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Bush wary of human rights talks

President outlines foreign, domestic policy plans in interview

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bush voiced reservations Wednesday about American participation in a human rights conference in Moscow in 1991, saying we need to look for performance by the Soviet Union.

In his first interview as president, Bush also hinted he will stop in China after visiting Japan next month.

"Stay tuned," Bush said. "We may have something on that soon."

The president also said he hoped the Federal Reserve would not move so strongly against fear of inflation that it would impede growth. Pointing to rising prices on Wall Street, Bush said, "There are no signals out there in the markets that this economy is in real trouble."

Bush refused to say how long his pledge against raising taxes would apply.

"I'm not thinking beyond anything other than to say I will not raise taxes and I've got to stay with that approach," he said. "I really feel strongly on that particular point, and I haven't thought beyond one year."

Bush discussed domestic and foreign policy subjects in a 12-minute interview with the *New York Times* and the *Houston Post*, and a text of his comments was released to the press. It was the first episode in what White House officials say will be a series of experiments to make Bush available to the media in various forums.

Bush's remarks about the human rights conference in Moscow echoed reservations voiced by James A. Baker III during his confirmation hearings to be secretary of state. In the final days of the Reagan administration, the United States agreed to the staging of a human rights conference in Moscow.

Asked about going ahead with the conference, Bush said, "I think that we need to look for performance (on human rights), and there will be time in which to see performance in that regard. . . There has been definite improvement in some ways there."

"But let's see what develops as we move towards that conference date," he said.

On other subjects, Bush said:

- The administration is considering imposing a fee on customers of savings and loan institutions to help the federal government rescue troubled S&L industry. "I'm not going to do what I'm going to do, but that is one option," said.
- He is not considering dropping Dr. W. Sullivan as his candidate to head the Department of Health and Human Services despite questions about Sullivan's position on abortion. Bush said that in his conversations with Sullivan, "He has supported my position 100 percent."
- He favors "prudent development" by companies in a vast Arctic national wildlife refuge that environmentalists are trying to protect.
- It is uncertain how much money will be available for the war against illegal drugs but "the elimination of drugs is going to stem from vigorous changes in our society's approach to narcotics. It's going to be successful only if education is successful."

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Republicans don't approve of Bush plan for S&L crisis

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bush said Wednesday his administration is considering charging depositors to help pay for the savings and loan crisis, but members of his own party in Congress quickly stuck a pin in the trial balloon.

"I'm not going to say what I'm going to do, but that is one option," Bush said in an interview with two reporters.

Treasury Secretary Nicholas F. Brady, in television interviews Wednesday morning, said a proposal under review by his department would impose an insurance fee of 25 cents for every \$100 in deposits. But, he stressed that the option has not been forwarded yet to Bush.

Brady did not say how the fee would be collected, but his spokesman, Arthur Siddon, said the fee could be imposed directly on depositors, or it could be paid by the institutions as an increase in the insurance premium they already pay.

The fee, or premium, would apply to all federally insured financial institutions: banks, S&Ls and credit unions, Siddon said.

Bush, in an interview, appeared to dispute a suggestion the fee could be considered a tax, thus violating his "Read my lips: No new taxes" pledge.

"I will answer the question with a question," Bush said. "Is (it) a tax when the person pays the fee to go

Texas consumers shifting funds from S&Ls to credit unions

AUSTIN (AP) — Deposits in Texas credit unions rose 7.5 percent in 1988 as leery consumers abandoned the savings and loan industry, Texas Credit Union League officials said Wednesday.

"We don't have a problem," said Dick Williamson, vice president of public relations for the Dallas-based league. "We're riding the front bumper in the financial industry."

"We're not taxed; we're the fastest-growing; we're the safest and the most sound," Williamson said.

to Yosemite Park, using the park? . . . There will be a lively debate on this."

John Sununu, White House chief of staff, said an increase in deposit insurance premiums "does not pass the duck test and therefore is not a tax." Sununu was referring to a statement by Budget Director Richard Darman, who told Congress that if a proposed revenue increase was widely perceived by the public as a tax increase it would not be proposed, saying, "If it looks like a duck . . . it's a duck."

Sununu suggested that the option

under consideration could be considered a "modernization" of deposit insurance premiums, which historically have proved to be too low.

Federal regulators pledged more than \$38 billion last year to close 205 insolvent S&Ls. More than 350 other insolvent institutions remain open and billions of dollars more will be required.

The Treasury Department is working on a plan for Bush that would raise money and institute reforms to prevent the problem from reoccurring.

The state's 1,023 credit unions, including 15 that opened last year, boasted \$13.3 billion in assets statewide. Texas credit unions issued \$7.7 billion in loans to more than 4 million members last year, according to league figures.

More credit union membership is expected as problems in the savings and loan industry increase, Williamson said.

"We're the consumer lender of the state," Williamson said.

Bus wreck kills driver, injures boy

OTTAWA, Kan. (AP) — A school bus rolled into a creek Wednesday, killing the driver and critically injuring an 8-year-old, but a high school sophomore helped lead 10 other students to safety through the emergency door, authorities said.

The Wellsville School District bus had run off a muddy dirt road into Walnut Creek, investigators said.

Investigators said the front end went into the water and 11 passengers escaped out the rear before the bus rolled the rest of the way in, trapping driver Dale Thomasson, 46, of Wellsville, and Loren Newkirk Jr. of rural Wellsville.

The two apparently had tried to escape out the front, authorities said.

The boy was pulled out by rescue workers and listed in critical condition at Ransom Memorial Hospital. He had been under water for more than 30 minutes, but the cold may have kept him alive, a sheriff's deputy said.

Sheriff's deputies credited Bill Raley, a sophomore from rural Wellsville, with leading young children out of the bus.

Thomasson was also an elementary school counselor and teacher.

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