

# Legislators looking into Sharp's audit of agencies

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUSTIN — Legislative leaders said Tuesday they were looking cautiously at Comptroller John Sharp's latest audit of state agencies and its suggestions for saving about \$4.5 billion.

The audit, the second to scrutinize spending by the more than 200 state agencies, will propose restructuring government by consolidating some agencies and making other economies, according to officials who had been briefed on the report.

Sharp will make the audit public on Thursday. Two years ago, a similar study proposed about \$4.4 billion in savings measures. But lawmakers enacted only about 60 percent, or \$2.4 billion, of those cuts.

This year, with Gov. Ann Richards and Lt. Gov. Bob Bullock vowing to oppose any tax increase, lawmakers are facing a projected budget deficit of about \$3 billion.

"I have all the confidence in Mr. Sharp bringing us some things that he would like to see. Then we'll look at them and see what we think are good, legitimate cuts," said House Speaker Pete Laney, D-Hale Center.

As for consolidating agencies, Laney said there are differing views on the concept.

"There's a lot of discussion of different viewpoints as to what consolidation does, whether that actually does save the dollars," he said. "That's what (happened) last session, most of the comments were ... that consolidation sometimes costs more money than it saves."

Lt. Gov. Bob Bullock, who presides over the Senate, said he did not want to comment until he studied Sharp's proposal more thoroughly.

But he did say that savings projected from one-time accounting maneuvers and payment delays can come back to haunt lawmakers.

"Any time you delay or push forward ... look for it to come back to you in a few years," he said. Bullock said that as state comptroller in the 1980s he recommended accounting moves that were enacted to help Texas deal with budget deficits.

"I must say it taught me some lessons that I am now having to live with. It was a real convenience to (Lt.) Gov. Hobby at the time, and little did I ever believe that it would be a burden on my back," he said.

According to state officials and published reports, Sharp is preparing to offer lawmakers a buffet of 192 money-saving suggestions. Among recommendations:

- Creating one state agency to oversee lottery, bingo and parimutuel horse and dog race wagering. Currently, separate agencies handle each.

- Giving state park superintendents more flexibility to set fees and turn some operations over to private companies.

# Minorities

Continued from Page 1

would penalize college-affiliated organizations if they engage in racial or sexual harassment, and require all students to take at least three hours of multicultural studies before graduation.

"Public universities are funded by tax dollars and come from citizens of all different races and creeds. If students want to practice discrimination in the privacy of their homes, have at it. But they shouldn't be allowed to do it on my tax dollar," Wilson said.

At Texas A&M in October, a party by the university's Sigma Alpha Epsilon chapter had a jungle theme with pledges wearing grass skirts and black body paint, and participating in a "slave hunt." A&M officials have said the chapter violated school regulations and was disciplined.

Days after the incident at A&M, Texas Tech's Pi Kappa Alpha chapter had a party with a "life-in-the-ghetto" theme and a person dressed in Ku Klux Klan robes. The fraternity has escaped punishment by arguing its actions were protected under the constitutional guarantee of free speech.

"There is some offensive behavior and speech that is not protected by the Constitution," Wilson said.

# Tubularman

By Boomer Cardinale



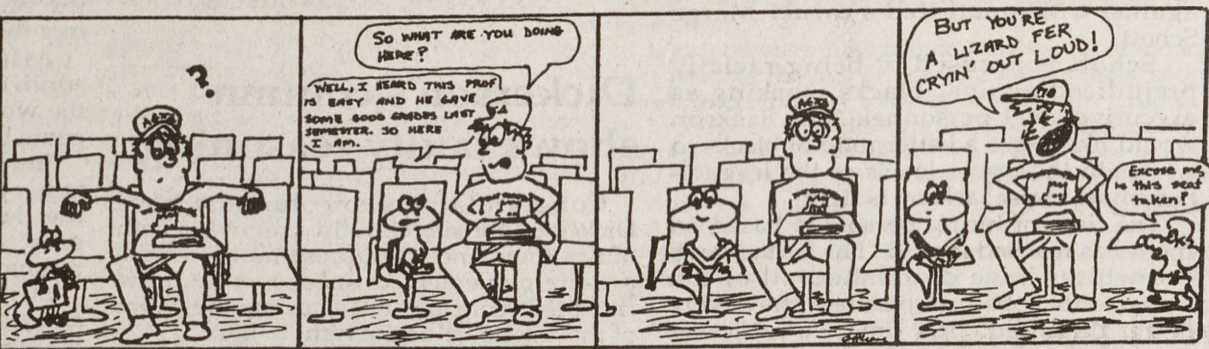
# Kozy "k"

By Clay Welch



# CheeseSalad

by jeff



# TSU 'bandits'

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played the clarinet in the band, said Texas Southern Dean of Judicial Affairs Joseph L. Williams told the students in a meeting Monday they would be reinstated if they enrolled in a particular

ethics class. Not all of the suspended students attended the meeting, Johnson said.

Williams would not discuss Monday's meeting. University spokesman Chuck Smith also refused to talk about the meeting, explaining that it was confidential and that Williams' committee has not passed along a report about it.

"We have no comment on that," Smith told The Associated Press Tuesday. "There's been no report submitted to anyone in writing."

A court order Johnson won has allowed her to resume classes until a disciplinary hearing is held. The hearing was held Friday, but results were not immediately disclosed.

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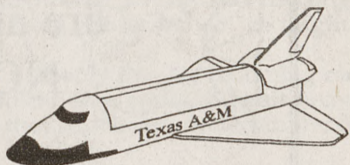
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