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Reagan seeking 12 percent jump in defense funds

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In a budget that slashed dozens of domestic programs, President Reagan asked Congress Wednesday to boost military spending by almost 12 percent to \$320 billion to pay for a surge in space-defense research and keep virtually every other weapons program intact.

"I fully appreciate the fact that we are preoccupied with deficits," Defense Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger said in presenting the fiscal 1987 spending plan to the Senate Armed Services Committee.

"But the defense budget has become the target of opportunistic demagoguery, and our security has suffered," Weinberger said. "The administration has made its priority choices regarding defense. . . I urge the Congress to get the defense debate back to the question of what this nation's security requires."

Committee Democrats quickly served notice that cuts were inevitable.

Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., said, "I do know that this budget request won't fly."

The request for the fiscal year beginning Oct. 1 totals \$274.3 billion in actual outlays for the Defense Department, up \$15.9 billion or almost 6.2 percent from this year after the 1986 cuts under Gramm-Rudman are taken into account.

But because many purchases of military hardware take place over several years, Congress gives more attention to the Defense Department budget authority request, which includes long-term money to acquire ships, planes and missiles. This figure would jump by \$33.2 billion, or

11.9 percent, to \$311.6 billion in the year starting Oct. 1.

When the money earmarked for nuclear weapons produced by the Department of Energy is added to the Pentagon amounts, total military outlays in fiscal 1987 would climb to \$282.2 billion from \$265.8 billion this year and budget authority would leap to \$320.3 billion from \$286.1 billion.

Sen. Gary Hart, D-Colo., predicted "total rejection of your budget," adding: "I don't think there's a member of this committee who believes you're going to get the kind of numbers you're requesting."

Levin said, "This year, the issue isn't whether the defense budget will be cut, but where it will be cut and by how much."

The 1987 defense budget provides significant increases for several major programs. Chief among them would be the Strategic Defense Initiative, or "Star Wars," the effort to develop lasers and other exotic weapons that could be deployed as a shield to automatically shoot down Soviet missiles.

That program would enjoy a 75 percent funding spurt, from \$2.75 billion to \$4.8 billion, turning Star Wars into the Pentagon's largest single program.

The budget also calls for the first purchases of a more accurate, Trident 2 submarine missile at a cost of \$3.1 billion; the start of full-scale development of a mobile, ground-based ICBM dubbed the Midgetman, costing \$1.4 billion; and a second year of production of chemical weapons, costing \$138 million.

Delta hijacker described as 'different'

Associated Press

GRAPEVINE — The man who used a pocketknife to take control of a Delta Air Lines jumbo jet Wednesday roamed the aisles throughout the two-hour flight and "just looked different," passengers said.

The man, who held the knife to a stewardess's neck, was taken into custody by FBI agents about two hours after the plane landed at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport.

"Just as it landed, he rushed up to the front of the plane," said Rebecca Mussler of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., where Flight 139 originated.

"Everybody noticed him walking

around," she said. "He was up and down, up and down. . . I kept wondering why the stewardesses didn't stop him. He just looked different."

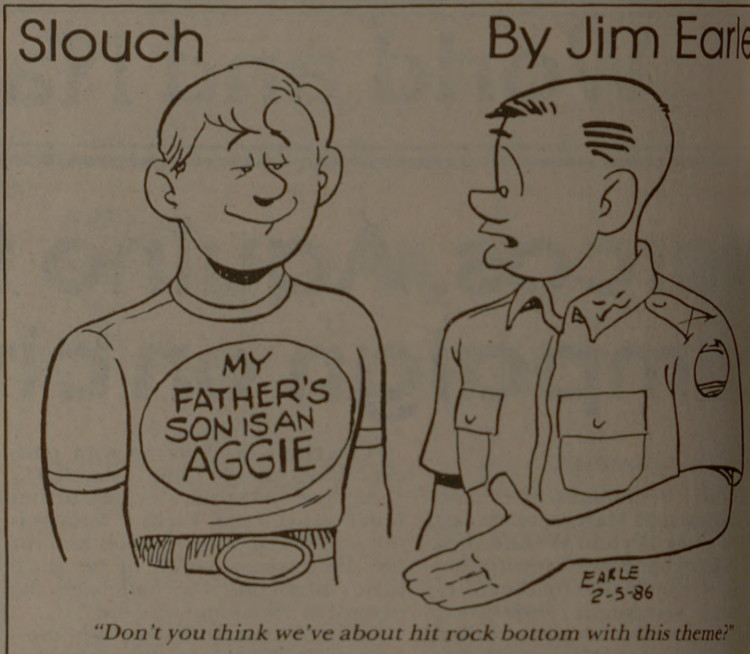
FBI agents, who said no one was injured, identified the man as Ralph A. Hughes, of Fort Lauderdale.

Passenger Bill Danko of Fort Lauderdale said, "I saw him in Fort Lauderdale — weird. He was pacing back and forth in the lounge in Lauderdale and looked disheveled."

Mussler said the man kept putting his hand at the small of his back.

"I thought maybe he had a back problem," she said. "He kept fooling with his back, but later we figured out that's where he had the knife."

Flight attendants initially would



Effort to end Hormel strike not successful

Associated Press

AUSTIN — Leaders of striking Hormel meatpackers and company officials met briefly Wednesday but made little apparent progress toward ending the 5½-month strike, while replacement workers streamed past National Guardsmen into the plant for a third straight day.

Meanwhile, the FBI said it was increasing its involvement in a probe of dozens of incidents of tampering with Hormel products.

Nothing was discussed at the 30-minute meeting, the first between the two sides since Jan. 11, Deryl Arnold said, Austin plant manager for Geo. A. Hormel & Co.

