the Senate since the Civil War.

Baker said that he was granting the delay at the request of Sen. Daniel Inouye, D-Hawaii, Williams' self-appointed defender, who pledged to bring the case before the Senate early in 1982.

Debate on the expulsion of Williams, who has been in the Senate 23 years, was to have begun Thursday. But in a brief exchange Tuesday, Inouye asked for the delay, and said he needed time to prepare Williams' defense.

Baker said that he and Democratic leader Robert Byrd had previously resisted any more delays in Williams' trial, saying that the

Senate had a "special and powerful reason to act on this constitutional duty."

But Baker said Inouye's request was "entirely different" and added "no one wishes to see the senator from New Jersey without counsel or defense on the floor."

With Byrd's agreement, Baker said he is postponing the trial until the Senate reconvenes in January, and said he will ask the Senate to make the Williams case "one of the earliest if not the earliest item of business."

The postponement also delays possible expulsion of Williams until after the inauguration of the new Republican governor in New Jersey, Thomas Kean, who could tap a member of his own party to fill Williams' office.

Baker said Ethics Committee Chairman Malcolm Wallop, R-Wyo., and Sen. Howell Heflin, D-Ala., were prepared to begin

presenting the case against Williams on Thursday as scheduled.

Baker made the announcement during an unusually solemn floor session in which he and Byrd exchanged compliments on the way the Williams case has been handled.

Byrd said that while the delay may appear to be in the Republicans' political interests, Baker had acted in a nonpartisan way.

"I compliment the majority leader," Byrd said. "(Baker) has not rushed the Senate to judgment, has not pressed it at all. He has not sought partisan gain."

Williams sought a postponement to provide what he termed new evidence of government wrongdoing in his and other Abscam cases — including alleged proof of perjury by FBI agents in his case and in other Abscam cases.

Inouye said that Williams' con-

viction on bribery and conspiracy charges is not final. U.S. District Judge George Pratt, who presided over the trial last spring, is considering a motion to set aside the verdict on grounds that prosecutors violated Williams' due process rights.

# Alcoholism wins court case delay

AUSTIN — An attorney won a delay in his client's murder trial by arguing that his own alcoholism had impaired his ability to defend the man, who is accused of drowning a woman in a mop bucket.

District Judge Tom Blackwell granted the delay Monday after attorney David Spencer, 38, testified in court that he was unprepared to render effective counsel. Spencer asked that his client, Steven Glenn Payne, be given more time to hire a new lawyer or to allow Spencer to prepare his defense.

Spencer, a former assistant district attorney, said he has been sober since Nov. 15, but he said

his drinking before that date had left him unable to adequately prepare a defense.

Payne, 23, was charged with murder in the March 7 death of Carol Kissman Rosebaum, a nightclub bookkeeper. A beer delivery man found the woman with her head in a mop bucket of water and her hands bound behind her back. Payne was night manager of the club where the woman worked.

Spencer and Payne embraced after Monday's court hearing. "It was something I had to do for my own peace of mind, and I hope Steven's family can forgive me," Spencer said.

# Wood slightly drunk, coroner determines

LOS ANGELES — Natalie Wood, 43, slipped and fell overboard in a drunken attempt to get off the yacht where her husband Robert Wagner and costar Christopher Walken were arguing, the coroner said.

Coroner Thomas Noguchi said Monday the actress apparently missed a step while trying to get into a rubber dinghy early Sunday, struck the yacht and fell into the water off Santa Catalina Island where she tragically drowned.

The autopsy showed Wood's blood contained 0.14 percent alcohol, a level the coroner described as "slightly intoxicated." Under California law, anyone with a blood alcohol reading of 0.10 or more is considered legally drunk.

Noguchi said the actress had drunk perhaps seven or eight glasses of wine and champagne for dinner Saturday and that her intoxication was "one of the factors involved in the fact that she was not able to respond to the emergency."

Wagner and Walken, who was filming "Brainstorm" with Wood, had engaged in a nonviolent argument on the couple's yacht after dinner, the coroner said. The argument apparently, however, did not involve Wood.

George Kirvay, a personal friend of the couple, said Wood probably got tired of the men's arguing and tried to get away.

The coroner said there was no evidence of foul play in Wood's death.

Wood's body, clad in a blue nightgown, red down jacket and socks, was found after dawn Sunday, floating face down about one mile from the yacht. The yacht was anchored off Santa Catalina, which is about 25 miles off the

California coast from Los Angeles.

Noguchi said several prescription drugs were found on the yacht, including sleeping pills and Darvon and Dalamine — both depressant pain killers. He said further toxicological tests would be performed to determine if the actress had any drugs in her system when she died.

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