

Senate chooses leaders

WASHINGTON (AP) — Senate Democrats, flexing their new political muscle, reinstalled Robert C. Dole of West Virginia as majority leader Thursday, and Republicans re-elected Bob Dole of Kansas as minority leader for the 100th Congress, which convenes Jan. 6.

That reverses the roles Byrd and Dole played in the 99th Congress and reflects the outcome of the Nov. 3 elections, which ended six years of Democratic control in the Senate.

"We are in the majority and we are ready to do business," said Byrd, who has led Senate Democrats since 1977. He is returning to the majority position he held until 1980.

With each party's choices for leadership posts all but settled in advance, there was no suspense as the 100th Congress opened. Democrats and 45 Republicans met privately in different rooms near the Senate chamber.

But the feisty Democrats served notice that they intend to put together a comprehensive agenda of domestic and foreign policy issues to capture the legislative initiative in the White House early next year.

"We are not going to wait three months in the presidential waiting room," Byrd said. "The president has his timetable; we have ours. We are going to send the American people a signal that it is no longer business as usual."

Byrd called on the administration to send its fiscal 1988 budget to Congress on Jan. 5, as required by the Gramm-Rudman budget-balancing act. But administration officials said the spending proposal may not be ready until early February.

Byrd also said the Senate will be in session in early January, instead of taking a recess that had been expected to last until late that month.

Along with Byrd, the Democrats re-elected their top leaders from the 99th Congress.

The Democrats also elected 85-year-old John C. Stennis of Mississippi, the oldest member of the Senate, to the largely ceremonial post of president pro tempore.

In addition to Dole, who will be facing his first Congress as minority leader, the Republicans re-elected an entire leadership team.

Female cadet files report over assault near bonfire stack

By Bob Grube
 Senior Staff Writer

A female Texas A&M cadet filed a report Wednesday with the University Police Department against five men who she said dragged her from a barrel and threw her outside the bonfire perimeter.

Simone Weaver said Thursday, "I charge them with assault if the police can find them."

College Station Police Department Detective Rita Watkins said assault is punishable by up to one year in jail and a \$2,000 fine.

However, she said, this is the maximum penalty and probably would be given to students, especially if they were first-time offenders.

Bob Wiatt, director of security and traffic, was unavailable for comment on the charges Thursday.

Weaver, who is a first lieutenant in the Company W-1, said she had been told she could not work on stack and decided to "swamp logs" (carry logs in from the outside perimeter) Tuesday night.

But no one was swamping logs, so she looked around for something to do.

Weaver said the chain crews were there, so she asked the "scarecrow" if he needed a break.

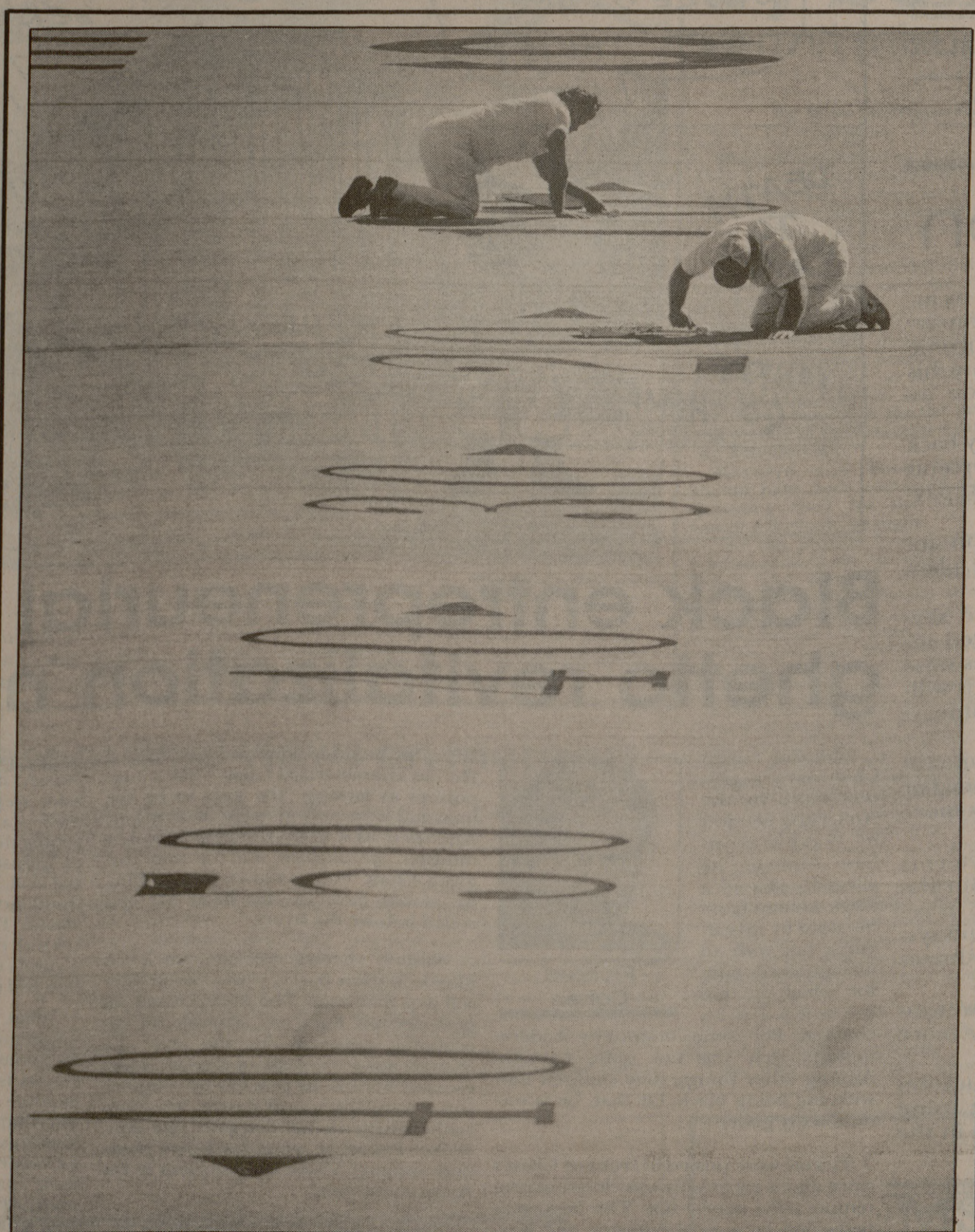
The "scarecrows" direct the trucks carrying the logs, so the logs can be stacked on the stack.

