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Watt discusses politics, policies and the press

By ROBIN BLACK
Staff writer

There are only two people in the United States who have the power to lead the country — Ronald Reagan and Jesse Jackson — former Secretary of the Interior James Watt told an audience in Rudder Auditorium Wednesday night.

Jackson, he said, has the wrong philosophy for this country — but is nevertheless a leader.

Watt said he believes the Democratic Party will ignore their true leader and nominate some "plastic figure" like Walter Mondale.

Watt, who is "enjoying the private sector," will be a part-time consultant to President Ronald Reagan's re-election committee.

He said he will be doing a lot of speaking on Reagan's behalf and fund-raising for the Republican Party.

Watt said he will not run for any elected position or accept any appointed government post.

The former interior secretary denounced his pro-development actions in the 45-minute speech co-sponsored by MSC Great Issues and Political Forum, and claimed he was not treated fairly by the media.

The national press, he said, was actively manipulated by anti-growth opponents to put out stories that questioned his policies.

Watt claimed that almost all information relayed by the press was inaccurate or even untrue.

"If I had read everything in the press, I wouldn't like Jim Watt, either," he said at the press conference before the speech.

In that press conference, Watt used a series of graphs to compare his accomplishments with those of the Carter era.

His figures showed that during his term of office, overall federal land acquisition increased and funding for endangered species recovery plans and national park improvement increased substantially.

All of these programs, Watt said, were cut drastically under the Carter administration.

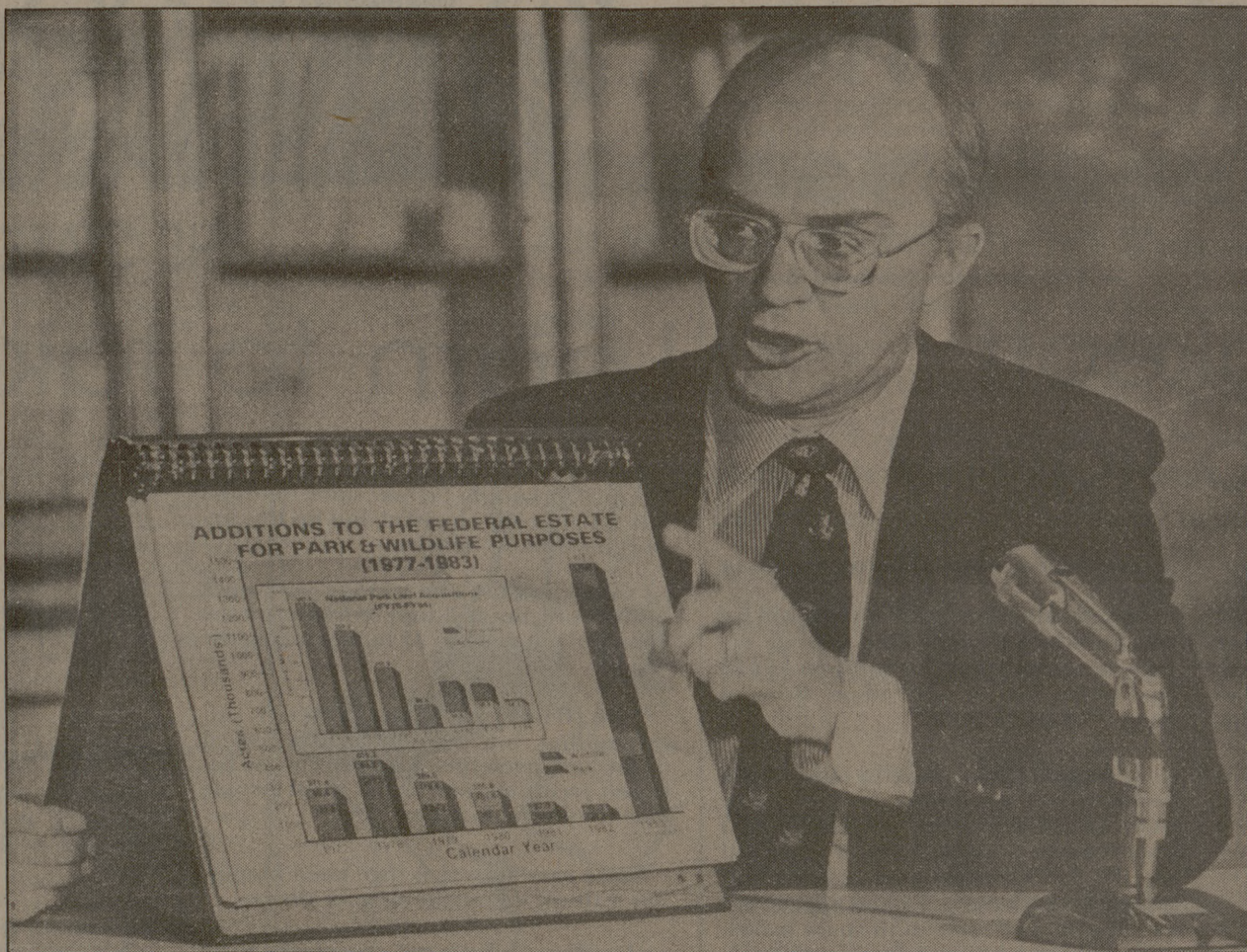
Watt complained that there was no objection by Congress or environmentalists to the Carter policies to cut programs, but he "got screamed at by the government" for his proposals.

