

# The Battalion

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College Station, Texas

## WEATHER

FORECAST for WEDNESDAY:  
Partly cloudy and continued warm.  
HIGH:74 LOW:50



Tuesday, January 31, 1989

## Clements proposes \$39 million education plan

AUSTIN (AP) — Gov. Bill Clements submitted a \$39 million proposal to state lawmakers Monday that would reward public schools for making academic gains, reducing the dropout rate and curbing drug and alcohol abuse.

"Now is clearly the time to enhance our educational system so that all our children have the opportunity to prosper," Clements said before 3,500 people attending the Texas School Administrators Mid-winter Conference. "Certainly no goal is more precious."

Later, Clements told reporters the \$39 million annual cost of his proposed package can be raised without increasing taxes.

"I think that we'll have ample funds," he said. "There are considerable sums available by rearranging how we spend those monies." Clements said that issuing bonds for prison construction could free up some funds for his proposed package.

The governor's Texas Educational Excellence Award System — also called the TEXAS Plan — would give financial awards

to schools showing improvement in drug and dropout prevention and to schools where students improve their academic performance.

Another part of Clements' proposal is a recommended change in the performance-based accreditation system now used by the Texas Education Agency. The new process would allow the TEA to concentrate on school districts that need help the most, Clements said.

But House Speaker Gib Lewis, D-Fort Worth, said Clements' plan will not provide enough if it doesn't address the main issue confronting lawmakers — a funding inequity between poor and wealthy school districts.

"It's not going to be enough to do what you really need to do as far as equalization," he said.

Clements' education package comes at a time when the state is being challenged in a lawsuit brought by poor school districts. The suit alleges that the \$11 billion school finance system is unconstitutional because it

doesn't ensure that each school district has the same ability to obtain money to educate students.

The 3rd Court of Appeals reversed a district judge's ruling that the system was indeed unconstitutional, and the matter is now before the Texas Supreme Court.

In his remarks, Clements said, "By rewarding measurable gain in all these areas, we can ensure that all our schools — regardless of wealth — can participate fully."

Clements even cited an example of "success stories" from the Edgewood Independent School District, which is the lead plaintiff in the suit by poor districts against the state.

"In San Antonio, educators and the private sector have joined forces in a full-scale battle to keep 'at-risk' students at Edgewood High School in class," Clements said.

But Clements told reporters his proposals are not a response to the lawsuit.

Clements also proposed kicking off a public awareness campaign to try to keep children in school. He said he also will ap-

point a dropout prevention coordinator from his office's budget.

The proposal also includes rewarding dropouts who re-enter high school and earn their diplomas by providing them with a tuition credit or privately donated cash award for college. The proposal also calls for a financial incentive program for high school students who complete courses in physics and calculus.

Clements said investing in education will help the state save money in the long run. He said illiteracy costs the state more than \$17 billion per year in lost income and tax revenue, unemployment insurance, adult education and the increased cost of welfare and crime.

"The correlation between a life of crime and illiteracy is all too real," he said. "Indeed, nearly 90 percent of all inmates in Texas prisons failed to complete high school."

Clements said Sen. Carl Parker, D-Port Arthur, would carry his proposals in the Senate, and Rep. Kent Grusendorf, R-Ar-

lington, would sponsor the House legislation.

Prior to his speech, Clements received the final report of the Select Committee on Education, which has recommended a longer school year and a state-funded \$100 million annual school construction fund program. The 15-member committee also has made proposals that would require state funding increases ranging from \$329 million to \$632 million to achieve funding equity in the school system. In related action, state Rep. Alex Moreno Jr., D-Edinburg, filed a bill mandating the abolition of school districts that have less than 500 students and more than three times the state average property wealth per child.

"Some school districts in this state exist only as tax havens to shelter mineral holdings and other wealth from paying their fair share of taxes," Moreno said.

Moreno said the bill would reduce the disparity between poor and wealthy districts, which is at issue in the Edgewood lawsuit.

## School killings prompt plan for legislation

AUSTIN (AP) — In the wake of recent schoolyard shootings, state Rep. Henry Cuellar said Monday he is introducing legislation requiring the death penalty in Texas for people convicted of killing a student or school employee on school premises.

Although none of the recent incidents occurred in Texas, Cuellar, a Democrat from Laredo, said he believes the law would help prevent attacks on schoolchildren.

"As of today, we have been lucky a Texas school has not become a target range," Cuellar said.

