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Texas A&M The Battalion

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Reagan defends budget against criticism

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Reagan and his top aides defended the administration's new \$994 billion budget, a plan Reagan conceded might require "artificial respiration" against sharp attacks Thursday from both parties in Congress. Congressional critics complained that the administration had made defense the top budget priority while calling for deep cutbacks in social programs.

But the president, in his annual economic report to Congress, said he was not willing to sacrifice programs essential to the nation or to consider supporting a tax increase.

Reagan said the economic outlook was bright through the end of the decade.

But, he cautioned, "changing events, including erratic monetary and fiscal policies, can bring any expansion to an abrupt and unexpected halt."

A day after its submission to Congress, the president's new budget

clearly was running into trouble in both chambers of Congress.

A House Republican leader, minority whip Trent Lott, R-Miss., said his party would repudiate the president's day-old fiscal 1987 budget plan and come up with one of its own. And Democratic leaders said they would press on with hearings around the nation next week on Reagan's budget, an effort they contended might discredit it.

Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole, R-Kan., said people would

have to be allowed to "howl and scream" about the budget for several weeks before lawmakers could get down to serious work.

And Reagan himself was asked about congressional criticism that the budget was "dead on arrival."

"We'll give it artificial respiration," Reagan joked.

The president disputed a characterization by House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill Jr., D-Mass., that the budget for the fiscal year that begins Oct. 1 was "a disgrace."

"I don't see anything disgraceful about a budget that is spending almost a trillion dollars, and is at the same time starting to move under the laws that they've adopted to balance the budget," Reagan said.

O'Neill, meanwhile, said the Democrats would ask Reagan to send representatives to next week's field hearings to defend the spending plan.

"There have been reports that Republican members of Congress have refused to appear on the same plat-

form as the president's budget," O'Neill told reporters. "It's his budget. We want him to justify it."

In other budget developments on Thursday:

- Treasury Secretary James A. Baker III told the House Appropriations Committee that domestic cuts in the new budget were not as extensive as the \$39 billion in cuts approved by Congress in 1981.

"I don't think the task is something we have to write off as totally impossible right off the bat," he said.



Photo by ANTHONY S. CASPER

With A Little Help From My Friend

Neil Vidrine, a senior construction science major from Houston, gets motorized assistance from wheelchair-bound Denise Crandon, a freshman accounting major from Houston. Vidrine is participating in

the "wheelchair challenge," part of Exceptional Children's Week, which is sponsored by the Student Council for Exceptional Children, to raise awareness of challenges the handicapped face.

NASA retrieves tip of fuel tank, brings it to port

Associated Press

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — A salvage vessel brought the pointed tip of Challenger's huge fuel tank to port Thursday, and NASA believed it located the shuttle's second rocket booster under the ocean 15 miles from the launch pad.

Public affairs officers for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration said privately that sonar soundings indicated the left booster had been located. But, acting under instructions that any statement must be cleared with agency investigators, the spokesmen could not confirm that officially.

NASA also would not say whether a helmet brought aboard a Coast Guard cutter, along with tiles and other debris from the shuttle, belonged to one of the seven Challenger astronauts. ABC News showed film of the helmet on "World News Tonight" Thursday.

The agency's recovery ships have been concentrating on an area 35 miles offshore where they believe the right booster lies under 1,100 feet of water. But, spokesmen cautioned, the soundings can't be vali-

dated until robot submarines photograph the wreckage.

In any case, it will be days, if not weeks, after positive identification before either of the heavy rocket casings can be raised by Navy salvage crews. Some engineers said privately they fear the casings may be broken into pieces and scattered on the ocean floor.

The finding of the fuel tank tip was a different matter. News photographs showed sailors on the USS Preserver, a World War II Navy salvage ship out of Little Creek, Va., lifting the tip of the fuel tank's cone from one deck to another.

In the search for debris, NASA is using four ships that are normally employed to recover the spent boosters when they fall away from the shuttle after two minutes of flight.

At least two of the ships returned to port Thursday, a cloudy and windy day, to be outfitted with different equipment. The Coast Guard was using six planes and six ships to search a huge slice of the east coast from Cape Canaveral to Cape Lookout, N.C.

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Benefits from Bowl showing to come next year

A&M will net about \$100,000 for Cotton Bowl

By FRANK SMITH

Staff Writer

The Texas A&M football team's first Cotton Bowl appearance could net about \$100,000 for the athletic department, an A&M official has estimated.

Wally Groff, associate athletic director for finance, said the Cotton Bowl Committee will retain 25 percent of the gross receipts from the game. The remaining 75 percent is to be split equally between the participating teams, A&M and Auburn University, Groff said.

"We're anticipating our 37 1/2 percent (of the gross receipts) to be approximately \$2.2 million," Groff said. "Of that, we will be able to keep somewhere around \$500,000."

The remainder of A&M's share of the game's gross receipts will be distributed equally among the nine Southwest Conference schools, including A&M, Groff said.

Every (SWC) school's going to

get around \$200,000 to \$225,000 out of the Cotton Bowl every year," he said. "We're going to get that regardless of whether we're there."

