



WEATHER

FORECAST for WEDNESDAY:
Partly cloudy and warmer.

HIGH:62 LOW:38

U.S.S.R. proposes reduction of troops, weapons in Europe

VIENNA, Austria (AP) — The Soviet Union proposed huge reductions in troops and armor and recommended Monday that the Warsaw Pact and NATO negotiate to eliminate all battlefield nuclear weapons from Europe.

Foreign Minister Eduard A. Shevardnadze's proposals went far beyond the reductions NATO plans to suggest at conventional arms talks that begin Thursday.

In a later speech, Secretary of State James A. Baker III told 35 foreign ministers gathered in a baroque palace that the West's goal, at least initially, is to reduce the Warsaw Pact's current advantage in conventional forces.

Estimates vary but give the Soviet-led alliance at least a 2-1 advantage in tanks.

"The Warsaw Pact's conventional military preponderance, especially in the spearheads of attack, is what makes an invasion possible," Baker said.

He urged Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev to implement the "new thinking" that guides economic and political reform in the Soviet Union by renouncing the Brezhnev Doctrine "beyond any shadow of a doubt."

That doctrine permits military intervention in a Soviet bloc country in the event of a liberal insurrection. The late President Leonid I. Brezhnev enunciated it after the Red army crushed the liberal "Prague Spring" of 1968 in Czechoslovakia.

"Those in the East should be free of the fear that armed Soviet intervention, justified by the Brezhnev Doctrine, would be used again to deny them choice," Baker said.

He also said Australia would organize a conference to prevent the spread of chemical weapons and the Bush administration was exploring ways to speed the removal of U.S. chemical weapons from West Germany.

"Unilateral action is not enough,"

Baker added. "The Soviet Union has enormous stocks of chemical weapons threatening Europe. We therefore call on the Soviets to join us, to accelerate the destruction of their enormous stockpile of these frightening weapons."

In Bonn, Chancellor Helmut Kohl said, "I welcome this intention to explore ways for the early removal of chemical weapons from the Federal Republic."

Kohl's chief spokesman, Friedrich Ost, said earlier Baker had telephoned the chancellor Sunday night and told him the aging U.S. chemical weapons would be withdrawn by 1992.

Shevardnadze countered a NATO proposal to retire at least 25,000 Warsaw Pact tanks, then reduce armor, artillery and personnel carriers on both sides by 5 percent to 10 percent, with a three-phase plan for radical cuts.

The foreign minister's arms reduction program that went far beyond NATO's by adding missiles, combat aircraft and soldiers.

"Let me ask what kind of reductions are these if they do not affect the main component of armed forces — their personnel?" he said. "And surely airplanes and helicopters can be used for a surprise attack."

In the Soviet second phase, 500,000 men on each side would be demobilized.

According to the Union of Concerned Scientists, a private U.S. research group, the Warsaw Pact has 3.09 million soldiers and NATO more than 2.13 million. NATO spends about \$300 billion a year to defend Western Europe, where 326,000 Americans are stationed.

As Shevardnadze explained it, the Soviet plan's progression would be:

- First phase, two to three years — Eliminate the imbalance in troops and arms, cutting 10 percent to 15 percent from the current lowest numbers.

- Second, also two to three years — Reduce forces by another 25 percent and withdraw battlefield nuclear weapons to a safe distance from "the line of contact" between the military alliances. That would make much of West Germany, along with East Germany and Czechoslovakia a nuclear-free zone.
- Third: Convert remaining forces to "a strictly defensive character."

While the reductions are made, Shevardnadze said, negotiations

should be conducted on eliminating tactical nuclear weapons in Europe.

His proposal conflicts with the 40-year-old U.S. policy of deterring the Soviets with a mix of weaponry including battlefield nuclear arms, which have a maximum range of 300 miles.

Kohl wants to delay modernizing U.S. Lance missiles in West Germany for up to three years, with the support of Norway and officials of other West European governments.



Photo by Jay Janner

3...2...1...

Jason Parker, a sophomore physical education major from Rogers, practices field goals at Kyle Field Monday. Parker will be trying to "walk on" as a place kicker this spring.

Senate approves bill to make violations in recruiting illegal

AUSTIN (AP) — The Texas Senate on Monday approved a bill that would make improper recruiting a criminal offense after a heated debate erupted on proposals to weaken the penalty for those convicted of trying to bribe a student-athlete to attend a certain school.

Sen. Chet Brooks, D-Pasadena, pushed for an amendment to decrease the penalty from a third-degree felony to a class A misdemeanor for improper payments of less than \$750.

