



photo by Dave Scott

Boring!

Shelly House takes advantage of the nice weather and tries to do some studying in the bleachers by the drill field Wednesday morning. House, a freshman from Boise, Idaho, is majoring in pre-dentistry

PACs gave \$80 million

United Press International
WASHINGTON — The 80 freshmen congressmen elected last November received a total of \$7.4 million from special interest groups during their 1982 campaigns, Common Cause said Saturday.

A study released by the self-styled citizens' lobby also noted the 80 fledgling lawmakers received contributions totaling another \$1.5 million from the special interest groups — known as political action committees — during their first six months in office.

The study said PACs accounted for 27 percent of the campaign contributions received by the lawmakers in their first successful congressional campaigns. PAC money also represented 43 percent of the campaign contributions they received in the first six months of their terms, Common Cause said.

The Common Cause study said PACs contributed \$80 million to congressional campaigns in 1982 — accounting for about a third of all the money donated to House members and 22 percent of the money received by Senate winners, the Common Cause study said.

Incumbents in 1982 received \$48 million in PAC money, four times more than challengers received.

The study marked the opening volley of a new Common Cause battle against PACs, which it accused of buying access to congressmen with \$80 million in campaign contributions.

"PACs put their money where the power is," the group said in a statement. "And now that (the freshmen congressmen) are incumbents, these Representatives are finding that PAC money flows much more swiftly into their campaigns."

Political action committees are formed by specific groups for the purpose of giving money to political campaigns. Major corporations form PACs, as do most large special interest groups.

PACs are allowed to give \$5,000 to a candidate per primary and \$5,000 per general election.

Common Cause said the top 10 freshmen recipients of PAC money in the first half of 1983 were: Bill Richardson, D-N.M., \$71,896; Don Sundquist, R-Tenn., \$59,864; John Bryant, D-Texas, \$54,300; Robert Torricelli, D-N.J., \$52,409; John McCain, R-Ariz., \$47,200; Gerry Sikorski, D-Minn., \$40,551; Jim Cooper, D-Tenn., \$40,228; Howard Nielson, R-Utah, \$38,500; and Ron Packard, R-Calif., \$38,432.

Both Richardson and a spokesman for Sundquist said they were concerned about the influence of PACs on campaigns

but said there was little done unless the system changed. "I think the reason I'm a top is that I came into Congress with a debt of \$225,000," Richardson said. "I'm very concerned about PACs. I support any kind of reform. I guess all victims, and we've got to get it."

A spokesman for Sundquist said, "As long as the system is the way it is, there's nothing unethical about it."

He said Sundquist "took money from anyone he could already on common ground with." The spokesman said that Sundquist's voting has been influenced by the noting that the congressmen recently voted in favor of a slurry pipeline that would cut railroad business, though received PAC money from roads.

"We're not selling out, and our voting record stands out," the spokesman said.

Democrats woo NOW women

United Press International
WASHINGTON — Six Democratic presidential candidates pledged Sunday to consider a woman for vice president and one of them said he would be willing to run in the second spot with a woman at the top of the ticket.

Sen. Gary Hart, D-Colo., got a rousing cheer from more than 1,000 delegates to the National Organization for Women's annual convention when he said, "I would be proud to run with a woman on either end of the ticket."

The issue of a woman on the Democratic ticket caught fire at the convention after its president, Judi Goldsmith, opened the three-day meeting Friday by declaring that a woman vice presidential candidate on the Democratic ticket should be a goal for 1984.

trumped their ace in making his pledge.

It was a sharp contrast to last summer when he was hissed at a National Women's Political Caucus Convention for disregarding the time limit set for candidate's speeches.

Former Gov. Reubin Askew of Florida, the seventh Democratic candidate, did not attend. Glenn ran into some loud hoots of derision when he said, "I think we all loafed on the ERA and let opponents out-hustle us."

Glenn met with Goldsmith and former NOW President Eleanor Smeal later in an effort to clarify the remark that angered some of the delegates.

Before adjourning Sunday, the convention considered a resolution urging such a step and at the minimum demanding that a feminist fill both places on the presidential ticket.

