

Texas A&M The Battalion

Vol. 88 No. 25 USPS 045360 12 Pages

College Station, Texas

Monday, October 3, 1988

Cisneros rallies locally for Dukakis campaign

By Alan Sembera
Senior Staff Writer

San Antonio Mayor Henry Cisneros made a brief stop in College Station Friday to boost the campaign of Gov. Michael Dukakis and Sen. Lloyd Bentsen.

Cisneros stressed the importance of this year's election, noting that this is the first presidential race in 28 years where no incumbent is running for re-election.

The fact that a new president will take office next year makes it important for people to look toward building the future and not base their vote on the performance of the last president, he said.

"What we've got to do is create a government that is involved and energetic — that tries to make things better," Cisneros told about 150 Democratic supporters.

The mayor focused on the nation's domestic policies when listing specific programs that the next administration should support.

Cisneros supported the creation of a national energy policy and called for increased support for education, low-income housing and small farms.

Cisneros blamed the Reagan administration for a decline in education, saying the high-school dropout rate is increasing and SAT scores are declining.

He gave Dukakis high marks for his educational policy, saying that San Antonio's education program is based almost exclusively on the Massachusetts program.

San Antonio's program gives a four-year financial package to poor students after they graduate from high school, he said. The students must have a B average and 95 percent class attendance.

Cisneros also criticized the current administration for a "nonexistent energy policy," saying that the United States is so dependent on foreign oil that soldiers had to be sent to the Persian Gulf "to get shot at."

If Dukakis were elected president, he would appoint Bentsen to head a national energy summit to create a national energy policy, Cisneros said.

The mayor said this is just one of the benefits of having a Texan as vice president. He said Bentsen would remember his roots and bring influence to Texas.

Republican presidential candidate George Bush claims Texas as a home for voting purposes, although he lives in Maine.

When asked about the influence of Hispanic voters in Texas, Cisneros said he thinks they will be an attribute for Dukakis and Bentsen.

Cisneros, who is Hispanic, said Dukakis and Bentsen are respected by the Hispanic community, and have generated much excitement there.



Photo by Phelan M. Ebenhack

San Antonio Mayor Henry Cisneros shows his support for Dukakis at Jose's Restaurant in College Station Friday.

Local officials debate on policy of allowing forest fires to burn

By Sharon Maberry
Staff Writer

Massive forest fires burning over 100,000 acres of Yellowstone National Park since the summer have raised questions about a National Park Service "let burn" policy allowing natural forest fires to burn freely.

Sam Logan, information officer for the Texas Forest Service, which is part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, said fires have been a natural part of forest lands throughout history, including natural fires caused by lightning and forest fires set by Indians to make walking and hunting game easier.

Also, some types of trees' seed cones must be exposed to fire occasionally to let the seeds out.

The idea behind the "let burn" policy is to let nature take its course. However, forest fires in the western states are not burning themselves out.

"There's nothing wrong with the policy as long as it's flexible," Logan said.

"It's my understanding that the 'let burn' policy is inflexible and the severe drought this year got out of hand."

"It's awfully easy to armchair quarterback after it's already happened, but the moisture content in some of those trees was 7 percent or lower, which is drier than lumber used to build houses."

"Also, a lot of the timber was already dead because beetles had killed the trees and left them standing. This rotting wood creates a fire hazard."

It is more difficult to fight fires in mountainous regions than in areas like East Texas forest lands, which have a flatter terrain. Forest fires in East Texas usually can be controlled faster because more roads reach the areas, and bulldozers can be used on the flat terrain.

However, in areas like Yellowstone where the land is too steep for bulldozers, fires must be fought by crews of men and women with hand tools.

The crews scratch a line — usually a few feet wide — down to mineral soil. Then they set a back fire between the line and the head fire to try to take the fuel out of the big fire, Logan said.

"There are three things that make a fire burn: fuel, flame and air," he said. "Take any one of those three away and it won't burn. We (firefighters) try to take the fuel away."

But this method of fire control is not working in the western states because high winds blow embers as far as a mile past the scratch lines, he said. Also, many of the fires are crown fires, which burn through treetops and not on the ground.

