

Thursday, October 26, 1989

House fails to overturn veto; Representatives say Bush erred

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bush's veto of a bill to provide abortion assistance to impoverished victims of rape and incest was sustained in the House on Wednesday as a 231-191 vote to override him fell 51 votes short of the necessary two-thirds margin.

Though narrow in scope, the bill carried symbolic importance in the widening political struggle over the abortion issue, and proponents took their loss with a vow to keep the president's feet to the fire. But Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J., called it "a decisive victory for the pro-life movement."

"The president won a legislative victory today with use of a legislative minority," said Rep. Les AuCoin, D-Ore. "He will put his party at tremendous risk in the next election, and some of his allies on the House floor will not be returned."

Rep. Bill Green, R-New York, who supported the bill, said "President Bush may well have stumbled on the one issue that could cost him re-election."

The vote, in which 42 Republicans joined 189 Democrats in the unsuccessful bid to enact the bill over the president's veto, left intact an 8-year-old ban of federal financing of abortions for poor women, except when their lives are threatened.

The disputed provision would have permitted Medicaid abortions for women who are victims of rape or incest, and who "reported promptly" to authorities. It was part of a spending bill that now goes back to the House Appropriations Committee for revision.

Smith and other abortion opponents said the vote demonstrated they can overcome future efforts to weaken the prohibition on most Medicaid abortions, adding that it shows the political ground has not shifted in favor of abortion rights, as some political strategists argue.

"They made the mistake of thinking this was a one-round fight," said Rep. Vin Weber, R-Minn. "Some members who were panicked by pro-abortion propaganda in the last few weeks are going to be surprised, because the final tale hasn't been told on how this issue is cutting across the countryside," he said. "We're now beginning to see

How Texans voted...

WASHINGTON (AP) — Here is how Texans voted in the 231-191 roll call Wednesday by which the House upheld President Bush's veto of a \$156.7 billion spending bill that would have liberalized rules on federal payment for abortions.

A "yes" vote is a vote to override the veto.

Voting yes were 189 Democrats and 42 Republicans.

Voting no were 59 Democrats and 132 Republicans.

X denotes those not voting.

Present denotes those who voted

they were "present" at the time of the vote but did not vote "yes" or "no" on the issue.

There is one vacancy in the 435-member House.

Democrats — Andrews, y; Brooks, X; Bryant, y; Bustamante, y; Chapman, y; Coleman, y; de la Garza, X; Frost, y; Geren, y; Gonzalez, y; Hall, n; Laughlin, n; Leath, n; Ortiz, y; Pickle, y; Sarpalius, n; Stenholm, n; Wilson, y.

Republicans — Archer, n; Arme, n; Bartlett, n; Barton, n; Combest, n; DeLay, n; Fields, n; Smith, X.

some victories on our side of the issue."

The House vote came two weeks after pro-choice lawmakers surprised even themselves by winning on a 216-206 that added the amendment expanding Medicaid abortions to the appropriations bill for labor, health

and education programs. For the first time in nearly a decade that the liberal language had passed the House, although the Senate had approved it.

Leaders of the move to liberalize Medicaid abortions said they still try to pass this legislation by adding similar language to other bills.

Officials say 13,000 homeless in SF

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — More than 13,000 people were reported homeless Wednesday, and officials warned more homes could be lost in landslides near earthquake fissures. Children in the badly damaged Marina district returned to classes in their reopened school-turned-shelter.

As Congress moved forward with relief packages worth billions, a survey found many Bay area residents gave low marks to the federal response to last week's devastating quake.

California's Office of Emergency Services raised its count of displaced people to 13,892, nearly double the figure previously reported. "There's more people out (at shelters) because of the recent rains," Bob Krueger of the OES said Wednesday, adding that a better reporting system also increased the tally.

"I'm taking it one day at a time right now," said Lynn Carrere, who was being sheltered by the Red Cross at the Marina Middle School after her apartment was heavily damaged. "The aftershocks are really getting on my nerves."

Some students were upset to find 175 displaced people still in their school when it reopened.

"It's sort of wierd," said one girl. "We can't get to the gym. The yard is split in half for the Red Cross." A boy said some students felt they had sacrificed enough.

Landslides in the Santa Cruz Mountains have already claimed scores of homes, and geologists warned of worse to come.

Because of rain, huge sections of land in Santa Cruz County cracked by earthquake fissures are in danger of sliding this winter and burying hundreds of homes.