Former Vice President Walter Mondale, senators Alan Cranston of California, John Glenn of Ohio and Ernest Hollings of South Carolina, and former Sen. George McGovern of South Dakota all promised to give serious consideration to a woman on their tickets but Hart

Elgin, Ill., truck driver who suffered arteriosclerotic heart disease, had received benefits for three years before he got his letter in April 1982.

"They said he was able to work," recalled his widow, Loretta. "I saw how depressed he got, because I knew he wasn't able to work and he knew if he didn't we couldn't make it on my income."

"He worked two weeks and died nine days later due to the fact that he had to work. If he had been examined by a Social Security doctor and they would determine that he was able to go back to work, then I would agree — but they didn't have him examined."

Posthumously, Denney's benefits were restored.

Joseph Davis, address unknown, had a history of depressive reactions and alcoholism when he was put on disability in 1964. On July 24, 1982, 26 days after his benefits were terminated, he killed himself with drugs and alcohol.

Davis, like many suicide victims, filed no appeal.

disabling impairments. The findings of Congress' investigative arm, made available to United Press International, also said that in 18 of the cases — including Witt's — the benefit termination was reversed on appeal.

Witt was informed he was losing his \$480 monthly checks because he was capable of doing "medium work."

"They cut him off when he had cataracts, glaucoma, heart condition, stroke, diabetes and one kidney," his brother said. "His income was absolute zero. He had to spend \$107 a month for medicine just to stay alive. He couldn't work."

"The pressure on him was incredible. We believe the six months of not knowing what was going to happen was enough to have triggered his last and final heart attack," he said.

On July 30, 1982, a month after Witt died, an administrative law judge reversed the decision and ruled he was entitled to his benefits.

William Denney, a former

Benefits cut called 'justice miscarriage'

United Press International
WASHINGTON — As Dean Witt lay dead of a heart attack on the operating table on July 1, 1982, his doctor began to weep in anger at the U.S. government. "He said it was atrocious that they had cut Dean's disability off," recalls Witt's twin brother, Richard, of Phoenix, Ariz. "He said it was just a miscarriage of all social justice."

Witt, who was 57, had suffered three earlier heart attacks and a stroke since he started receiving Social Security disability benefits in 1972.

Despite his declining health, his benefits were cut Dec. 16, 1981, like those for more than 286,000 other disability recipients in the 2½ years since the Social Security Administration began a sweeping effort to trim non-qualified workers from the rolls.

The General Accounting Office, in a report delivered Sept. 14 to Sen. Howard Metzenbaum, D-Ohio, provokes new questions about the cutbacks. It concluded that of a sampling of 26 disability recipients who died in the months after their benefits were halted, 19 succumbed to their original

Watt called 'insensitive'

United Press International
WASHINGTON — House Democratic leader Jim Wright said Sunday that Interior Secretary James Watt is guilty of a "lamentable but not an impeachable offense" with his wisecrack about members of a coal advisory board.

Wright declined to join members of Congress who have called for Watt's resignation for his comment that the commission is made up of "a black, a woman, two Jews and a cripple."

"Well, obviously, he is not really very sensitive to other people's feelings," said Wright, interviewed on Cable News Network's "Newsmaker Sunday" program.

"I don't think he intended to insult anybody but it was a terribly unfortunate comment. His insensitivity to other people's feelings is a lamentable offense, but it is not an impeachable offense. And whether or not he resigns is a matter entirely between him and the man who appointed him, the president."

On other subjects, Wright said that despite congressional agreement to a compromise with the White House authorizing President Reagan to keep troops in Lebanon for up to 18

months, "not only a majority, but perhaps a unanimity of all the members of Congress of both political parties want to bring the Marines home."

But he said the United States should speak with one voice and stick to its commitment to help keep the peace in that battle-torn nation.

"Apparently the togetherness that has been demonstrated, our capacity to work

together though one house is dominated by another political party than that of the White House, has convinced the Syrians and others we're serious," he said.

And Wright said that despite the Soviet shootdown of the Korean airliner, "everyone agrees" that a verifiable U.S.-Soviet freeze on the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons is desirable.

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