

The Battalion

Vol. 88 No. 139 USPS 045360 16 pages

College Station, Texas

Monday, April 24, 1989



WEATHER

FORECAST for TUESDAY
Continued partly cloudy and hot.
There is a slight chance of afternoon showers.

HIGH:88

LOW:65

University researchers stand by fusion-experiment results

By Fiona Soltes

STAFF WRITER

Texas A&M researchers are standing by results that helped confirm a University of Utah experiment, but are hesitant to say that the findings actually represent fusion.

"I like to call it uncertain confusion," research scientist Dr. John Appleby said Friday. "We do know it's not a conventional nuclear fusion process. We don't know what it is, but we can be fairly confident that something peculiar is happening."

U.S. Rep. Joe Barton, R-Ennis, who visited Texas A&M Friday to learn about fusion research at A&M, said he can explain it to Congress when the issue of funding comes up, but he doesn't care what it's called, as long as it works.

"I don't care whether it's fusion, fission, or what," Barton said. "The bottom line is, if you're on to something that will be a potential source of commercial energy, we'll fund it."

A&M scientists announced April 10 they had duplicated a controversial Utah experiment concerning an electrochemical reaction at room temperature that produced more energy than it consumed. But the researchers have been facing skepticism about the experiments since an April 19 article in the *Washington Post* reported the researchers as saying their confirmation was probably in error.

Friday, during Barton's tour, the scientists at the Center for Electro-

chemical Systems and Hydrogen Research said they were baffled by the *Post* article and that a second experiment, similar to the first, was producing excess energy, as had its predecessor.

Appleby, the director of the center, said the experimentation is still in its early stages, but the process can be explored a little bit at a time. Any amount of research done will be helpful in the long run, he said.

"We haven't solved any of the world's problems yet," Appleby said. "In fact, we've only started looking at them."

Appleby said the largest problem facing the scientists is finding a metal through which the cold nuclear process can work. Current experiments use palladium, a byproduct of platinum.

"Palladium, if it turns out to be a unique material for this process, is totally impractical," he said. "In terms of electrical cost, the cost of palladium alone would be something on the order of \$5,000 or so per kilowatt, which is way out of line."

Problems also arise because palladium is a byproduct of platinum production. Each year, only 100 tons of platinum and about 30 tons of palladium are produced worldwide, he said.

"Based on the data we've seen, it will take about 150 tons of palladium for one megawatt," Appleby said. "In other words, we need five times the world's production (of palladium) for a very, very small output of energy."

But Appleby said he is hopeful there will be an answer to the problem, possibly through alloys.

"We mustn't believe that everything's been invented yet," he said. "We've got a long way to go and we must look for a new material to withstand both the temperature and the pressure necessary."

Results will not be visible in the near future, he said. It will be about

a month before A&M researchers figure out exactly what is happening and at least another 25 years before the process, if it is indeed fusion, will bring the results many are hoping for.

"Maybe by the year 2015, if all this turns out to be true, something might happen based on this research—a new way to generate electricity," Appleby said. "But I say that 'if' about 10 times."

'Merger mania' strikes Texas higher education

HOUSTON (AP) — A blue-ribbon panel's recommendation two years ago to streamline the state's college systems has prompted "merger mania," and a new concern about the effect of large universities' gobbling up smaller schools.

Already the Texas Legislature is expected to approve placing Pan American University's campuses at Edinburg and Brownsville under the University of Texas System.

The Legislature also is expected to place Laredo State, Corpus Christi State and Texas A&I at Kingsville in the Texas A&M University System.

Those changes would mean that UT and A&M would control almost

half of the state's 37 colleges and universities. Other possible mergers are being considered.

"I believe one thing we really need to be careful about is that you don't get UT and A&M into such superboards (of regents) that it winds up being detrimental to all the other institutions," said Larry Temple, chairman of the Select Committee on Education, which in 1987 recommended streamlining the state's higher education system.

"Are we going to get such mega-systems that it negatively impacts the Lamars and the Stephen F. Austins and the University of Houston's

See Mergers/Page 8



Photo by Phelan M. Ebenhack

"Softly call the Muster, . . ."