Arnold said the next meeting won't take place until sometime next week, and added by that time he expects to have hired all the 1,025 employees needed. By Wednesday, 800

people had reported for work at the plant, he said.

Officials of Local P-9 of the United Food and Commercial Workers union could not be reached for comment in telephone calls to the union hall and the home of union leaders.

Also on Wednesday, about 40 union members and supporters tried to cross a police checkpoint up at a road leading to the plant's north gate.

Ray Rogers, a labor strategist in Local P-9, said the demonstration was designed to see how authorized and the National Guard responded.

Lawrence G. Lawler, head of the Minneapolis office of the FBI, said the bureau was increasing its role in the tampering probe since a Minneapolis television state received handwritten letter threatening further product adulteration.

Pension program may be in trouble

(continued from page 1)

sheltered pension programs available to non-profit organizations, employees of public schools or state government. The legislation was originally written to encourage these employees to save for their retirement by granting them saving incentives over and above the regular pension plan offered by the employer.

Texas Optional Retirement Program was created by the Texas Legislature in 1968 in recognition of the specific needs of faculty and professional administrators in Texas institutions of higher education.

Lytle said that once a person joins the ORP they can't go back to TRS without losing benefits. If ORP is abolished because of the tax bill, he says the Texas Legislature will have to create special legislation to allow faculty back into the TRS or come up with a new retirement plan that would not have the same advantages as ORP.

In another attempt to raise revenues without raising taxes, Honea says lawmakers were probably unaware of the effects the tax plan has on Texas ORP.

"Congress does not intend to destroy somebody's sole retirement plan, but they're trying to tighten up loopholes," Honea says. "This is just a small part of the whole tax bill, but one that has a devastating impact on higher education in the state of Texas."

Honea says Texas also could use any of a number of commercial providers that offer retirement benefits, but employees probably wouldn't get the same advantages as they're getting with ORP.

The Texas Teacher Retirement System remains the primary pension plan for all primary and secondary school employees, as well as the non-professional staff of the colleges and universities, but an employee must have a minimum of 10 years of service to get its benefits.

This is a disadvantage to college faculty, who often move from state to state during their academic career. ORP provides the faculty or administrators the ability to contribute to their retirement plan without gaps while pursuing a career.

"ORP provides portability to faculty and staff members who are recruited on a national basis," Honea

says. "We have to recruit competitively, especially if we want to maintain that leading edge of teaching expertise."

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'87 budget plan causing doubt in Congress

(continued from page 1)

about our determination to maintain our commitments and without jeopardizing our prospects for meaningful arms control talks."

Reagan's new Pentagon request totals \$274.3 billion in actual outlays for the Defense Department, up \$15.9 billion or almost 6.2 percent compared with the current year after the March 1 cuts already required by the balanced-budget law are taken into effect.

But because much of the Pentagon's purchases take place over several years, Congress focuses on Reagan's budget authority request, which includes long-term money to acquire ships, planes and missiles. This would jump by \$33.2 billion or 11.9 percent to \$311.6 billion in the year starting Oct. 1.

The president had said he would be requesting a 3 percent military spending increase after inflation, but budget director James C. Miller

III conceded Wednesday that the increase would be more than that.

Nonetheless, Miller said, "That's what the president wants and that's what the president is driving home. And that's what we need."

On domestic spending, Reagan's proposal would increase spending for Medicare, the federal health insurance program for the elderly and disabled, and for Medicaid, the state-federal program for the poor. The budget also would allow for a

3.7 percent cost-of-living increase for Social Security beneficiaries in January.

But it includes a \$29.6-billion increase in Medicaid spending, an estimated \$1.3 billion less than what is projected for 1987 spending under current law.

The premium increase next year would be only 90 cents per month for individuals, but sharply higher for states that use Medicare to pay for their elderly poor.

Expert says doctors should stop AIDS fear

Associated Press

BOSTON — Reassuring evidence that AIDS is not spread through casual contact should encourage doctors to work harder at quelling hysteria and preventing discrimination against homosexuals and others who risk catching the disease, a health expert says.

A study of people who live in close daily contact with AIDS victims found that none of them caught the virus, although they often shared bathrooms, eating utensils and beds.

"We conclude that the risk of transmission of the virus during close, long-term contact has to be extremely, extremely small, approaching zero. That is very reassuring," Dr. Gerald H. Friedland, who directed the research, said in an interview.

The study was published in Thursday's New England Journal of Medicine, along with an editorial by Dr. Merle A. Sande, chief of medical services at San Francisco General Hospital. The findings were first publicized last fall when Dr. Martha F. Rogers, a co-author of the report, presented them at a meeting in Minneapolis of the American Society for Microbiology.

Sande noted that the chance of catching AIDS is remote for all except homosexuals, drug abusers who share contaminated needles,

people getting tainted blood transfusions and children born of AIDS-infected mothers.

He said doctors should oppose proposals for universal AIDS screening and quarantining AIDS victims, as well as the exclusion of infected students from classrooms and adult victims from their jobs.

Friedland, a physician at Montefiore Medical Center in New York, conducted the study with researchers from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control.

Friedland said some physicians, especially those who don't treat AIDS patients, have been slow to accept the idea that AIDS is extremely difficult to catch except through sex or blood.

"There is still a lot of skepticism," he said. "I think physicians have been susceptible to the AIDS hysteria epidemic, perhaps not as much, but to some extent as the general population."

The researchers examined 68 children and 33 adults who lived with AIDS victims for an average of nearly two years. Only one of these family members — a 5-year-old girl — caught the AIDS virus, and the researchers believe she was infected before birth.

They said most of the families lived in poor, crowded conditions that would ordinarily be expected to facilitate the transmission of contagious diseases.