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Gov. White signs bill raising drinking age

Associated Press

AUSTIN — A bill that would raise the drinking age in Texas from 19 to 21 was signed into law Thursday by Gov. Mark White.

The bill, by Sen. Bill Sarpalus, D-Amarillo, would become effective Sept. 1, 1986, only if a federal law that pressures states to increase their drinking ages has not been changed. The drinking age would revert back

to 19 if the federal law is held invalid.

In 1984, Congress enacted federal legislation to withhold federal highway funds from states that do not raise their drinking age to 21 in an effort to decrease highway deaths.

White told reporters he also would sign a second bill passed by the recent Legislature that not only would raise the drinking age to 21

but would provide maximum fines for anyone convicted of drunken driving with an open container of alcohol in the car or pickup.

"Two bills are better than one," White said.

White told a crowd in his reception room he was signing the increase in the drinking age "fully aware of the strong feeling on both sides of this issue. But he said he was

convinced that the drinking age should be raised for several reasons.

"First and foremost, there is evidence that raising the drinking age would reduce the number of alcohol-related deaths on Texas highways," he said.

"Second, I think this bill puts Texas into compliance with the congressional mandate and guarantees that more than \$100 million in high-

way funds will flow to Texas in the next two fiscal years."

White said he thought all Texans share a concern about the problem of alcohol abuse.

"I would not suggest for a minute the problem is limited to our young people," White said.

"For that reason I am also supporting increasing the penalties for driving while intoxicated and apply-

ing those penalties equally to all persons."

White also signed a bill that would allow the state to issue up to \$500 million in bonds to finance purchase of farms and ranches with small down payments and low interest loans.

The loans would be available to those who have made 25 percent of their income the past three years from farming.

Senate votes to reestablish aid to Contras

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Senate voted Thursday to approve \$38 million in non-weapons logistical aid to anti-Sandinista rebels and to repeal a strict prohibition against U.S. support for military action inside Nicaragua.

The vote was 55 to 42.

President Reagan praised the Senate action as "a display of bipartisan concern for the people of Central America and our own national security."

The aid amendment would provide \$14 million this year and \$24 million next year, resuming direct U.S. assistance to rebels fighting to overthrow Nicaragua's leftist government.

The Democratic-controlled House, which has led opposition to CIA aid to the guerrilla force in Nicaragua known as the Contras, is expected to vote on a similar proposal next week.

Reagan, in a statement released by the White House, said the Senate amendment would "provide support for the freedom fighters who are struggling for liberty and democracy in Nicaragua."

"The Senate has seen that their struggle is ours — that they need and deserve the help of the American people," Reagan said.

The president urged the House to join with the Senate in sending a signal to both the Sandinistas and to the struggling Nicaraguan democratic opposition.

"The only resolution to the tragedy in Nicaragua is the same course which the Congress has supported in El Salvador — that of democracy, reconciliation and liberty," Reagan said.

The proposal would restrict the aid to food, clothing, medicines and transportation. It bars use of the money to buy weapons, ammunition, and other lethal military equipment.

But the aid could be funneled through the CIA, which trained and supported the rebel force from 1981 until last year.

The amendment contains language urging progress toward a negotiated settlement in the region.

And, as an incentive, it would suspend economic sanctions if the Sandinista government agrees to a cease-fire and to open negotiations with the rebels.

The measure also calls on the Contras to purge their ranks of any individuals who have engaged in human rights abuses.

An expedited procedure for the resumption of direct military aid to the Contras is provided for if negotiations fail.

Democratic critics suggested that the measure might open the way to a resumption of direct CIA involvement in the fighting because it removes the prohibition enacted last October barring aid that "would have the effect of supporting, directly or indirectly, military or paramilitary operations in Nicaragua."

The measure would limit U.S. spending strictly to humanitarian assistance, ruling out even military advice and training.

Senate approval of the amendment came several weeks after the House rejected all spending in support of the rebels.

Since then, however, a trip by Nicaraguan leader Daniel Ortega to the Soviet Union requesting stepped-up Soviet aid provoked new congressional support for resuming some assistance to the Contras.

The Nicaraguan Embassy, in a statement from its press office, called the Senate action "an escalation of U.S. involvement and a major step down the road to interjection of U.S. combat troops."

'Angel of Death's' body believed to be found

Associated Press

EMBU, Brazil — Police exhumed a body in this quiet town Thursday that they believe is Dr. Josef Mengele, the sadistic Auschwitz "Angel of Death" who became the symbol of Nazi evil.

Romeo Tuma, the federal police chief in Sao Paulo, said he was "90 percent convinced" that a man who drowned at the seashore in 1979, and was buried as an Austrian, was the doctor whose bizarre medical "experiments" made a shocking page even in Adolf Hitler's book of horrors.