The bill carries misdemeanor charges for a student who solicits or accepts money or gifts in exchange for attending a college and participating in intercollegiate athletics there.

Brooks said a third-degree felony charge, which carries a sentence of up to 10 years in prison and a fine of up to \$5,000, was too stiff for someone who committed a minor infraction.

Sen. Bob Glasgow, the bill's sponsor, said the amendment "guts the bill." A class A misdemeanor is punishable by a maximum of one year in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

The tougher penalty is needed to send a message to college recruiters and alumni nationwide, Glasgow said. "It's a notice that we're giving to every other school: 'We're trying to clean up our business in Texas, don't you come in and mess up our business,'" he said.

Prosecutors would not pursue as rigorously a misdemeanor violation, Glasgow said. "You reduce that to a misdemeanor, and I don't think there is a county attorney in Texas that's going to spend the time and trouble... to convict someone of this offense."

Brooks' amendment failed, 18-12, but he tried another amendment that would have called for disclosure

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Some insurance rates will decline, Mattox says

By Holly Beeson

REPORTER

Texans can expect a decrease in property and casualty insurance rates, Texas Attorney General Jim Mattox said Monday in the College Station City Council chambers.

"We want to see a total change in how the property and casualty insurance industry sets its rates," Mattox said, "and an elimination in allowing them (firms in the industry) to come before the board and present all the rates at the same time."

The property and casualty insurance industry is exempt from anti-trust laws, which enables firms in the industry to establish their desired profit levels. They then present their recommendation as a group to the Texas State Board of Insurance.

They are presenting it in a way that makes the least efficient company able to stay in business, Mattox

said, which means the companies that are more efficient and more profitable get rich.

"I call for the total repeal of all the antitrust protections this industry has because it needs to get back on a more competitive basis," Mattox said.

It is a myth that state insurance is competitive and regulated, he said.

"It's not," Mattox said. "The Texas State Board of Insurance has left this industry largely unregulated, and we're trying to change that."

The board is under a major siege, and Mattox is a leading the attack.

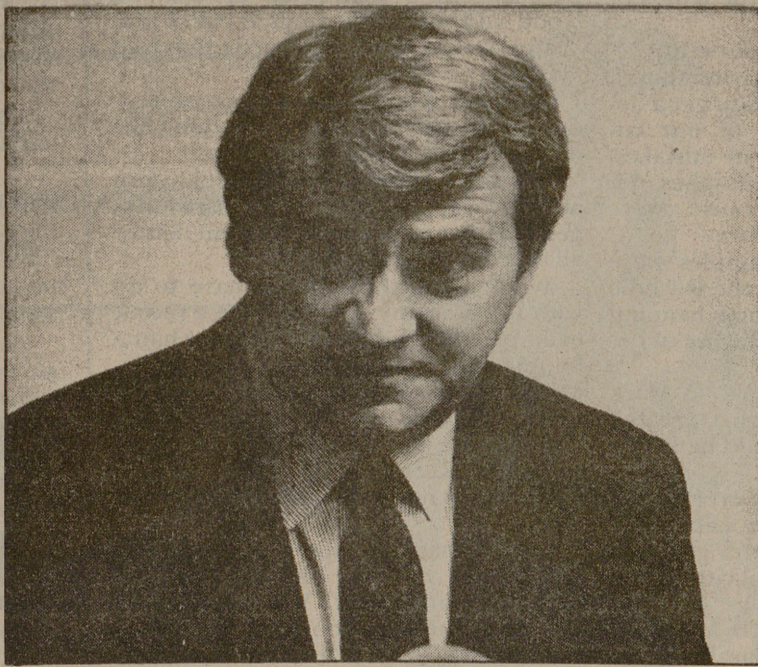
"It has been a badly mismanaged agency," he said. "As of last week, nearly all the members have resigned or their terms have expired."

Mattox said he is hopeful the governor will appoint a new board made up of consumer-oriented members.

"We need individuals who will try to get a handle on these spiraling insurance policies," he said.

The office of the attorney general has made recommendations to the Legislature asking it to consider changing the policy by which rates are determined.

"We asked for a total restructuring of how rates are written in Texas," Mattox said. "We asked them to take the first steps toward regulation."



Texas Attorney General Jim Mattox

Battalion file photo

The attorney general urged the public to let the Legislature know they're fed up with the insurance industry's actions and demand total reform in the process.

"If we do that, I think we'll see changes within the industry," he said.

Mattox also discussed improvements in overall child-support collections, but said several problems still exist.

The Bryan child-support office has increased collections this year by

46 percent, he said. The statewide average is 37 percent.