He related his policies to the ideas of Andrew Jackson — he said the land belongs to the people and the people should have access to the land.

The changes in interior department policy concerning the management of federal lands have caused a struggle, he said. It is not a struggle between the Republicans and the Democrats, but a struggle between the haves and the have-nots.

Watt said the development of federal lands for the benefit of the people is a battle between the privileged and progress.

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Former Secretary of the Interior James Watt illustrates purchases of federal park and wildlife lands in a press conference

held Wednesday night. Watt's presentation was sponsored by MSC Great Issues and Political Forum.

Photo by JOHN MAKELY

Classes continue despite flu

By LORRAINE CHRISTIAN
Reporter

Classes will not be suspended because of the current flu outbreak, Dr. John Koldus, vice president for student services, said Wednesday.

Koldus commented in response to a rumor that classes would be halted if as many as 5 percent more of the student body went to the health center with flu symptoms.

Koldus said he can't foresee any percentage of ill students that would call for class suspension. No University regulations call for class suspension because of illness, he said.

Dr. Claude Goswick, director of health services, said that about 40 percent of the student body has been in the center during the past 10 days with upper respiratory problems. In the past seven working days, 4,000 students have gone to the center.

The flu still has not yet peaked, Goswick said. More students are coming in every day, he said. Goswick said he has no record of the number of ill faculty members.

He said that although at times it seems as if all the students in the University have come to the Health Center, many other students are home sick. Those students, he said, probably have diagnosed themselves. He recommends the use of decongestants, cough syrups and aspirin. He also said rest is very important.

Goswick said that despite the large number of ill students there is no reason to cancel classes. The flu virus, although at epidemic levels, is relatively short-lived, he said.

Reagan urges Congress to secure budget

United Press International

WASHINGTON — President Reagan, urging Congress to secure a springtime of hope for America, proposed Wednesday a \$925.5 billion election-year budget that contains record-high military spending and a projected \$180.4 billion deficit.

The fiscal 1985 budget includes no major tax increases or spending cuts, but it calls for a 13 percent "real" increase in military spending that would make it the largest defense budget since World War II, surpassing even the peak of the Korean or Vietnam wars if measured in constant dollars, a Congressional Budget Office analyst said.

The proposal for fiscal 1985, which begins Oct. 1, proposes only \$5 billion in spending cuts in federal benefit and social-welfare programs — a fraction of the cuts Reagan sought in his past budgets — and \$7.9 billion in minor tax increases.

Besides benefit and social-welfare

programs, certain non-defense domestic programs are cut and others are increased so that generally it works out to an aggregate spending freeze — about a wash.

Democrats immediately denounced the spending blueprint for failing to dress the issue of massive budget deficits that many fear will keep interest rates high and send the economic recovery into a tailspin. Reagan had promised in his 1980 campaign to try to balance the budget by 1984.

"The budget is, simply put, an election-year document which dodges the serious issues that would help insure a strong and viable economy for the country's future," Sen. Lawton Chiles, senior Democrat on the Senate Budget Committee.

"It is a stay-the-course budget that leaves us \$180 billion in the red each year — certainly not an agenda for

action in reducing mounting deficits," he said in a Democratic analysis.

Senate Republican leader Howard Baker called the deficit figures in the new budget "hairraising projections," but said it was "a good budget." Previous Reagan budgets, non-defense spending associated with national security, such as foreign aid, nuclear research and the space program, are increased. Slight cuts are recommended in education, legal services, jobs programs, mass transit and economic development grants to states and cities.

The budget includes \$150 million to begin designing a permanent, manned space station that Reagan hopes to get into orbit by the early 1990s, and it provides \$2.5 billion over four years in economic aid to Central America based on the Kissinger Commission's recommendations.

For the first time, the proposed

budget also sets aside money — \$1.8 billion — to launch Reagan's ambitious goal to erect a nuclear defensive shield over the United States by the year 2000, possibly with Star Wars-like beam weapons.

