

Texas A&M The Battalion

Vol. 82 No. 77 USPS 045360 6 pages

College Station, Texas

Wednesday, January 7, 1987

Congress creates 'Watergate' committees

WASHINGTON (AP) — A new Congress tackled a top priority Tuesday, creating two Watergate-style committees to investigate why the United States clandestinely sold arms to Iran and how some money wound up supporting Nicaragua's Contra rebels.

"Our first duty in this new Congress is the restoration of public trust in the formulation of American foreign policy," said Sen. Robert C. Byrd, D-W.Va., the majority leader in the new Democrat-controlled Senate, as the body opened for business.

"The Iran misadventure has hurt the presidency, made a shambles of American foreign policy and called into question just how our foreign policy is formulated and implemented," Byrd said.

Partisan tensions already were becoming apparent over the Iran issue and its potential for affecting the 1988 presidential elections, and Sen. Bob Dole, R-Kan., now the minority leader in the 100th Congress, urged colleagues not to be consumed by the Iran-Contra matter to the exclusion of other issues.

"There are too many other problems, domestic and foreign, problems that are not going to go away," Dole said. "They cannot, and should not, be swept aside because of an obsession with the Iranian affair."

A few blocks west of the Capitol, former federal judge Lawrence E. Walsh, appointed last month by a three-judge panel to be independent counsel for the Iran-Contra affair, was settling in at the U.S. Court-

house. Walsh also was to meet with high-ranking Justice Department officials, government sources said.

The 74-year-old independent counsel, they said, likely will take over a series of separate Justice Department investigations into various elements of the private support system for the Nicaraguan rebels, merging these efforts with his broad-based investigation.

At Georgetown University Hospital, officials said that CIA Director William J. Casey, who appeared before congressional committees last month to discuss the Iran-Contra affair, remains in stable condition and "continues to convalesce" from Dec. 18 surgery to remove a brain tumor.

But the hospital statement acknowledged, for the first time, that

the spy chief "has been experiencing speech difficulties and right-sided weakness. Both of these functions have been improving slowly since the surgery. He has begun radiation therapy which will continue for a number of weeks for treatment of his lymphoma."

And at the Pentagon, Defense Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger expressed doubts that profits from the sale of U.S. weapons to Iran actually had been provided to the U.S.-backed Contra rebels.

Weinberger, in an interview with reporters, said, "I think it's a possibility" that the money never made it to the guerrillas. At this point, he said, the only evidence that such a transfer took place has been statements by Lt. Col. Oliver L.

North to Attorney General Edwin Meese III.

"I think we're all assuming that what he said was true," Weinberger said of North. "And nobody knows that yet. I understand the Contras have denied receiving it."

North was fired as a National Security Council staff deputy on Nov. 25, and he has cited his Fifth Amendment rights against self-incrimination in refusing to give testimony to congressional committees.

The Senate began debate on legislation that would establish an 11-member Select Committee on Secret Military Assistance to Iran and the Nicaraguan Opposition, and worked toward a compromise calling for the panel to finish its work by Aug. 1,

three months earlier than initially proposed.

The House also was preparing to take up its own legislation on today to create a 15-member parallel panel to report no later than Oct. 30.

GOP lawmakers continued to press for public release of a 133-page report by the Senate Intelligence Committee that sources said found no evidence that President Reagan knew of the diversion of Iran arms sale proceeds to the Contras. The panel had voted 7-6 not to release the report late Monday.

Byrd strongly objected to release of the report, saying it had been "sanitized" by the administration and that at least one unclassified section had been deleted from the proposed report.

Amtrak starts train service after wreck

CHASE, Md. (AP) — Amtrak restored limited passenger train service Tuesday past the site of a deadly wreck, and said its tests found two critical signal lights were working properly and should have prevented the collision that killed 15 and injured more than 170.

Amtrak spokesman Clifford Black said 20 trains would be permitted to make the run during the day on the busy Northeast Corridor between Washington and New York, rather than the normal 80.

Trains were held to 30 mph through the area of the wreck, far below the estimated 100 mph at which the 12-car Colonial was traveling Sunday when it rammed three Conrail diesel engines from behind.

National Transportation Safety Board officials provided no fresh details about their investigation beyond Monday night's disclosure that the Conrail engineer reported seeing a stop signal and applying his brakes when he approached the main track from a siding. The engineer said he didn't have time to stop before pulling onto the tracks just ahead of the packed, speeding passenger train.

NTSB officials refused to say if a signal the Conrail engineer had passed earlier directed him to proceed or to slow and be prepared to stop.

The Conrail engineer reportedly has told investigators that the first signal 1.7 miles from the track junction erroneously told him to proceed, meaning that when he saw the passenger train he could not stop in time.



No Way Out

A&M quarterback Kevin Murray searches for help as he tries to escape the oncoming rush of Ohio State linebacker Chris Spielman (36). Murray had problems with

the Buckeye defense all afternoon as he threw a Cotton Bowl record five interceptions in the Aggies' 28-12 loss to Ohio State in the Cotton Bowl on Jan. 1.

Photo by Bill Hughes

Clements says Texas can avoid fines

AUSTIN (AP) — Gov.-elect Bill Clements voiced hope Tuesday that Texas may be able to head off a federal judge's threat to fine the state up to \$800,500 a day for failing to carry out prison reforms.

U.S. District Judge William Wayne Justice on Monday found the state in contempt of court for failing to complete reforms dating back to 1981.