Although it is generally easier to fight fires in Texas than in mountain regions, Texas forests suffer damage from fires each year. So far in 1988, more than 2,000 Texas forest fires have burned 35,500 of its 22 million acres of forest, Logan said.

The U.S. Forest Service occasionally uses the National Park Service "let burn" policy, but usually it attempts to put natural fires out, he said.

Prescribed burning, controlled by foresters, is often necessary to remove dead wood and brush that create fire hazards, he said.

Also, the fastest way to clear harvested land for replanting trees is to burn it.

Texas forests are not at risk for massive burns like those in the West, Carl Gidlund, public affairs officer for National Forests in Texas, said.

"Some areas in the West will not fight a lightning-caused fire unless human lives or structures are threatened," he said. "In the South, we don't really have a 'let burn' policy. If a fire starts, we fight it. We also have a different fuel type and it is far more moist here."

Humanitarianism helps Contras

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Reagan administration expects to take advantage of a minor change in the new humanitarian aid package for the Contra rebels to institute a series of non-military training programs designed to make the insurgents more self-sufficient.

The aid program that expired Friday said the administration could use the \$17.7 million package only for food, clothing, medical services and shelter.

The new \$27 million six-month package signed into law by President Reagan Saturday calls for assistance

in the same four areas but the word has been deleted, permitting the administration greater flexibility in how the money is spent.

In signing the \$14.3 billion foreign aid bill, Reagan criticized what he said was a minimal amount of humanitarian aid for the Contras.

U.S. officials, insisting on anonymity, said they envision U.S.-sponsored "skills training" in areas ranging from radio maintenance to record keeping, human rights and health care.

The officials said such programs should boost the morale of the thousands of rebels who are camped along the Honduran-Nicaraguan border with little to keep them occupied.

Many of the rebels flocked to these camps from inside Nicaragua over the past six months to take advantage of the assistance programs being carried out in the border area by the Agency for International Development.

No deliveries were made inside Nicaragua because agreement could not be reached with the Sandinista government on an acceptable delivery system.

The officials said they expect opposition to the proposed training programs from members of Congress hostile to the Contras who don't want them to survive as a viable organization.

The prospects for a renewal of military aid for the rebels are not good. The aid package, initially approved by the Senate in August, authorized the release of \$16.5 million in stockpiled military equipment under certain conditions.

Bell tolls farewell to Olympic athletes

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — The 1988 Summer Olympics, kept free of terrorism but tainted by drug scandals, closed Sunday with the pealing of a medieval bell to symbolize the sorrow of parting. The United States finished third in medals.

The 1,000-year-old, 72-ton Emille Bell, which according to Korean legend has the saddest tone of any in the world, tolled farewell to the more than 9,000 athletes from 160 nations who participated in the 24th Olympiad.

The 16-day event, conducted under extraordinary security, wrapped up with the Soviet Union winning the lion's share of the 237 medals events.

The Soviets took home 132 medals, including 55 gold, the most ever in a Summer Olympics without a major-power boycott. East Germany had 102 medals and 37 gold, and the United States 94 medals and 36 gold.

Many felt that the United States was robbed of a second-place tie for golds when judges awarded a bout to a South Korean boxer over American Roy Jones in the 156-pound event on the final day of competition.

Because of boycotts in 1980 and 1984, the Games were the first meeting between the Soviet Union and the United States since 1976 in Montreal, and matchups between the two nations provided some of the Games' highlights.

The U.S. men's volleyball team beat the Soviets to defend its 1984 Olympic championship, providing consolation for America's upset in the men's basketball quarterfinals. America also defeated the Soviets in women's basketball and men's water polo.

At least 1 billion people watched the Olympics via a 115-nation, worldwide TV hookup. The Seoul Games had the greatest number of athletes (9,633), the most countries, the most gold medals and the most venues (34).

Communist North Korea, which demanded a role in the Games, boycotted them, but the only sports power to follow suit was Cuba.

Among the highlights: Greg Louganis won the Olympic Spirit Award as top American athlete Sunday for winning gold medals in platform and 3-meter springboard diving. He accomplished the same feat in 1980 and became the first man to sweep the events twice.

