

State and Local

Speaker: Foreign policy power tilts to Congress

By Amy Couvillon
Staff Writer

The foreign policy power struggle is now weighted slightly in favor of Congress and away from the presidency, a former Texas A&M student who served as an assistant to the president told students Thursday night.

"I believe that that's the way it (the power advantage) will continue tilting, toward Congress, if President Reagan's strength does not return in some degree or fashion," said Frederick D. McClure, former special assistant for legislative affairs to Ronald Reagan.

"And absent the next president having the charisma, the charm, the character of a Ronald Reagan, the popularity and public opinion factor will continue to be weighted in Congress' favor," he said.

McClure, Class of '76, in a lecture on relations between Congress and the president in connection with the April 1 MSC Wiley lecture series, said the roles of the executive and legislative branches are both complimentary and conflicting.

"As the commander-in-chief, the president commands the military," McClure said. "But he would have nothing to command if the Congress didn't use its power to raise and support the Army and the Navy."

The president is the negotiator — the visual symbol of the United States to foreign countries, he said, but Congress has control over the purse strings because it can decide to appropriate money or levy taxes. Thus their relationship is tension-filled and dynamic, he said.

McClure said his role as former presidential adviser, combined with

his other past position as former legislative director of legal counsel for former Sen. John Tower, R-Texas, has given him a view of the two branches' relationship.

Historically, the president has had the most power in relations with other countries, McClure said.

"George Washington first got onto this idea of having power," he said. "He decided that it was a presidential prerogative to be the leader

"Attitude changes are needed in both the branches."

— Frederick D. McClure, former Reagan assistant

in terms of foreign affairs. His successors tended to embellish upon that theme, and a guy named Abe Lincoln probably invoked the notion of war power for the very first time."

Through the modern wars and conflicts the United States has been involved in, he said, the foreign-policy power of the president grew more, but recently, Congress has begun to take a more active role, beginning with the 1973 passage of the War Powers Act.

"Since Vietnam, it has challenged the president's preeminence," McClure said. "It has also appropriated unto itself the resources, the information and the legal authority to engage in the conduct of foreign affairs on a comprehensive basis."

He said the current Iran-Contra affair makes a discussion of this issue very timely.

"Given the events of the past four months," he said, "it's pretty clear that the lecture series committee must have used some sort of a crystal ball in selecting this year's topic. In my view, your timing could not have been more perfect."

An important power of the president, he said, is the power of persuasion. It still remains to be seen, he said, if Reagan can bounce back from his recent fall from popularity and credibility.

"This power rests in the president's ability to induce others to believe (his policies)," he said. "Ronald Reagan used this power quite effectively during the first six years of his administration, even outside the foreign policy area. . . . Frankly, the jury is still out in the case of President Reagan and Iran."

McClure said Congress is using the ongoing congressional investigation of the Iran-Contra matter as a forum through which to question foreign policy quite closely.

"Sure, they're wanting to get to some answers," he said, "in terms of who did what to who and at what time and who knew about it, but by the same token, it allows Congress to control the foreign policy debate, because they can be critical of the policy as well as the process."

The current struggle between Reagan and the Congress over aid to the Contras is the beginning of the battle, McClure said, adding that the Congress' new basis for power is likely to spill over into the United States' future dealings with Israel and Iran.

But McClure said Congress and the president must learn to compromise and cooperate more if foreign policy is to work.



Frederick D. McClure

hand, must accept the reality that Congressional diffidence and the passivity of an earlier era will never return. The executive's personal and institutional working relationship with Capitol Hill must be strengthened, through continued consultation and cooperation.

"The problem is, where is the line drawn?"

Thief takes master keys to Hart Hall

By Robert Morris
Staff Writer

A Hart Hall dorm resident reported that two master keys were stolen from the dorm's staff room early March 16.

The keys were apparently taken between March 13 and March 16, said Bob Wiatt, director of the University Police.

The student told University Police he saw a first floor window open early Monday morning. He entered the hall and found that the door to the staff room in the basement had been forced open and the keys had been taken from their box, Wiatt said.

Tom Murray, assistant director of student affairs, said the entire building would be re-keyed within the next three weeks at a cost of \$2,500. The money will come from an account students pay \$15 into when they lose a dorm key.

The decision to change the locks was delayed with hope the missing keys would be found earlier in the week, Murray said.

There have been no reports of theft, Wiatt said, but one room was vandalized March 19 with no sign of forcible entry, which would indicate the key was involved.

Currently there are no suspects, but an investigation will continue and the campus police are keeping close watch on the dorm until it can be re-keyed, he said.

Attorney files contempt motion against MHMR

DALLAS (AP) — A lawyer for plaintiffs in a class-action lawsuit against three state schools Thursday filed a motion in federal court asking that the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation be held in contempt of court.

The state is under a federal order prohibiting substandard care in facilities for the mentally retarded.

Attorney David Ferleger said he obtained confidential reports from the Fort Worth State School reflecting "a pattern of degradation, beatings, neglect and abuse."

"The horror of being locked up at the institution (in Fort Worth) is that you never know whether you will be next in line for a beating or left to wallow in filth," Ferleger said.

The filed motion coincides with a consultant's report given to U.S. District Judge Barefoot Sanders that alleges mishandling of clients and a lack of training at state schools.

In a 66-page report delivered Wednesday, sociologist Linda O'Neill said she visited state schools at Fort Worth, Denton and Austin last August and found "flagrant violations" of personal dignity, neglect, unnecessary re-

straint and almost no social-skills training for patients who spend their days engaged in "non-productive and self-abusive activity."

Ferleger's motion, filed with Sanders, alleges that workers at the Fort Worth school who abuse retarded residents are given lax discipline, that workers lie to cover up abuse, and that abuse often is not fully investigated.

"We can't trust the state school to police itself anymore," Ferleger said. "There has been a court order saying that you can't abuse people, you can't beat them up and neglect them.

And that's been violated in dozens of cases in a year and a half."

He said he will ask Sanders to fine the state an unspecified amount. He said he also plans to ask the judge to appoint a monitor to work full-time investigating abuse at the facility.

The report said the residents are overly restricted; young and handicapped retarded people spend a great amount of time walking about aimlessly or staring into space; and personal dignity is violated by such occurrences as coed showering for adolescents.

Clarification

In a front-page article in Thursday's issue of *The Battalion*, information received from both Carolyn Adair, director of student affairs, and Louis Meneghetti, Traditions Council chairman, indicated that sale of T-shirts protesting senior finals had been ended. However, sources have revealed that sales continued Thursday on a private basis.

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