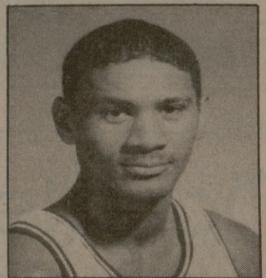




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President calls for new 'revolution'

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Reagan, in his fourth State of the Union address, asked Congress on Wednesday to pass a tax simplification bill that he said would help unleash "the tremendous pent-up power of our economy."

Making the annual evening address to both houses of Congress on his 74th birthday, Reagan said "we did what we promised" in his first term, and he described the United States as "renewed — stronger, freer and more secure than before."

In prepared remarks, Reagan barely mentioned the record federal deficit or his controversial budget-cutting plan just submitted to Congress. Rather, he reaffirmed American support for freedom movements in Afghanistan and Nicaragua, stressed his proposals for helping the nation's low-income citizens, and embraced guidelines for an overhaul of the tax system.

He did not endorse the tax plan put forth by the Treasury Department in December; rather, Reagan said he was directing his Treasury secretary to begin working with congressional authors and committees to write bipartisan legislation based on principles of "fairness, simplicity and growth."

He provided guidelines that he said would ensure no "tax increase in disguise" — mentioning in particular that he would not "jeopardize the mortgage interest deduction" for family homes. He vowed a top tax rate of "no more than 35 percent, possibly lower," to replace the current top rate of 50 percent.

To achieve a lower rate, the plan would trim "many tax preferences," but he proposed at least two new ones himself — tax breaks for companies that locate in depressed urban "enterprise zones," and tuition tax credits to help families who send their children to private schools.

Even before Reagan made his tax proposal, Senate Majority Leader Robert J. Dole, R-Kan., said it would be "very difficult" to overhaul the tax system this year, given the lawmakers' preoccupation with Reagan's proposed spending cuts in the budget the president sent to Congress on Monday.

In his remarks, broadcast nationally, Reagan declared "a second American Revolution" of hope, opportunity, technological progress

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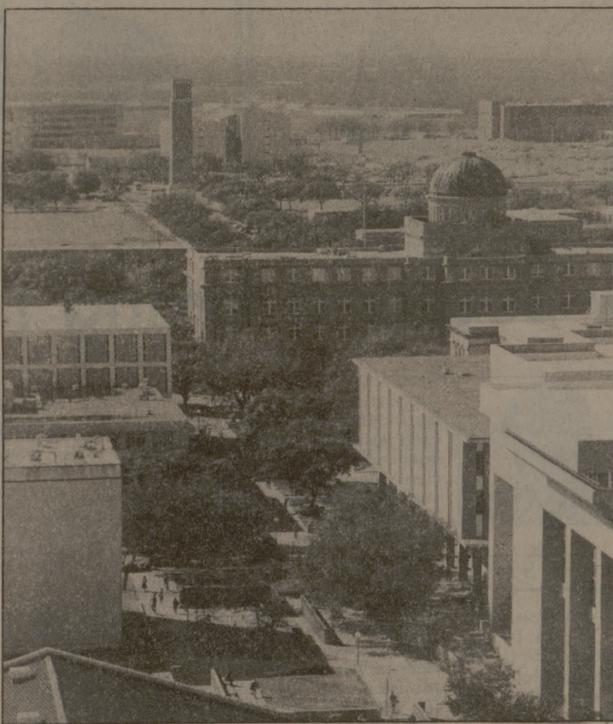


Photo by WAYNE L. GRABEIN

On Top of the World

On a clear day, the A&M campus seems to go on forever.

Student Senate votes on library bill

Funding needed for longer hours

By JERRY OSLIN
Staff Writer

The Texas A&M Student Government is considering furnishing funds to pay for extended hours in the Sterling C. Evans Library, the Student Senate's Vice President for Academic Affairs, Tom Urban, said Wednesday night.

Student Government is hoping to give the library \$1,500-\$1,700 to help restore the hours that were cut back because of the University's budget crunch, Urban said.

Urban, who had vacated his position on January 23, decided not to resign so the Senate's special election for a new Vice President of Academic Affairs was cancelled.

The Senate passed a bill calling for all colleges to require their students to file a degree plan. If an adviser signs a student's degree plan saying the student is eligible to graduate but makes a mistake, the student will still be able to graduate anyway.

In other business, the Senate approved a schedule for the Spring 1985 elections.

Candidates may begin filing for the elections Monday, Feb. 25 in room 214 of the Pavilion. Hours for filing are from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The deadline is Friday, Mar. 1.

General elections will be held on

Mar. 27 to Mar. 28. Students may vote in the main lounge of the Memorial Student Center, first floor of the Pavilion and in the A-1 Lounge (Northside).