One of many candle-bearers sheds a tear for a loved one during Friday night's Muster ceremony at G. Rollie White Coliseum. Muster, which honors Aggies who have died during the last year, was held in more than 400 locations around the world.

Wright probe moves to Texas for oil inquiry

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House ethics committee investigation of Speaker Jim Wright moves to San Antonio this week, where panel members will interview the Texas businessmen involved in an oil well investment that netted large profits for the blind trust held for the embattled Democratic lawmaker.

Two committee members and panel investigators reportedly will spend three days in Texas, beginning Monday, to interview San Antonio financier Morris Jaffe; his business associate and son, M.D. (Doug) Jaffe Jr., and two others involved in the oil well deal.

At the same time, Wright's lawyer in Washington, William C. Oldaker, is expected to continue negotiations with the ethics committee's special outside counsel, Richard J. Phelan, over a timetable for the speaker's personal appearance before the panel.

The ethics panel — officially See Wright/Page 8

Beijing protesters organize class boycotts

BEIJING (AP) — Students on Sunday paraded on campuses, made speeches on street corners and began organizing a nationwide boycott of classes to press their demands for democratic reform.

The protests in Beijing were organized and generally peaceful, but marches turned violent Saturday in Xian and Changsha. Rampaging mobs looted stores, burned cars and seized a government building. Scores were reported hurt.

The unrest was perhaps the most violent since demonstrations began April 15, when the death of reformist leader Hu Yaobang stirred anti-government sentiments and an organized protest campaign by university students.

Protest leaders said students at Beijing universities planned to join a class boycott beginning Monday and to contact schools nationwide to persuade them to join.

They said the boycott was a peaceful, legal attempt to force communist authorities to meet with them and discuss demands for a free press, an end to official corruption and other reforms.

Many students also called for Premier Li Peng's resignation and hung posters on campus mocking him.

The official Xinhua News Agency said Monday's *People's Daily* newspaper contained a commentary that warned: "Social turmoil can only do good to an extremely small number of people with ulterior motives."

About 150,000 people joined Saturday in one of the biggest protests in Communist China's 40-year history, holding a 15-hour rally at Beijing's Tiananmen Square. Authorities allowed the protest to unfold, but students alleged Sunday that police beat several and injured one seriously.

Worse violence was reported Saturday in Xian and Changsha. The state-run Xinhua News Agency said rioters in Xian, a popular tourist city and capital of northwestern China's Shaanxi province, forced their way into the provincial government compound and burned buildings and vehicles.

It said 130 security officers were injured and 18 people were arrested. Xinhua said the melee began after students who had been mourning Hu left the scene.

A student contacted by telephone said at least 30 people were arrested.

Another student, speaking on condition of anonymity, said he saw about 50 youths begin "ripping

Houston university students support efforts for democratic reform in China

HOUSTON (AP) — Chinese students from Houston universities protested outside the Chinese consulate Sunday in a show of support for the massive student demonstrations opposing communism in their homeland.

It was thought to be the first such protest in the United States since the death of ousted Communist Party leader Hhu Yaobang sparked violent protests by thousands of Chinese students.

"I believe most of the Chinese students here in the United States have sympathy for the protesters, but they just haven't demonstrated that," said Li Jin, an organizer of the protest that drew about 22 Chinese students and recent graduates to the doors of the General Consulate of the People's Republic of China.

"Most of the students are afraid to take the risk,"

Members of the group issued a plea for President

Bush and all Americans to acknowledge the lack of civil rights in their homeland.

"We think the U.S. government should drop the double standard on the human rights issue," Jin said.

"They should do whatever they have to do. They should not treat the Chinese different from the Russians just because they look different."

The protesters, carrying signs reading "No More Dictatorship," and "Anti-Autocracy," were watched from a balcony by consulate officials, but had only a brief exchange when two men opened a heavy steel door, accepted some literature and then slammed the door shut without speaking.

"This is a fine example of Chinese government in action," protester Yimin Yu said.