Of the \$7.9 billion in new tax income, \$3.9 billion would be achieved by requiring employees to pay Social Security and income taxes on employer-paid health insurance premiums that exceed a certain level and \$4 billion would come from closing tax loopholes.

The budget proposes \$305 billion for the military in spending authority — the right to enter into long-term contracts and spend money over several years. That is a \$46.8 billion increase over this year, or a 13 percent "real" increase after accounting for inflation.

In addition, Reagan is seeking

another \$7.8 billion for development and production of nuclear weapons — raising the national defense total to \$313 billion. Last year's nuclear military budget was \$6.7 billion.

The budget projects total federal spending of \$925.5 billion and receipts of \$745.1 for a deficit of \$180.4 billion — even if all of Reagan's spending cuts and tax hikes are enacted into law.

"The long winter of transition from the misguided policies of the past is now yielding to a new springtime of hope for America," Reagan said in his budget message. "Bold, vigorous fiscal policy action is essential to keep the recovery on track.

"I call urgently upon the Congress to take the actions proposed in this budget," the president said, to secure

"a prosperous, non-inflationary future. That prospect must not be sacrificed to an expedient ducking the issues.

"Let us seize the high ground and secure, for ourselves and our posterity a bright and prosperous future," he said.

Congress rejected Reagan's past two budgets and his new one is likely to meet the same fate. Republican leaders have said non-defense domestic programs have been cut enough and last year they gave Reagan only half his proposed 10 percent increase in military spending.

The new spending plan projects deficits of \$183.4 billion this year, \$180.4 billion in 1985, \$177.1 billion in 1986, \$180.5 billion in 1987, \$152 billion in 1988 and \$123.4 billion

House Democrats urge Reagan for a withdrawal of Marines

United Press International

WASHINGTON — House Democratic leaders, in a move to increase pressure on President Reagan for a withdrawal of U.S. Marines from Lebanon, is backing a resolution calling for the troops' "prompt and orderly" withdrawal.

The resolution, drafted for a meeting of the House Democratic caucus today, sets no deadline, but House Speaker Thomas O'Neill said Tuesday the language means withdrawal should be "immediate or right away."

The non-binding resolution says the president should, within 30 days of passage, explain to Congress how the withdrawal is being accomplished or why it is not being done, O'Neill said.

The measure was hammered out in a two-hour meeting Tuesday evening in O'Neill's office. O'Neill said after the effort should not be

seen as a U.S. move to "cut and run," noting other proposals set specific deadlines for the U.S. withdrawal.

"We think that would be wrong," O'Neill said. "It could possibly endanger the lives of the Marines over there. That is the one thing we do not to do. What we want to do is bring those boys home as quickly and as safely as we possibly can. And we think we're doing it in the best way."

The meeting followed renewed fighting Monday in Beirut where the U.S. forces suffered their 259th casualty since the Marines were sent into Lebanon as part of a multinational force in September 1982.

O'Neill indicated Reagan may not be able to count on the Republican-controlled Senate to block the move to reduce the 18-month authorization Congress voted last fall. "There's a crack in the Republican side in the Senate, and I anti-

ciate that when this vote comes to the floor, I'd have to say yes that I'd expect bipartisan support," O'Neill said.

A source in the Democratic leadership said the resolution was made "much tougher" during the meeting than the proposal they began with.

"This is a way to hold the president's feet to the fire, without trying to be making tactical ground decisions," the source said. "This is a clear way to set policy and at the same time avoid getting into the intricacies of ground troop management."

The resolution was worked out by O'Neill's ad hoc monitoring group that includes himself, Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Dante Fascell; Rep. Lee Hamilton,

D-Ind., chairman of the Middle East subcommittee; assistant Democratic

leader Bill Alexander, D-Ark.; and Rep. John Murtha, D-Pa., among others.

The Democratic caucus does not need to take a formal position on the resolution in order for it to be brought to the floor for action. O'Neill said he does not expect the measure to be brought up for action by the full House until after Congress returns from its Feb. 21 Washington's birthday recess.

O'Neill said the proposal had been reviewed in great detail, and it was decided a resolution "calling for the prompt and orderly withdrawal of our Marines in the multinational force in Lebanon will be presented to the Democratic caucus."

In Today's Battalion

Local

• There are still no suspects in the rape of a Texas A&M student last week. See story page 3.

State

• Policewoman survives shootout wearing a bullet-proof vest. See story page 5.
• An infant will have a bone-marrow transplant in Houston to save his life. See story page 8.
• The Dallas Mavericks lose to the New York Knicks in Dallas. See story page 18.

National

• Trends show lung cancer may now be the leading cause of cancer death in women. See story page 10.