The Senate passed a bill creating the Student Athletic Committee. The Committee will help in the promotion of all men's and women's

sporting events and to serve as the liaison between the Athletic Department and the student body.

The Senate also passed a bill calling for all colleges to require their students to file a degree plan.

Vice President of Student Services Wayne Roberts said the College of Business currently does not require its students to file a degree plan.

By filing a degree plan, the student knows what he must take to graduate, Roberts said. And if an adviser signs a student's degree plan saying the student is eligible to graduate but makes a mistake, the student will still be able to graduate anyway, he said.

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Senate votes to increase drinking age

Associated Press

AUSTIN — The Senate on Wednesday voted to raise the drinking age in Texas from 19 to 21, effective Sept. 1, 1986, but the measure may never become law even if enacted by the Legislature.

The bill was sent to the House on voice vote over protests that it sets up a "young-adult Prohibition."

Sen. Bill Sarpalius' measure had two apparent purposes — to save lives and to avoid the loss of \$107 million in federal highway funds.

Federal law would reduce the amount of highway funds for Texas in 1987-88 if Texas fails to raise the drinking age to 21. That federal law, which applies to all states, is being challenged in court by South Dakota.

Four years ago, Texas raised its drinking age from 18 to 19, and Sarpalius said the new bill has identical provisions in that a person under 21 could sell alcoholic beverages but could not buy or consume such beverages.

The measure was approved only after the Senate OK'd an amendment, 16-13, that Sarpalius said would "take out the heart, liver and spleen of this bill."

The amendment by Sen. Chet Edwards, D-Duncanville, has three basic provisions as reflected in Senate debate and an impromptu news conference by Edwards:

- If the federal law should be held unconstitutional by the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals or the U.S. Supreme Court before the effective date of the state law, Sept. 1, 1986, the drinking age would remain at 19.

- If the state law goes into effect and the federal courts later rule the federal law unconstitutional, the state law raising the drinking age would expire at the end of the next regular legislative session, unless re-enacted, or about the end of May 1987.

- If the federal law is upheld by the courts, the drinking age in Texas would revert to 19 when the federal sanctions on highway funds expire. Currently, that would be Sept. 30, 1988.

TTI researcher opposes raising speed limit

By TRENT LEOPOLD
Staff Writer

Although Congress will soon consider raising the speed limit on country highways where traffic is considered light, Dr. Quinn Brackett, a senior researcher with the Texas Transportation Institute, says such an action would create enforcement problems on both country highways and crowded freeways where speed limits would remain 55 mph.

"Whatever speed limit is set, after a period of time people will begin to exceed it," he said. "Drivers usually go over the posted speed limit by about 5 mph."

Brackett said if the speed limit is raised on selected roads, there would be a problem because drivers generalize about speed limits.

Many people would think if it is acceptable for them to drive at certain speeds on some roads, then they should be able to do it on all roads, he said.

The National Academy of Sciences released a report last November which recommends that Congress keep the 55 mph speed limit on 94 percent of the nation's highways. The report also outlines the benefits of the higher speed limits on rural highways and tells why the higher limits would pose safety concerns.

"Lowered speed limits have been shown to save lives since they have been implemented," Brackett said.

"I think the 55 mph speed limit should be kept. I don't think raising the speed limit in certain areas would be a good idea."

Studies in Texas have shown less than 10 percent of all drivers in the state now drive over 65 mph, while 54.9 percent exceed the 55 mph limit.

Researchers also have found that compliance with the 55 mph speed limit increases when gasoline prices increase dramatically and decrease when gas prices stabilize or drop.

Texas Department of Public Safety officer Greg Riley said an increase in the speed limit would cause an increase in the number of highway traffic related deaths, but wouldn't necessarily pose enforcement problems.

"A direct relationship exists between speed limits and highway traffic fatalities," Riley said. "If speed limits are increased, the number of fatalities also will increase."

When the speed limit was lowered to 55 mph, the number of highway deaths decreased proportionally, he said.

"I personally don't think increasing the speed limit would be a good idea even if it was on only 6 percent of the nation's highways," Riley said. "We all know 55 saves lives. It has been proven. We also know 55 saves gas. That also has been proven."

"Our lawmakers shouldn't change something that is working well the way it is."



Photo by DEAN SATIO

Congress will soon consider raising the speed limit on country highways.

If speed limits are increased on certain highways, Riley said enforcing the new speed limit wouldn't necessarily be a problem.

"If speed limits are increased on rural highways, which I don't think will happen, the speed limit will be enforced just like it always has

been," he said. "It won't mean we will stop doing our job. If people exceed the limit they will be given a ticket."