They stand on a 55-gallon oil drum, so they'll be visible to the truck driver.

"I talked to him and he said he was really tired and needed a break," Weaver said. "I've scarecrowed before, so I knew what I was doing."

She said she expects to be teased when she goes out to bonfire but that it's OK because she's used to it.

But, she said, about five minutes after she got up on the barrel, five citizens approached her and knocked



Painting By Numbers

Terry Perry, left, and Mark Record paint white outlines around the Kyle Field yard-

line markers Thursday for Saturday's A&M-TCU football game. Kickoff is at 12:04 p.m.

Photo by John Makely

CS bank fails, sold to bank in Caldwell

FDIC official says deposits safe; bank will reopen today

By Christi Daugherty
 Staff Writer

Blaming the Texas economy and poor lending practices, Texana National Bank declared insolvency at 4 p.m. Thursday, and was sold by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. within hours.

An FDIC spokesman said all accounts at the bank are safe.

Bill Olcheski, an FDIC spokesman in Washington D.C., said that the bank was purchased by First State Bank of Caldwell and would open its doors today as a College Station branch of that bank.

Olcheski said First State assumed \$11.1 million in deposits, and that all Texana Bank depositors now are automatically First State depositors.

He said that First State agreed to pay the FDIC a \$225,000 purchase price and assume \$7.7 million in loans.

The FDIC will advance \$3.3 million to the assuming bank to facilitate the takeover, he said.

The FDIC will recover some of that money, Olcheski said, by liquidating some assets that weren't transferred to First State Bank.

He said that in such cases as these the FDIC has precedence over First State on handling some of the loans.

Buster Chandler, the FDIC representative handling this case, said that the assets to be liquidated are the bank's bad loans.

"Basically that means that the assets of the bank that caused it to fail, mainly bad loans, will be liquidated," Chandler said.

"They will either be collected or sold," he said.

He said that 36 percent of the bank's loan portfolio involves real estate.

Charles Hancock, the chief executive officer of First State of Caldwell, said that depositors probably will notice few changes.

He said that because most person-

nel will stay on and because First State policies are similar to Texana policies, depositors will need little adjustment.

"We will operate with our policies, which are relatively conservative," he said.

"We're an old bank; we're well-backed and well-capitalized," he said.

He said this branch will be among the first to be allowed to organize under the new branch banking law passed by Texas voters in November.

He also said that his son, Bill Hancock, will be president of the College Station branch.

Larry Chilton of the Texas Department of Banking said that all those who have deposits in the bank have nothing to worry about.

The investments of the depositors are protected for up to \$100,000 by federal law.

Chilton said that the Texana case basically followed the book for cases of bank insolvency.

The bank can reopen so quickly, he said, because the FDIC knows when a bank is struggling and prepares to take over.

He said the FDIC can assume control of a failing bank whenever it thinks that such an action would reduce the potential FDIC loss.

"The FDIC makes a list of potential buyers and calls the buyers who meet at a bidders meeting in Dallas," Chilton said.

"Once a bid is accepted by the FDIC, the bank is closed and reopened under a new owner," he said.

He said the FDIC moves in quickly to make sure that assets are properly taken care of.

The FDIC said Texana is one of 126 banks to fail nationwide so far this year.

It also is one of 22 to fail in Texas this year, he said.