The 28-year-old Louganis, who hit his head on the board in the preliminaries and received five stitches, announced his retirement from diving and said he wanted to pursue acting.

Sisters-in-law Florence Griffith Joyner and Jackie Joyner-Kersey led an American assault in track and field.

Griffith Joyner won golds in the 100, the 200 and the 400-meter relay, and silver in the 1,600-meter relay. Joyner-Kersey won two golds, taking the heptathlon and the long jump.

Kristin Otto of East Germany won six golds in swimming. American swimmer Matt Biondi won seven medals, five gold, while Janet Evans earned three golds in the pool for the United States.

Daniela Silivas of Romania dominated women's gymnastics, winning three golds, two silvers and a bronze.

West German Steffi Graf completed tennis' first Golden Slam, winning the gold medal as well as all four Grand Slam tournaments — Wimbledon and the U.S., French and Australian Opens — in a calendar year.

Regents increase chance of special admission to A&M

By Juliette Rizzo
Staff Writer

Students applying for admission to Texas A&M may have better chances of getting in because of items added to A&M's special admissions review policy by the Texas A&M Board of Regents Saturday.

Under A&M's special admissions review policy, students who are residents of Texas and are not admitted automatically by merit of being in the top 10 percent of their graduating class or for their scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test can be admitted through a special evaluation process.

Students considered under this special provisions category will be evaluated for admission by letters of recommendation, extra-curricular activities, planned field of study and leadership experience.

In revising the admission policy,

regents asked Friday that intended enrollment in the Corps of Cadets be added as a preference item to the list of criteria to be considered for special admissions, although none of the criteria guarantee admission.

In-state students also may be admitted on the basis of relation to a former student. For out-of-state students, the Regents added relation to a former student to the list of special considerations.

In other action, the regents agreed to pay \$125,000 in legal fees to lawyers of former student and member of the Corps of Cadets, Melanie Zentgraf, who filed suit against A&M in 1979 for discrimination.

Zentgraf claimed that she was harassed by male cadets after she was admitted into the Corps.

The payments were ordered by U.S. District Judge Ross Sterling,

who presided over the Zentgraf case. A&M already has paid \$100,000 to the law firm that represented Zentgraf.

The Railroad Relocation Concept Plan also was discussed Friday by the Regents' Building and Planning Committee, led by Chairman Royce E. Wisenbaker. The Regents selected a proposed route for the tracks, but funding for the \$58 million project is scarce.

Regent John Mobley was the only Regent not in favor of approving the relocation before funds are available, to avoid an implication that the rail lines definitely will be moved, he said.

In the proposed route, the tracks would be relocated from south of Wellborn Road to west of East-

terwood Airport toward the east side of Riverside Campus and connected with existing rail lines just north of the intersection of Highway 6 and FM 2818 north of Bryan.

The Regents said they hope that the federal government will supply the remainder of the money needed for the project since the state can only come up with about \$4 million. The Regents were asked Friday to endorse Proposition 3, a proposed amendment to the Texas Constitution that would create the "Texas Growth Fund," a source of investment funds, including venture capital, and job opportunities. Small portions of state funds and of the Permanent University Fund would be invested in the growth fund.

The resolution passed unanimously.

The proposition will be on the Nov. 8 ballot.

Regents also approved the creation of a new company, Technology Commercialization Inc., or TechCom, which will be owned primarily by the Texas Engineering Experiment Station. Chancellor Dr. Perry L. Adkisson said TechCom has been specifically formed to commercialize technology developed within TEES and in any part of the University System that is interested in using its services.

President William H. Mobley said, "We are excited about TechCom and its potential for commercializing research results from Texas A&M and TEES. The complexities of forming companies and licensing technologies have required the emergence of a new breed of company based on aggressive technology transfer."

"Such companies will aid not only Texas A&M but also the state by nurturing economic diversification."

The Board also acted on the following issues:

- Approved \$10,000 for the first phases of a "Hall of Honor" for the Corps of Cadets, which will include offices for Corps leaders and a visiting area.

- Approved an agreement with the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station and Renew Development International Inc. to grant RDI the exclusive right to patent an enzyme that produces light by bioluminescence.

- The Board also authorized allotting funds for use by the veterinary medical school.