"They don't want to give the students freedom of speech, freedom of the press or a democratic China."

limbs off trees and throwing anything they could," including rocks, at a truck of security forces. He said hundreds of armed security forces in riot gear closed off the area by nightfall.

In Changsha, capital of Hu's home province of Hunan, rioters looted 28 shops, Xinhua said. It said an unspecified number of police

were injured, one seriously, and about 100 people were arrested. No deaths were reported in either riot.

Foreign sources in Changsha said about 1,000 students from Hunan University had marched to provincial government headquarters in memory of Hu. They commandeered a truck and bus on the way. But thousands of young street toughs joined the marchers and began breaking store windows, the sources said. They fled when nine trucks of security forces appeared. Peaceful student marches have been held in Shanghai, Tianjin, Chengdu, Nanjing and Canton, Western witnesses and Chinese sources say.

Williams plans to take 'bidness' savvy into politics



Photo by Phelan M. Ebenhack

"Professor" Clayton Williams — oil-well wildcatter and possible gubernatorial candidate — lectures budding entrepreneurs in his Management 489 class.

By Stephen Masters

SENIOR STAFF WRITER

What do you give to the Aggie who has almost everything? A gubernatorial candidacy.

That's why Clayton Williams, Aggie extraordinaire, likely will run for governor in 1990.

"I've led a fortunate life," he said. "I've been blessed with many achievements and accomplishments, and today I am out of debt. In 1981, I owed \$500 million."

"Now I want to give something back. You reach a point where you devote yourself to public service after a successful business career."

Although he has never held public office, the 57-year-old entrepreneur from Midland said he thinks his "bidness" and personal experiences make him the most qualified candidate in either party.

Williams has not yet officially announced his candidacy for governor. "My qualifications are the lessons and experiences I've learned which can well be applied to run the biggest endeavor in the state — the state government with a \$45 billion biennium (budget)," he said. "This state could well be run like a business."

"I believe I can apply the lessons I've learned and the scars I've carried to create a better Texas, more like the one when I graduated from A&M those many years ago (in 1954). I'm sincere and I'm dedicated

to trying to make a difference."

"More than that, I have been blessed with the ability to lead, to motivate, encourage, in some cases cajole. I've enjoyed great loyalty from my thousands of employees over the years."

The fact that he has never held office likely will be a major issue in Williams' campaign. But he declined to comment on comparisons with the political qualifications of other potential candidates such as State Railroad Commissioner Kent Hance, State Treasurer Ann Richards and State Attorney General Jim Mattox. Williams instead emphasized his leadership skills and business experiences and successes.

Williams said the main goal he would pursue if elected is to continue and strengthen the war on drugs, a subject that hits close to home with him. Williams said his oldest son became addicted to marijuana and alcohol in high school. His son went through extensive rehabilitation to deal with the problem, he said.

"That's my number one priority — to fight drugs," he said. "Once children get on drugs, they have to enter crime. They can't go to mommy and daddy and ask for \$300 or \$500 a month because they'll ask, 'What do you want that money for?'"

"They're taught by the underworld how to live. The girls become prostitutes. The boys deal marijuana and encourage other kids to get on

the substance. So they start living in the underworld and then drop out of high school.

"Even if you rehabilitate them, they don't have a high school education so they can't get a job. It's a vicious, endless cycle. We've got to start with the young people."

"I've lived through it with my son. We've got to prevent it as best we can."

Williams suggested a professionally-produced indoctrination program for children in public schools.

"We could take five minutes from math, five minutes from P.E. and five minutes from music, but drugs are the main reason our young people aren't finishing high school and I don't accept that that has to happen," he said.

"Even if you are a very selfish person, an investment in young people today which would in any way keep them off drugs is going to save you money in taxes when they (would be) in jail."

"It's my experience with drugs and people on drugs that it's a lot easier, a lot less expensive and a lot more productive to put your money up front in prevention."

"If you're worried about taxes, which we all are, I'm going to suggest to you that your money is better spent indoctrinating young people, not that I don't want to rehabilitate people. A mechanic would call it

See Williams/Page 8