Earlier this month, Patrick Edward Purdy, 26, entered the grounds of an elementary school in Stockton, Calif., where he opened fire with a Chinese-made semi-automatic AK-47 assault rifle on hundreds of children that were playing in the schoolyard.

He fired from 106 to 110 shots, killing five youngsters and wounding 30 others, including a teacher. He then turned a pistol on himself and died from a single shot to the head.

Nine days later, four students were wounded — none critically — when struck by gunfire outside a Washington, D.C. high school.

Two people who were not students at the high school were subsequently arrested on assault charges in the incident, which followed a quarrel in the school cafeteria.

On Sept. 26, 1988, a lone gunman walked into Oakland Elementary School in Greenwood, S.C., and opened fire with a handgun in a crowded cafeteria and a classroom. Two 8-year-old girls died and nine other people, including two teachers, were wounded.

The gunman, whom family members say had a history of mental problems, was charged with two counts of murder, along with other charges.

He is awaiting a trial date.

Cuellar said he began researching such a bill before the Stockton incident.

"The senseless slaying of a student in an environment dedicated to the peaceful pursuit of knowledge and the advancement of society must result in the highest price," Cuellar said.

Currently, state law allows for the death penalty when a person is convicted of murder of a police officer or firefighter on official duty, or intentional murder during the commission of a burglary, robbery, aggravated sexual assault or arson.

Texas law also carries the death penalty for persons convicted of murder for hire; murder while escaping a penal institution; murder of a prison inmate by another inmate; and multiple murders.



Paintin' the town  
A painter takes advantage of the dry day to work on the underside and roof of Rudder Tower Monday as part of the building's clean-up and outside renovation.

## U.S. Embassy staff makes final plans to exit Afghanistan

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — Marine guards lowered the flag for the last time Monday, and the U.S. Embassy staff prepared to depart before the Red Army leaves Kabul's fate to Afghan soldiers and Moslem guerrillas who wait in the hills.

"As we say goodbye, we say, 'God bless the United States,'" said Charge d'Affaires John D. Glassman, the ranking American diplomat still in Kabul, at the solemn ceremony.

"Today we leave at a moment that is both happy and sad — pleased that the people of Afghanistan are going to be relieved of their suffering, but we know their struggle is not over."

"The people of the United States are with them," Glassman said, raising the folded flag above his head in a salute. "We will be back when the conflict is over."

Marine guards brought down the Stars and Stripes, gently folded the flag and handed it to Glassman, who walked to a small slab of marble on the other side of the compound that honors Adolph Dubs, the former U.S. ambassador.

Dubs was kidnapped, then killed along with his abductors when soldiers tried to rescue him Feb. 14, 1979. U.S. officials still do not know the motive.

Soviet soldiers entered Afghanistan's civil war nine years ago and are to be gone by Feb. 15 under a United Nations-mediated agreement. Moslem insurgents, who get most of their support from the United States and Pakistan, were not parties to the agreement and predict

victory soon after the Red Army is gone.

Yuri Maslyukov, Soviet deputy premier, arrived to meet with Najib just after Soviet Defense Minister Dmitri Yazov ended a three-day visit to Kabul. A Western diplomat in Islamabad, Pakistan, said the visits were meant to "boost the sagging morale of the communist government."

Embassy officials would not say when the American staff of two diplomats, four Marine guards and five others would leave on a chartered flight to New Delhi, India. The Kabul airport was closed Monday because of a three-inch snowfall.

The State Department said last week the embassy would be closed because of fears that Afghanistan's conscript army could not protect foreign diplomats after the Soviets leave.

The departure of the embassy staff will leave 10 Americans in Afghanistan, all missionaries.

## Silver Taps ceremony to honor 3

The solemn sound of buglers playing "Taps" and the sharp ring of gunfire will be heard on campus tonight as three Texas A&M students who died during the past month are honored in a Silver Taps ceremony at 10:30 in front of the Academic Building.

The deceased students being honored are:

- Gina Renaye Cure, 18, a freshman in business administration from Fort Worth who died Dec. 21.
- Terry Dean Devilbiss Jr., 24, a graduate student in chemistry from Del Valle who died Jan. 23.
- Mark Nazmi Tadros, 19, a sophomore in business administration from Houston who died Jan. 19.

Dating back almost a century, the stately tradition of Silver Taps usually is practiced on the first Tuesday of each month from September through April, when necessary. Because of the Christmas holidays, this month's ceremony was rescheduled for today. The names of the deceased students are posted at the base of the flag pole in front of the Academic Building, and the flag is flown at half-staff the day of the ceremony.

