

The Battalion

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House OKs Reagan's Contra aid measures

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House heeded President Reagan's pleas Wednesday night and narrowly approved \$100 million of mostly military aid to rebels fighting to overthrow the government of Nicaragua.

The Democratic-controlled chamber approved the plan by a vote of 221-209 for \$70 million worth of military hardware and \$30 million in non-lethal aid. That reversed the House's narrow defeat of a similar package three months ago.

Under the plan, the U.S. government for the first time would openly give military support to the rebels known as "Contras" and permits the CIA and Pentagon to manage the

Contra program. The rebels had been covertly supported by the CIA from 1981 to 1984.

During the debate, much was made of \$27 million in non-lethal aid previously provided to the Contras. Opponents of further aid said large amounts of that money ended up in the pockets of the Honduran military and in bank accounts in the Bahamas and the Cayman Islands.

Reagan's supporters said military aid was essential to curb communism and restore democracy in Nicaragua while opponents said the administration had failed to pursue a peaceful outcome through negotiations.

In summing up the opposition, Rep. Thomas Foley, D-Wash., said

that by approving military aid the United States would be "embarking on what would be a virtually unprecedented action — the United States would be undertaking . . . a proxy war (against) a government with which we technically are at peace and technically have diplomatic relations."

Republican leader Bob Michel of Illinois urged his colleagues to abandon partisanship. "Let's have the guts to nurture democracy and fight communism in our hemisphere today, not tomorrow," he said.

The battle took on a personal quality this week when House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill Jr. rejected a White House request to per-

mit Reagan to make a pitch from the House rostrum for his plan. O'Neill said such an action would be unprecedented and unorthodox, and offered to give Reagan a forum if he would submit to questioning from House members or address a joint congressional session instead. Those terms were rejected and Reagan made a noontime speech Tuesday in the White House, which the three major television networks declined to carry.

The House vote added the Reagan plan to an unrelated bill providing money for military construction projects. To become law, that bill must pass the Republican-controlled Senate.

Reagan lobbied until the last minute to win support and reverse the earlier defeat. It was an uphill battle, as White House spokesman Larry Speakes said earlier in the week that Reagan was behind.

Several congressmen who switched their votes said they supported Reagan this time because they felt decisive action was needed to force the leftist Sandinista government to negotiate in good faith with its opponents.

Earlier Wednesday, O'Neill said Reagan's effort was picking up Democratic votes.

Some Democrats backed an alternative package of \$100 million which would give the Contras \$30

million now for non-lethal items like clothing but which would hold off the military items until after another House vote Oct 1. The delay was intended to give peace talks a chance to work.

That proposal, offered by Rep. Dave McCurdy, D-Okla., was incorporated into a bill providing \$8.1 billion for various Pentagon construction projects. McCurdy's plan was superseded by the Reagan proposal.

The House voted 279-148 approval of the proposal to add McCurdy's plan to the package before moving on to other items in the overall bill and then returning to Contra aid late in the afternoon.



Beware!

College Station Fire Marshall Harry Davis says people caught within city limits with fireworks will have the fireworks confiscated and will be issued a citation. At left, Larry Elkins displays some of his wares for

sale on Highway 60 just outside the city limits. At right, signs located at most entrances into College Station warn any would-be violators. Davis says the signs will be removed after July 4.

Photo by TOM OWNBEY

Hurricane Bonnie hits Texas coast with 85 mph winds

GALVESTON (AP) — Hurricane Bonnie, with 85 mph winds, hit the Texas coast about 8 a.m. Thursday between Freeport and Port Arthur becoming the first June hurricane since 1957.

Authorities in Port Arthur and Jefferson counties in Texas evacuated Sabine Pass late Wednesday after securing beachfront property during daylight hours and ceasing travel on coastal roads.

Galveston officials advised residents not protected by the city's sea wall to evacuate, but unusually high waves tempted many surfers Wednesday afternoon and others were sunning themselves and walking along the wall.