Leading Nazi hunters were skeptical. Three gravediggers opened the weed-covered mound in the small cemetery. The coffin stuck in the cavity, which was four feet deep, and police told them to smash it open.

Bones and shreds of clothing were removed by hand. Jose Antonio de Mello, assistant director of the Sao Paulo morgue, held the skull high for the hundreds of onlookers to see.

Mello said it would be difficult to determine whether the disarrayed bones, placed in a morgue van on a long metal tray, were those of the man who sent hundreds of thousands of people to gas chambers.

However, he said the teeth were sufficiently well-preserved to allow comparisons with any appropriate dental records.

Tuma told reporters federal police have "documents and a diary belonging to Mengele," seized at the home of a German couple in Brazil where Mengele had lived. He said the couple appeared to be neither Nazis nor sympathizers, or to be aware at first who the man was.

He did not say when or where police found the documents, but said West German authorities advised Brazil that Mengele was living in the country.

Mengele, who would be 74, has been sought since World War II. Rewards for him have been offered totaling \$3.5 million.

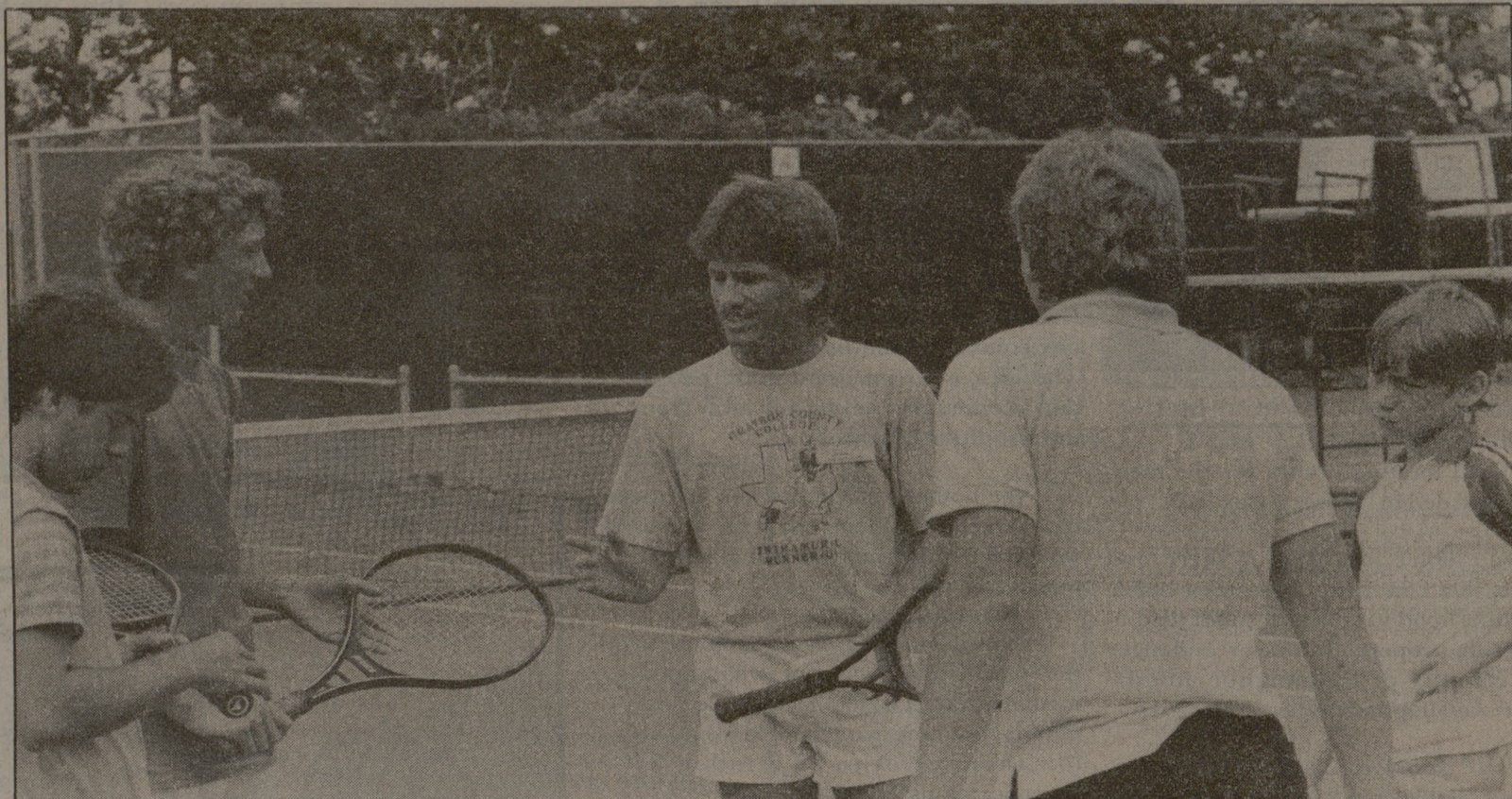


Photo by GREG BAILEY

Tennis Anyone?