He said that unless the improvements were made by March 31, fines would begin April 1. Assistant Attorney General F. Scott McCown said the fines could total up to \$24 million a month.

But Clements, who is scheduled to meet with Justice at the judge's Tyler office on Friday, said through a spokesman that he hopes Justice can

be persuaded not to levy the fines.

"He believes that Judge Justice wants what everybody else wants, and that is to solve the problem," said Reggie Bashur, Clements' press secretary. "If it is shown clearly and convincingly to the judge that the state is doing everything it can, then he won't levy any fines."

The spokesman said Clements, who will take office Jan. 20, was reviewing Justice's 100-page order Tuesday and would "reserve judgment on the specifics of the citation until after the (Friday) meeting."

The court ordered the reforms — including hiring of more guards and medical personnel —

after an inmate sued the Texas Department of Corrections a decade ago over conditions in the nation's second-largest prison system.

Justice's latest ruling against the prisons came a year after inmates' lawyers filed a motion contending that Texas was in contempt of a settlement it agreed to in July 1985.

In his ruling, Justice criticized the state for doing very little during the first two years after it agreed to the settlement.

While most state officials expressed disappointment with the judge's ruling, Lt. Gov. Bill Hobby went further. He said Justice carried out an arrogant act that is unfair to Texas.

Syrian hostage-taker may be in U.S. illegally

GRAPEVINE (AP) — A Syrian who held a boy at gunpoint for eight hours at the Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport and demanded to be flown to Egypt may have been in the country illegally, authorities said Tuesday.

The 10-year-old boy, Michael Caruso Jr., who had been snatched from his parents as they stood in line at a Delta Air Lines ticket counter,

was released unharmed and reunited with his family.

At a news conference Tuesday afternoon before he and his family flew to Phoenix, Ariz., Michael said that during the ordeal he pretended he was playing a game called "Guns" with a friend of his.

Swiveling in a chair and appearing at ease with reporters, Michael asserted that he could have walked away from his captor at one point.

The hostage incident in the Delta terminal Monday afternoon temporarily halted Delta air travel for about 6,000 people headed into or out of Dallas. Flights resumed early Tuesday, shortly after the gunman surrendered at 11:39 p.m. Monday.

The suspect — identified as Solah Kas Abou-Kassem, 26, of Damascus — was persuaded to surrender by a fake document and the promise that there would be "some amicable way for him to leave the country," airport spokesman Joe Dealey said.

At one point, a Boeing 737 was taken to Gate 10 at the request of the airport's Department of Public Safety, Delta spokesman Henry Conley said.

Len Limmer, director of public safety at DFW, said Abou-Kassem may be in the United States illegally.

The regional director of Immigration and Naturalization Service in Dallas said the agency has no records on Abou-Kassem.

Witnesses said the gunman grabbed Michael and fired a shot in the ceiling and threatened him when the child's father came after him.

Technology shows fat, lean meat in cattle

Ultrasound images show yields of carcasses

By Tricia Pilger
Reporter

The use of ultrasound to predict cattle carcass yields is a good example of technology transfer in action, says Homer Recio, a lecturer in the Texas A&M animal science department.

"Ultrasound was first used in humans," Recio says. "Since then, it has gone from the medical field to the animal science and veterinary medicine fields."

Ultrasound was first used in animals to detect pregnancy in cows and mares, but now it's commonly used in sheep to detect multiple fetuses, he says, so a ewe's feeding regime may be adjusted.

Fertility problems in male animals also may be detected and corrected with the use of ultrasound, Recio says. The testicles may be viewed

with the equipment and monitored until the problem is located.

Ultrasound is beginning to "take off" in the area of determining yield grades, Recio says. Fat thickness, muscle depth and some marbling are visible with an ultrasound machine, he says.

"With this information we are able to determine the quality or yield characteristics of that carcass," he says.

The process is relatively easy, he says. A gel or oil is placed on the animal where the observation is to be made and then a transducer, or probe, is placed in the same area.

"Once the probe is in place, the machine can be turned on and an image is projected onto the screen," Recio says.

"Operating much like sonar, sound waves beamed by the transducer through the flesh will echo

back as they encounter heavier densities of tissue," he says. "Lean has more density than fat and bone has more density than lean."

"We're (A&M) moving the hardest and the fastest in our work with yield grade determinations."

Homer Recio, A&M animal science lecturer

Once a suitable image is acquired, it is placed on a video cassette recorder for later analysis, he says.

In the future, he says, interfacing with a computer will make automatic measurement readings.

"We (researchers) think that within five years, the industry will have developed a prototype using robots so that a mechanical arm will sweep across the kill floor, place a sensor on the hide carcass hanging from a shackle and determine yield and quality grade," Recio says.

The biggest advantage of ultrasound is the ability to yield grade carcasses before the hide is removed, he says, because it enables meat packers to trim off excess fat before shipping the meat.

Another advantage of using ultrasound is that it enables the value of a live animal to be determined, Recio says. Since it measures fat and the ribeye area, and since the carcass weight is given, he says, farmers are able to know which cows are doing best.

However, ultrasound does have some disadvantages, Recio says.

"Expense and expertise are the biggest disadvantages to the machine," he says.

To have the program completely developed and hooked up to a computer costs about \$25,000, he says, although it will pay for itself in the long run.

"Some degree of expertise is also required in the interpretation of the image seen on the screen," Recio says.

However, Recio says, A&M is at the forefront of ultrasound development.

"We're (A&M) moving the hardest and the fastest in our work with yield grade determinations," he says.