"We are still woefully understaffed and have far too many cases to handle," he said.

Nearly 3,600 cases are being handled at the Bryan office, and about 30 percent of these cases are on wage garnishment.

"We think that in the long run, taking the money out of paychecks will become the normal way to pay child support," he said.

Attorney General stresses importance of water to Texas

By Sherri Roberts

STAFF WRITER

Texas Attorney General Jim Mattox said water, along with transportation, energy and an educated population, is the key to the long-term development of Texas.

Mattox, who has announced a possible bid for the governor's office in 1990, praised the Texas Water Utilities Association for its research and development efforts within the water industry and urged it to continue seeking answers to Texas' water problems in a speech at Texas A&M on Monday.

"You need to do the best that you can to educate the uneducated," he said. "When we're in the legislative process, most of those people (legislators) are asked to be experts on everything in the world — and most of us know very little about those issues that you (the water industry) are about."

Noting that Monday was the anniversary of the Alamo's fall in 1836, Mattox compared the history of the water industry with that of the siege, saying victory is sometimes found in defeat.

"You all have a history of ups and downs," he said. "You are asked to do things with very little resources, and are always struggling to get more resources to try to solve the problems you've got."

Mattox said he considers himself a strong environmentalist who, as the attorney general since 1973, has played a role in drafting legislation to protect the environment. The state has filed more than 1,500 law suits against polluters, he said.

"We (the office of the attorney general) have helped draft legislation that will control that kind of irrational adult that takes away our rural areas," he said. "We want to continue to work for you."

Mattox said he defends the state of Texas in the lawsuits it files and those filed against it.

"The attorney general's office is the trial law firm for the state of Texas," he said. "It's our (Mattox and the 400 lawyers who work for him) responsibility to watch over court actions."

Mattox also operates the nine-member Opinions Committee, which helps various public officials interpret laws.

In addition to handling consumer protection actions regarding such issues as deceptive advertising and business practices, Mattox's office is responsible for enforcing the collection of child support in Texas. Child support collections have increased by 430 percent since the office began managing that function in 1983.

Silver Taps ceremony to honor 1

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

The deceased student being honored is:

- Valerie Kay Hurta, 26, a junior in marketing from Houston, who died Feb. 5.

Dating back almost a century, the stately tradition of Silver Taps is practiced on the first Tuesday of each month from September through April, when necessary. 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.

Dates set for spring graduation

May graduates will put on their caps and gowns to cross the stage on the following dates:

- FRIDAY, MAY 12 at 2 p.m.
 • College of Liberal Arts
 • College of Geosciences
 • Graduate students

- FRIDAY, MAY 12 at 7:30 p.m.
 • College of Agriculture
 • College of Business
 • College of Science
 • College of Veterinary Medicine

- SATURDAY, MAY 13 at 9 a.m.
 • College of Architecture and Environmental Design
 • College of Education
 • College of Engineering

- SATURDAY, JUNE 3 at 2:30 p.m.
 • College of Medicine

All local hotels are booked for May 12 and 13, but some still have vacancies for June 3.

Faculty Senate tries to improve academics of student-athletes

By Kelly S. Brown

STAFF WRITER

The Faculty Senate approved a resolution Monday committing themselves to strengthening the academic standards and progress of scholarship student-athletes.

The resolution came after the Academic Affairs Committee released a report on the assessment of athletes and their academic performance. Statistics from the registrar show that student-athletes' academic performance in terms of graduation rate is below that of the overall student population.

Dr. Samuel Gillespie, a senator and chairman of the Academic Affairs Committee, said the NCAA has no grade-point ratio requirements. The NCAA requires that each institution set eligibility requirements for an athlete, rather than setting a standard itself.

"Along the line, someone has to start setting the standards," Gillespie said.

"The Athletic Department does not admit or graduate students nor do they give an athlete an undeserved

grade to keep him in school," Gillespie said. "The responsibility of these athletes belongs to professors, deans, faculty members and staff of A&M."

The Academic Affairs Committee is claiming part of that responsibility by setting University guidelines to help strengthen the academic standards of athletes.

The five-part resolution states that because the University actively recruits, admits or supports through scholarships some students who are deficient in the skills necessary to be academically competitive at A&M, it must provide a program to assist these students in making a bridge between submarginal and successful academic performance.

Under the resolution the University administration will initiate a remediation program to accommodate all admitted students deficient in academic skills, while college deans are to closely monitor scholarship athletes performing below acceptable academic guidelines and uniformly enforce college standards.

According to the resolution, the University Athletic

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