Attending sports camps can be fun as well as educational. Scott Hauseman, center, is one of the counselor's in this year's

tennis camp. Hauseman, from McAllen, interrupts one of the daily drills to give a little encouragement to the "campers."

Campaign to be an "uphill battle"

Associated Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — President Reagan, concluding a two-day campaign swing for his tax plan, sought recruits Thursday for an "uphill battle" to overturn the latest Supreme Court ruling against organized school prayer.

Reagan's first comment on Tuesday's 6-3 high court decision striking down an Alabama school prayer law came at a fund-raising luncheon here for Sen. Jeremiah Denton, R-Ala.

"I know that there has been a strong push here in Birmingham to help restore voluntary prayer in public schools," Reagan said. "As this week's Supreme Court decision shows, we still have an uphill battle before us."

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By LAMYA SOURYAL

Reporter

Local clergymen expressed little surprise at the United States Supreme Court's recent 6-3 ruling which abolishes an Alabama law allowing daily moments of silence for "meditation and voluntary prayer" in public schools.

"I'm not surprised," said Chaplain Mark Wilburn, of the Episcopal Student Center.

"We are no longer a Judeo-Christian country; there are Christians, Jews, a growing Islamic group and a growing percentage of people from the Far East who are Hindu and Buddhist. How do you define religious values for so many groups?" The clergymen, interviewed this

week, said they believe there is a need for a separation of church and state.

Rev. Al Palermo, pastor of St. Mary's Catholic Church, said, "In my opinion, I don't think a moment of silence contradicts the separation. That's up to the court and if they feel it would, then we must abide."

Rev. Wally Goodman, of First Baptist Church of Bryan, also agrees with the Supreme Court's decision. "Prayer should not be imposed on someone," Goodman said, "Christianity can't be legislated to someone. It should be left up to the individual."

The school prayer controversy, which has become a moral as well as legal issue, also has caused divisions among individual denominations.

Reagan also suggested that Democrats should switch parties, saying their own party has been taken over by leftists.

"While a lot of Democrats have stood fast by their principles, the party has been pulled out from under their feet by a kind of left-wing leadership," he told the luncheon before flying back to Washington aboard Air Force One.

During the flight, White House spokesman Larry Speakes defended Reagan's use of the term "left-wing."

"I don't think putting that adjective with that noun is anything new in American political rhetoric," Speakes said.

Earlier in the day, Reagan

stumped for his tax simplification plan before a group of Atlanta high school students.

"We're trying to take less money from you and less from your parents," Reagan said.

In Tuesday's prayer decision, the high court struck down an Alabama law that provided a daily minute of silence for "meditation or voluntary prayer" because the statute violated the constitutional separation of church and state.

The court ruled that public schools providing a silent period for students cannot suggest that they use the time to pray.

It was the high court's first major ruling on the issue since it outlawed

school-sponsored prayer in the classroom in 1962.

Before Reagan spoke, Denton presented him with an ax for cutting taxes. Outside the Birmingham Civic Center, a large group of demonstrators carried similar placards and chanted, "Make Love, Not War."

Reagan's appearance at the Denton campaign fundraiser was the last event of his two-day speaking tour of Oklahoma, Georgia and Alabama on behalf of Republican candidates and his tax simplification program.

Outside the high school, Reagan's motorcade was greeted by about a dozen young people carrying signs opposing his Central America policies. The demonstrators chanted: "We Are Not Reagan Youths."

Clergy not surprised at prayer ruling

The Southern Baptists, for example, have members on both sides of the conflict, Goodman said.

"Some members heartily support President Reagan in his efforts to revive school prayer," he said. "Others are opposed to school prayer based on the First Amendment, which calls for a separation of church and state."

Palermo said the Catholic Church's main concern is the freedom to practice its faith.

"Since the no-prayer law doesn't necessarily mean that our freedom is hampered, the church has no official stand on the issue," Palermo said.

The three clergymen agree that the Supreme Court made a fair decision, but said they believe there are other methods available for the indi-

vidual expression of religious beliefs.

Goodman said he would like to see consideration of an amendment, proposed by Sen. Mark Hatfield (R-Ore.), that would allow religious groups to meet voluntarily before and after classes.

Chaplain Wilburn said he believes a moment of silence for meditation would allow parents the freedom to teach their children to use the time for the practice of individual religious values and beliefs.

"This would return Christian education back to the responsibility of the parents and the Church where it belongs," Wilburn said.

Although none of the clergymen can predict the next step in this 23-year-old controversy, all accept the ruling of the Supreme Court.