"What's happening today is frightening to geologists who have looked at it," Professor Gary Griggs of the University of California, Santa Cruz, told county supervisors Tuesday. "I think there's a cause for alarm, but not instant alarm until we've had more rain."

The Senate approved a \$3.45 billion quake relief package Wednesday, and sent it to the House, which had passed a \$2.85 billion measure just a day before. The Senate bill tacked on \$600 million for Small Business Administration emergency loans.

A survey in Wednesday's San Francisco Chronicle found 36 percent of Bay area residents polled found the federal response to the quake "fair" or "poor."

Forty-nine percent found it "excellent" or "good," compared with 72 percent who felt that way about the local government response and a 59 percent positive rating for the state.

Damage estimates have been set at \$7.1 billion. Police said six people remained unaccounted

for, and the death toll from the Oct. 17 quake remained at 63, including 39 from the collapse of double-decked Interstate 880 in Oakland.

New aftershocks did not damage the structure as crews continued to dismantle it. An aftershock of 4.5, the strongest in four days, was registered at Tuesday evening and a 3.7 shock followed Wednesday morning, the latest of about 3,500 aftershocks since the quake.

Buck Helm, the I-880 survivor, remained in serious but stable condition. "He's doing well," said Phyllis Brown, a spokeswoman for Highland General Hospital in Oakland.

Also improving were 6-year-old Julio Berumen and his sister, Cathy, 8, who lost their mother in the I-880 collapse. Some 500 letters to the children and more than \$25,000 in checks have flooded a fund set up at Summit Bank in Oakland.

On Wednesday, BankAmerica Corp. announced it would give \$1.1 million to quake relief programs, in addition to \$250,000 already donated to the Red Cross.

And state aid has begun to flow. Santa Cruz County got a \$356,460 check from state Controller Gray Davis on Tuesday. The check is 75 percent of the money the county already has spent on earthquake response.

Northern Ethiopia faced with new drought

ADIERADOM, Ethiopia (AP) — When the first rains fell in April, Debre Medhiro Wolde-Mariam planted sorghum on his patch of sandy land and hoped for plentiful rain and a repeat of last year's good harvest.

He got neither. All Debre, 76, had in October were dry stalks, not even suitable to feed his bullock.

And he wasn't alone. Eritrea, Ethiopia's northernmost province, is dotted with patches of scorched crops, and relief workers say the crop failure could threaten nearly 1.7 million people with famine next year.

"In severity, the situation is as bad as it was in 1984-85," David Morton, operations director at the U.N. World Food Program said. The 1984-85 drought and famine killed

as many as one million people, most of them in northern Ethiopia, despite one of Africa's largest-ever relief operations.

To stave off famine deaths, the agency has appealed to international donors for 241,000 tons of emergency food to feed an estimated 1.5 million Eritreans and 200,000 refugees from its southern neighbor, Tigre.

Those figures, however, do not take into account foodless peasants living in areas now under rebel control.

Tigre and Eritrea are home to insurgencies that have waged 15 and 28 years of war respectively against Ethiopia's government. The Eritrean rebels are talking with President Mengistu Haile Mariam's Marxist government and have remained quiescent behind battle lines

forged last year.

However, the Tigrean rebels have intensified their fight. Having won control of their homeland, they are engaged in a successful campaign that has brought them into the heart of Tigre's southern neighbor, Wollo province.

On Oct. 15, the Eritrean rebels appealed for 270,000 tons of emergency food it said would be needed for 1.4 million people in areas it controlled. It urged nations to send the food into the guerrilla-held areas from across the border in Sudan, a route used successfully in the past to feed Eritrea's hungry.

Taken together, the rebel and U.N. figures would indicate nearly the whole of Eritrea's population of some 3.2 million is threatened with famine.

In Eritrea's capital, Asmara, 15

miles north of Adieradom, officials say the traditional drought indicators are beginning to appear: child malnutrition is on the rise, water is being rationed and peasants are beginning to sell at very low prices livestock they can't feed.

Isaak Tsegay, the province's deputy administrator, said peasants already were seeking relief food "when they should be harvesting."

Relief officials say they have little food to distribute, with only 10,000 tons of emergency food in stock already tabbed for 161,477 needy people displaced by the civil war.

The only additional supplies expected are 27,000 tons of wheat promised by the United States, Britain and the 12-member European Economic Community which is due before the end of the year.

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When: Monday, October 30, 7:00 p.m.

Where: Room 501, Rudder Tower

All interested Faculty and Students are invited

Made possible with assistance from the Ayn Rand Institute and Texas A&M Student Activities