Congress blasts Reagan's secret arms sales

WASHINGTON (AP) — Congressional leaders on Thursday brushed aside President Reagan's defense of his secret sale of arms to Iran, branding it a mistake that may very well have violated the law.

As two congressional committees prepared for closed door sessions with CIA Director William Casey, Republicans and Democrats used nearly identical terms to criticize the president's actions.

Reagan met with the House Dem-

ocratic and GOP leaders at the White House but had nothing further to say publicly, following a Wednesday night news conference in which he defended the sales as a high-risk gamble that at least gained the release of three American hostages.

Reagan's former national security adviser Robert McFarlane, who delivered a planload of weapons to Iran, issued a statement saying he was taking responsibility for a serious error in judgment in not realizing that the sale would have a damaging effect on the national interest.

Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, R-Kan., said, "The bottom line is that we should not even have a perception of trading arms for hostages."

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., went a step further in his criticism. "It's the end of the Reagan era," he said. "If there was any doubt that it ended with the election, it ended last night."

After meeting with Reagan, House Majority Leader Jim Wright, D-Texas, told reporters that the administration had not complied with several laws requiring that Congress be notified in a timely way of major transfers of arms.

Wright said Thursday the United States has shipped more than 2,000 anti-tank missiles and more than 200 anti-aircraft missiles to Iran, a figure higher than earlier published estimates.

Panel: Overabundance of rules could hamper biotechnology

By Rodney Rather
 Staff Writer

Although regulation of biotechnology is needed, too much regulation may hamper developments in the field, members of a panel discussion said Thursday.

The panel discussion concluded the MSC Political Forum's E.L. Miller Lecture Series, which also addressed questions concerning the ethics and safety of biotechnology and genetic engineering.

Harold Himmelman, a lawyer who represents companies in regulation and litigation involving biotechnology, said biotechnology has enormous benefits, but with those benefits come risks.

"I also believe, very strongly, that biotechnology is here to stay," Himmelman said.

Several government agencies are charged with the research and approval of biotechnological experiments and products, but he said those agencies also have hindered growth of the field.

Such agencies as the Environmental Protection Agency, the Food and Drug Administration and the U.S. Department of Agriculture all have laws pertaining to the interests of biotechnology enthusiasts, the public and the government. These laws should comfort anxiety of the control of the industry, Himmelman said.

"All these programs should assure the public that biotechnology can be controlled," he said.

But the government has refused to let experiments continue or products reach commercialization, Himmelman said, although no public risks have been found and other countries are surpassing the United States in the field.

"I feel very strongly that if America cannot do this well, it will be done somewhere else," he said.

He said there are virtually no rules regulating development of biotechnology in Europe or Asia, and both are making rapid advances in the field.

Andrew Kimbrell, a lawyer and policy-maker for the Foundation on Economic Trends, said biotechnology may include many short-term benefits, and also will produce several long-term problems.

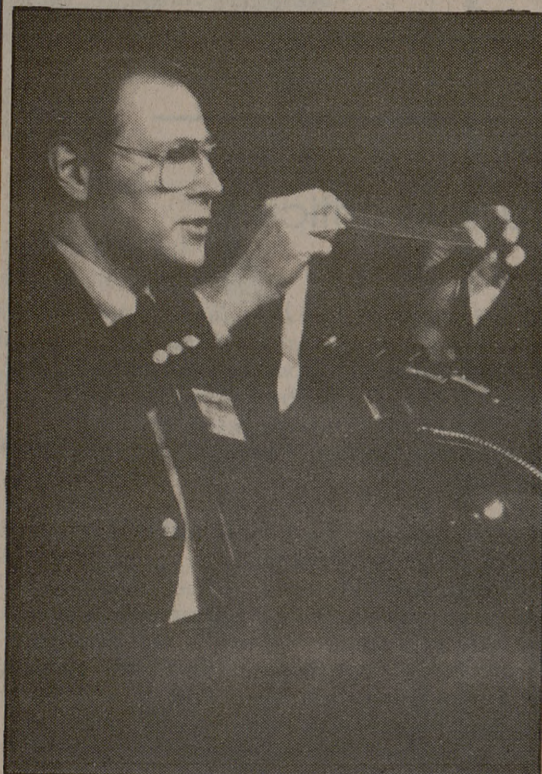
Hard questions pinpointing possibly hazardous side effects must be answered before biotechnology is given too much freedom to operate, Kimbrell said.

"This technology brings with it a whole group of technical, social and social distribution questions that should be answered and have to be answered before we implement this technology," he said.

Dr. Winston Brill, vice president of research and development for Agracetus Corp., however, said the changes made through genetic engineering would not make radical changes in organisms.

But Kimbrell said open, public debate is needed before questions surrounding biotechnology can properly be answered.

"Do we want to change the very structure, external and internal, of the vital community around us to suit our production needs, or do we want a wait-and-see or status quo attitude until more is known?" he asked.



Dr. Winston J. Brill

Photo by Greg Bailey