

# Reagan

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1, the president said "tens of millions of Americans" would make their tax-filing deadline.

"I urge Congress to forget about raising taxes and concentrate instead on controlling spending," he said.

On prospects for a summit meeting this year with Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev, the president virtually ruled out June as the date. "It is just about out now," he said.

The two leaders had tentatively decided on June at their first summit meeting last November in Geneva. But since then the two sides have had trouble nailing down Gorbachev's visit.

Reagan said July still remained a possibility, but said sometime after the Congressional elections in November was more likely. He flatly ruled out having Gorbachev here in the four months leading up to the elections.

Privately, U.S. officials had expressed concern the Soviet leader might try to use his meeting with Reagan to try to influence the

outcome of the races for the House and Senate.

In reply to other questions, the president said:

- He hopes the collapse of this weeks Contadora peace talks following Nicaragua's refusal to negotiate would persuade the Sandinista regime's neighbors to support U.S. aid to Nicaraguan rebels.

- He hopes oil prices will stabilize soon, but he resists government intervention in the oil market "because that has never worked."

- Deposed Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos may have been "misinformed" when he said he did not realize the United States was flying him out of the country after he fled the presidential palace aboard a U.S. helicopter.

"As far as we knew, he knew his destination when he left the palace was Clark Field," the U.S. air base in the Philippines, where Marcos and his entourage remained briefly before flying on to Guam and Hawaii, he said.

"I think maybe he was misinformed," Reagan said. "It happens to every president."

# Texas Air-Eastern merger to be studied

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Transportation Department, saying Texas Air Corp.'s acquisition of Eastern Airlines "presents serious competitive issues," ordered an in-depth analysis of the merger Wednesday, including oral arguments before an administrative law judge.

Texas Air Corp. had hoped that the department would give the proposed merger accelerated treatment so it might be concluded before the heavy summer air travel season. But critics have asked for the longer process because they said the merger poses competitive problems.

The Transportation Department, which must approve the merger, said the oral arguments would begin May 27, with a recommendation to be sent by the administrative law judge to Transportation Secretary Elizabeth Dole by July 23.

Texas Air and Eastern announced their intention to merge last February. If the agreement is approved, it would result in the creation of the country's largest airline. Texas Air already owns Continental Airlines and New York Air.

The department said it would examine all competitive issues raised

by the merger but asked participants to concentrate on the merger's impact on competition in the Northeast market.

"The acquisition presents serious competitive issues, particularly with respect to service between Washington, New York and Boston," the department said.

Critics of the merger, including a number of airlines, said that Eastern's primary competitor in the Washington-New York-Boston air shuttle is now New York Air. Under the merger, Texas Air Corp. would control both those airlines, although

Texas Air officials have said the merger would remain separate entities.

Among the airlines that questioned the proposed merger were Delta Airlines, U.S. Air and Piedmont Airlines, a new low-cost carrier that recently established a base at Dulles International Airport outside Washington.

These airlines have argued that the merger is approved Eastern possibly New York Air should pick up some of their so-called "slot" term for landing and takeoff authority — at the crowded National Airport in Washington and equally congested LaGuardia Airport in New York.

# French premier's program wins vote of confidence

PARIS (AP) — The National Assembly gave Premier Jacques Chirac a vote of confidence Thursday for his program of economic recovery, social reforms and tough security measures against terrorism.

The 577-seat Assembly voted 292-285 in support of Chirac's Wednesday policy speech, giving him three more votes than the 289 he needed. Chirac had said he would put

himself and his program on the line following the slim, two-seat majority the conservatives won in the March 16 legislative elections that ousted the Socialists from five years in power.

The conservative coalition has 291 seats in the Assembly. It was not immediately clear which other deputy gave his vote to Chirac.

Besides the Socialists and the

Communists, the extreme right-wing National Front voted against Chirac.

Seated in the Assembly for the first time ever with 35 deputies, the National Front has the power to swing votes because of the conservative coalition's slim majority.

All parties are united in a desire for action against terrorism, but a disagreement already has developed

between Chirac and Francois Mitterrand, the Socialist president, over selling state-owned companies to private investors.

Chirac and Mitterrand must agree along if the government is to stay. It is the first time since Charles de Gaulle created the strong presidency in 1958 that France has faced "bifurcation," with the two leaders in rival political camps.

# Man to learn difference between life sentence, 99 years

ABILENE (AP) — An Abilene man will find out first hand the difference between a 99-year prison sentence and a life term when he begins thinking about parole, court officials say.

After just 17 minutes of deliberations, a state district court jury on Tuesday convicted Marion Alexander Chaney Jr. of the Jan. 1, 1984, theft of three new Pontiacs from Western Pontiac-Datsun.

After hearing evidence of five prior felony convictions, jurors set Chaney's punishment at 99 years in prison.

Another jury had given Chaney a life prison term in the same case in January 1985, but Chaney appealed and won a retrial because of the improper introduction of a conviction that had been reversed.

Punishment range this time was five to 99 years, or life, and Assistant

Criminal District Attorney James Eidson again asked for the maximum.

Jurors sent Judge Billy John Edwards a note asking the difference between a 99-year term and life, but the judge said law prohibited him from answering the question.

The 99-year term was announced an hour later.

After the trial, a state parole officer, Matt Spears, explained the dif-

ference. For purposes of parole, the Board of Pardons and Paroles regards a life sentence as 60 years.

A specific term of more than 60 years, like 99 years, is considered just that, Spears said.

If a crime is not aggravated by the use of a deadly weapon or the age of the victim, a person becomes eligible for consideration for parole after he

has received credit for one-third of his sentence.

With "good time" and other credits, a person conceivably could be paroled from a life term in as little as six to seven years.

Parole consideration does not mean parole is automatic, Spears said.

Because Chaney's 99-year term was not aggravated, he will be eligi-

ble for parole consideration after receiving credit for 33 years in prison, Spears said. That could be done in little as 10 years, based on the current guidelines for "good time," officer said.

Court-appointed defense attorney Larry Robertson claimed Chaney was set up by a former prison inmate and then entrapped by police. Another appeal is expected.

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