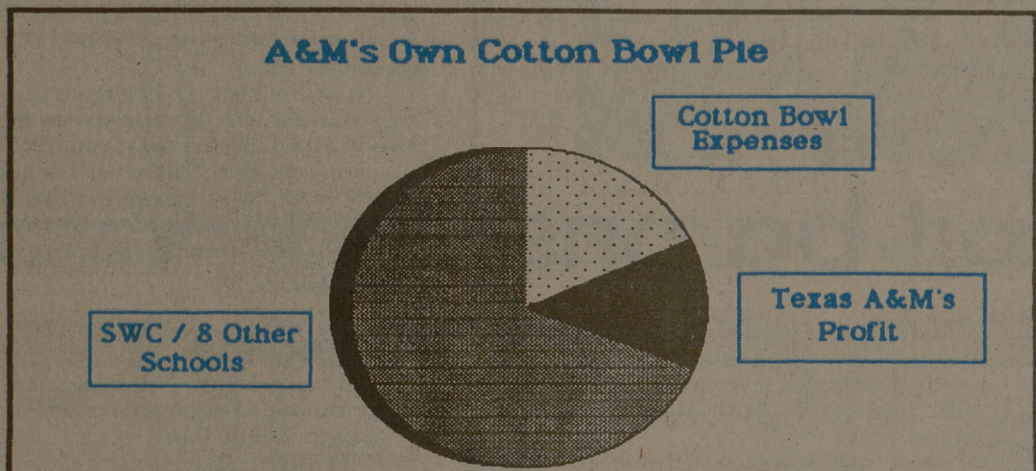
As for the \$500,000 A&M expects

to receive as the conference's participating team, Groff said the expenses incurred during bowl week will eat into a substantial portion of that.

He said those expenses will proba-

bly be around \$400,000 — which would leave A&M a net total of \$100,000 for the bowl appearance.

"We just took 250 people to Dallas for a week," he said of the expenses.



"We had to feed them and house them and take them to these (Cotton Bowl) functions and so on. And this costs money."

Groff said the bowl committee only picks up part of the tab for bowl game functions. The participating teams have to pay the rest, he said.

The money A&M nets from its Cotton Bowl appearance will be added to the school's \$7.4 million Athletic Department budget, Groff said.

Groff said many of the financial benefits from playing in the Cotton Bowl may show up for A&M next season.

"Winning the Cotton Bowl is good for us monetarily," Groff said. "But what it really does is boost your ticket sales for the next year."

"Next year's sales should be considerably higher than this year's — based on the fact that people are still optimistic about the program."

Number of students down

Spring '86 figures below last spring's

By BRIAN PEARSON

Senior Staff Writer

Enrollment numbers for the 1986 spring semester at Texas A&M are down slightly from last year's spring figures.

Don Carter, associate registrar, said 32,968 students are enrolled for spring classes, a 2.63 percent decrease from last year's 33,859 enrollment.

"This is the second time in the history of A&M that we've had a reduction in the spring compared to the previous spring," Carter said.

He said the first time A&M experienced a drop was last year when enrollment dropped 0.75 percent from spring 1984 semester when the enrollment was 34,118.

Carter said this year's drop in enrollment may be attributed to several factors.

One possible cause, he said, is the size of the December graduating class — the largest December graduating class in A&M history — and the lack of incoming students.

"We just don't get that many new people in the spring," Carter said.

Carter said the tuition hike and the current slump in the Texas economy due to dropping oil prices also took their toll on A&M enrollment figures.

Group trying to unionize college athletes

By MARGARET ARTZ

Reporter

What if they had a bowl game and the players were out on strike?

A new organization, the Revenue Producing Major College Player's Association, is trying to organize a strike of next year's bowl games by college athletes. RPMCPA organizers say the strike would draw attention to what they see as the exploitation of college athletes.

RPMCPA coordinator Dick Devenzio said college athletes are being cheated by the NCAA because

they can't share in the money awarded to schools for playing in bowl games.

Devenzio said the RPMCPA would act as the players' union. Money now given to schools that compete in post-season games would instead go to the RPMCPA and be redistributed to the players through scholarships and other programs, he said.

"That money is earned by the talent and sweat of the athletes, yet they get no part of that reward," Devenzio said.

College athletes must be amateurs

according to NCAA rules, he said, but with the current system, to be an amateur is to be poor.

The goals of the RPMCPA are:

- To change the current NCAA definition of amateur status so college athletes can receive the benefits that are now prohibited.

- To provide athletes with legal representation, complete medical coverage, career advice and personal counseling.

- To represent athletes so rules made by the universities take the athletes' interests into full consideration.

- To establish a lifetime scholarship program which would provide an athlete with room, board, books, tuition, and spending and travel allowances for as long as he continues his education.

- To provide advice and money needed for emergencies through a toll-free hotline number.

"If an athlete suddenly needs to go home because of sickness or a death in the family and can't afford the plane fare, it's against NCAA rules for the coaches or alumni to give him that money," Devenzio explained. "This would be a way for

him to get the money he needs in a bona-fide emergency."

The toll-free number also will help educate athletes about the goals of the RPMCPA, he said.

Devenzio said he hopes players, with the funds of RPMCPA, will be able to finish their education after their days on the field are over.

Devenzio said the demanding nature of college athletics prevents athletes from getting their education while on scholarship.

"Athletes are accused of having

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