"We are advising people who own boats to go check their moorings, and people in mobile homes to check their tie-downs," said Judie Holland with Galveston's Office of Emergency Preparedness. "We're asking everyone that if they do not have the materials to board up their homes, to purchase the materials and be sure their survival kits are in place."

Traffic leaving the island Wednesday evening on Interstate 45 toward Houston was slowed because of an automobile accident, officials said.

About 7,000 people in lower Cameron Parish, La. headed for higher ground late Wednesday as Hurricane Bonnie picked up speed and churned closer to the bayous and marshes of western Louisiana.

Everybody was ordered out by nightfall and the coastal highway was, La. 82, was closed off, said Hayes Picou Jr., civil defense director in the parish that remembers when Hurricane Audrey killed 526 people there in 1957.

La. 27, a narrow, low road along a ridge between the Gulf of Mexico and Calcasieu Lake, was the only remaining land route out of Cameron, and it's subject to flooding by storm-blown tidal surges.

Advance thunderstorms were already crackling into the area ahead of the storm, according to the National Weather Service.

Cameron, Holly Beach and Johnson's Bayou are Louisiana's closest exposed points to Bonnie's predicted landfall in Texas.

Gale-force winds extended about 75 miles from the center of the hurricane, and thunderstorms lashed the western Louisiana coastline Wednesday afternoon.

When a hurricane does threaten, Breaux said, things start moving fast.

With television, radio, and the bullhorns atop the deputies' squad cars all working to let people know if danger threatens, he said, everyone in lowlying areas can be warned and on their way to higher ground within 90 minutes.

The weather service said Bonnie could pile tides 10 feet higher than normal.

B-CS may be site for aircraft plant

By Sondra Pickard
Senior Staff Writer

Bryan-College Station is one of eight proposed sites defense contractor McDonnell Douglas Corp. has chosen for a possible aircraft manufacturing plant that might also include a research facility involving Texas A&M personnel.

James Douglas, manager of long-range plans at the Long Beach, Calif. McDonnell Douglas aircraft division, said the corporation is looking at a number of possibilities, including a plant which would assemble U.S. Navy T-45A Goshawk training jets.

But Douglas stressed that a number of factors will determine if the

plant becomes a reality, most importantly government funding.

"Assuming you get funding," he said, "it still depends on both the level and timing of those funds."

"We are in the planning stages and this is an ongoing process, but we have made no decisions on this whatsoever. This plan could literally change overnight, and a lot depends on a certain economist from Texas A&M (Sen. Phil Gramm)."

A Goshawk plant is one possibility McDonnell Douglas has studied, he said, but other options include utilizing the site for a maintenance overhaul modification center or a panel assembly plant.

Douglas said A&M is the factor

that gives Bryan-College Station an advantage over other areas, both because it has exceptional engineering capabilities and because it's one of the company's principal areas of recruitment.

Most aircraft manufacturing plants are accompanied by a research facility for continued modification studies, he said, and there is a distinct possibility that A&M faculty could participate in such research.

"If we were to locate in Bryan-College Station," he said, "we would naturally want to look at A&M because it is one of the nation's leading engineering schools."

The three other prospective Texas sites for the plant are San An-

gelo, Corpus Christi and San Antonio.

Dr. Mark L. Money, system vice-chancellor in charge of the A&M Research Park, accompanied David Eller, Board of Regents chairman, to Long Beach in March to make a presentation to McDonnell Douglas and answer their questions about the city and A&M.

Money said if the plant were constructed here, Easterwood Airport would be the only airport that fits the qualifications in the area, because of the extended runway and limited air traffic.

He said research personnel could use A&M engineering facilities, possibly including the A&M Research

Park, which is only a short distance from the airport.

"We're going to hold our breath and hope that we're in the running but we just don't know that at this time."

Ed Brady, executive vice-president of the Bryan-College Station Chamber of Commerce, said that a plant of this sort could initially employ about 600 people.

But Douglas said exactly how many people could be employed will depend on factors such as the amount of production expected, an estimate which cannot accurately be made at this point.

Tax bill compromises to aid middle class

WASHINGTON (AP) — Three weeks before congressional negotiators begin writing a compromise tax-overhaul plan, the top item on their agenda has been set: protect the middle class.