Lights will be extinguished and the campus hushed as Aggies pay final tribute to fellow Aggies.

The Ross Volunteer Firing Squad begins the ceremony, marching in slow cadence toward the statue of Lawrence Sullivan Ross. Shortly after, three volleys are fired in a 21-gun salute and six buglers play a special arrangement of "Taps" three times — to the north, south and west.

## Canada withdraws from war games after plane crash kills eight soldiers

FAIRBANKS, Alaska (AP) — Canada pulled out of joint cold-weather military exercises Monday, the morning after eight soldiers were killed in the crash of a C-130 transport plane trying to land in icy fog at 50 degrees below zero.

The four-engine Hercules was carrying eight crewmen and 10 paratroopers from Edmonton, Alberta, to participate in Brim Frost '89 when it crashed Sunday night at the end of the runway at Fort Wainwright, U.S. Army Maj. Sherrel Mock said.

Three men were in serious condition, one was listed as stable and six others were being held for observation at the base's Bartlett Army Community Hospital, Mock said Monday.

"We don't know if the cold weather had anything to do with it," Mock said. "Teams are out

there right now, going through the wreckage.

"The investigation is still in its early stages. They're wondering if it was the weather or something mechanical."

A 450-man Canadian paratroop force was to support the U.S. Army's 1st Brigade, 6th Infantry Division (Light), in a major land battle that was the centerpiece of the Brim Frost ground exercises near Fairbanks.

But after the crash, Canadian officials canceled their forces' participation and recalled their remaining aircraft and soldiers, Mock said.

"They canceled because of the equipment they lost (in the crash)," Mock said. "The aircraft was bringing in equipment ranging from snow machines to cold weather gear."

Military planners call Brim Frost "the premier

cold weather training exercise in the free world." But temperatures plunging to more than 60 below zero during the past two weeks have been too much of a test.

The bitter cold has caused metal fatigue and rubber fatigue in trucks and aircraft, stalling equipment and generally slowing maneuvers, Mock said.

"But we've been able to land aircraft," he said. "Another Canadian C-130 had landed an hour earlier," he said. "The third aircraft in the flight was diverted to the Fairbanks airport because the runway was blocked."

The plane's last contact with the control tower was at 6:47 p.m. There were no distress calls from the crew before the crash, Mock said.

## Legislators call for new open-container law

AUSTIN (AP) — State lawmakers filed bills Monday banning open alcoholic beverages for passengers and drivers, with exceptions for those in mobile homes and limousines and for clergy carrying alcohol for religious purposes.

The new bills, sponsored by Rep. Bill Blackwood, R-Mesquite, and Sen. Judith Zaffirini, D-Laredo, would strengthen 1987 laws against open alcohol containers, which required law officers to see a driver drinking before issuing a citation.

The proposed legislation would make it a misdemeanor for the driver or any passenger to have an open alcoholic beverage, including an unmarked or disguised one, in-

side the passenger compartment of a vehicle.

The 1987 bills, which Zaffirini helped carry, were "simply a first step," she said in a news conference with Blackwood and representatives of the Texas Department of Public Safety and Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

"We said we would be back this time, and indeed, we are," Zaffirini said.

Also present to support the bills were representatives of the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse and the Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas.

Blackwood said the 1987 law almost was impossible to enforce be-

cause officers had to witness a violation and drivers could too easily

"I'm not talking about prohibition. I'm talking about public safety."

— Bill Blackwood, state representative,

disguise alcoholic beverages or could hand one to a passenger if pulled over.

Under the proposed bills, a driver would be cited if he or anyone else in the vehicle, including someone in the back seat, is caught with an open alcoholic beverage.

Open alcohol containers would have to go in the trunk, Zaffirini said, except in mobile homes and limousines. The only other exception would be for clergymen carrying wine for religious ceremonies.

"I'm not talking about prohibition," Blackwood said. "I'm talking about public safety."

About two-thirds of the states have restrictions on drinking while driving, and 23 have complete bans on open containers, similar to the

bills proposed here, said Milo Kirk, legislative liaison for MADD.

"Drinking and driving must be separated in the interest of public safety," Kirk said.

She said a 1984 DPS survey of fatal crashes on Texas highways showed 12 percent involved open containers of alcohol.

A MADD survey last summer of 100,000 people across the state showed widespread support for a complete ban on alcoholic beverage containers in vehicles, Kirk said.

Bills for complete bans on open containers passed the Senate in 1985 and 1987, but never made it through the House.