"How we treat middle-income families is going to be probably the most important" issue for the Senate-House conference, Rep. Dan Rostenkowski, D-Ill., chairman of the tax-writing House Ways and Means Committee, said Wednesday.

Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, R-Kan., said, "I think the House bill is a bit better in that area."

Appearing with Rostenkowski on ABC-TV's "Good Morning America" program, Dole stopped short of saying he would like to see negotiators depart from the tax-rate structure in the Senate bill to pay for greater relief for the middle class.

"Obviously, all of us want to keep the rates as low as we can," Dole said.

Rostenkowski agreed but added: "There are areas that we're going to have to negotiate in order to keep those rates that low."

The tax plan that the Senate approved Tuesday on a 97-3 vote would cut individual taxes by an average of 6.4 percent. Several lawmakers, including some of the most vocal supporters of the bill, said they were counting on negotiators to come up with a final plan that would be fairer to the middle class.

Senior tax-writers from the House and Senate will begin working on a compromise bill around July 15. Leaders hope to get the final measure to President Reagan for his signature about Labor Day.

Irradiation ups shelf life, kills parasites on fruit, vegetables

By Olivier Uytendaele
Staff Writer

Within the year, irradiated fruit and vegetables could begin appearing on supermarket shelves due to the easing of Food and Drug Administration regulations on irradiated produce in April.

The Federal government, hailing the process as an economical means of ridding foods of pests and disease-causing parasites without the use of chemical pesticides, hopes to see the food-irradiation industry prosper. Officials also cite irradiation's ability to extend shelf life as another valid reason for supporting its acceptance.

Food irradiation is a preservation technique that involves exposing the food to a radioactive source, usually cobalt-60, by moving the food along a conveyor belt through a thick-

walled concrete chamber where the radiation is contained.

According to an April article in the *New York Times*, spices are the only food items irradiated commercially in the United States today and only one-half of one percent of approved spices undergo irradiation.

But on April 15, the Food and Drug Administration approved the use of irradiation on fresh fruits and vegetables, the latest in a series of initiatives that have allowed the irradiation of pork, wheat, potatoes, onions and spices.

One Texas A&M researcher, however, doubts there is enough of a need to make the process attractive to industry.

A&M horticultural sciences professor Dr. E. E. Burns, a 35-year veteran of food-irradiation research, says there are many reasons he doesn't think the process will become commercially viable soon.

The irradiation of white potatoes for example, which prevents the potatoes from sprouting and extends their shelf life to a year-and-a-half, was approved by the FDA in 1964.

In fact, 30 years ago a potato grower in Michigan experimented with a portable, cobalt-60 irradiator encased in lead which was used in the field during harvest, Burns says. The newly picked potatoes were run along a conveyor belt, through the irradiator and into the hopper.

Burns says although the process is simple and effective, it didn't catch on because an 18-month shelf life for potatoes is unnecessary. The shelf life of irradiated potatoes equals three crop cycles for the potato — with a crop harvested every six months, there is little need to store potatoes for 1½ years. The same holds true for onions and garlic.

Irradiation of fruits and certain

2nd session registration will begin on June 30

By Sondra Pickard
Senior Staff Writer

Beginning June 30, any student who does not require academic advising will be able to pre-register for the second summer term on the first floor of the Pavilion, but those who do require advising will register July 9 through 11.

In all, registration will be open from June 30 to July 14, and classes for the second summer session begin July 15.

Students who need academic advising should use the following registration schedule:

- Last name A through G should register July 9.
- Last name H through O should register July 10.
- Last name P through Z should register July 11.

Don Carter, A&M associate registrar, said students who register for the second summer term during any of these periods must pay their fees by 5 p.m. on July 14, or their classes will be cancelled.

Carter said students are encouraged to pay their fees at the time they register in the Pavilion, although payments will also be accepted in the Coke Building.

vegetables such as tomatoes "cripples up," or slows down, the ripening process and gives produce a longer shelf life, Burns says.

But he says U.S. apple and citrus growers already are having a hard time competing with imported fruit

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