

Politics

Thursday, September 13, 2001

THE BATTALION

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Congress resumes following Tuesday's evacuations in D.C. Calls for swift response to both terrorist attacks

WASHINGTON (AP) — Congress reopened Wednesday with lawmakers demanding a swift response to the devastating terror attacks in New York and Washington.

In a day devoted entirely to the attacks, the common theme was that terrorists who crashed hijacked jets into the twin towers of the World Trade Center and into the Pentagon had committed an act of war against the United States.

When diplomacy fails, said the Senate's second-ranked Democrat, Harry Reid of Nevada, "We must use military force in this war against terrorism."

"We will rid this world of the stench of your existence," Rep. Shelley Berkley, D-Nevada, said of the terrorists. "There is no such thing as a measured response to this horrific attack. This act of war will be avenged."

Both the House and Senate took up a resolution condemning terrorism and expressing solidarity with the president in his determination to "punish the perpetrators of these attacks, as well as their sponsors."

A room was set up in a House office building for lawmakers to donate blood.

Lawmakers also began work on a request from President Bush for an unspecified amount of emergency funding to help victims, begin reconstruction and bolster defenses against terrorism.

On Tuesday senators and representatives were ordered out of their offices in what Capitol Police said was the first mandatory evacuation ever of the entire

Capitol complex. Lawmakers were eager to get back to work Wednesday because, Senate Republican leader Trent Lott said, "It's so important that we show that even these terrible acts cannot stop America from going forward."

"Bin Laden is at war with the United States, and it is time that we reciprocate."

— Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pennsylvania

"Yesterday changed our world," House chaplain, the Rev. Daniel P. Coughlin, said in his opening prayer before an unusually well-attended session. "Today we are changed."

Australian Prime Minister John Howard had been scheduled to address a joint session of Congress on Wednesday. That was canceled, but Howard attended the House opening, sitting in the visitors' gallery in what House Speaker Dennis Hastert termed a show of solidarity with Americans.

Both the House and Senate broke during the day for closed-door briefings with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and other Cabinet secretaries. Congressional leaders also went to the White House to confer with the president.

Beyond the resolutions of unity, several members were proposing concrete action: Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pennsylvania, suggested that Congress officially declare war against Osama bin Laden, the top suspect in the terrorist attacks, and his coconspirators. "Bin Laden is at war with the United States, and it is time that we reciprocate," he said.

Reid recommended that Congress create an office whose head would oversee the nation's fight against terrorists. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, R-Texas, said she would propose legislation to put sky marshals on random commercial aircraft.

There were voices of restraint: Rep. John Conyers, D-Michigan, whose hometown of Detroit has a large Arab-American population, saw a "real danger that this tragedy could result in prejudice, discrimination and crimes of hate against Arab-Americans and others."

Rep. David Dreier, R-California, said he had a problem with a declaration of war against bin Laden while the role and involvement of the Saudi-born, Afghanistan-based militant was still unclear.

Almost all committee hearings scheduled for Wednesday were canceled. One that did go forward, in the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee, examined the terrorist threat to the nation's computer and telecommunications systems.

"If we are serious about commencing a war against terrorism," said Rep. Joe Lieberman, D-Connecticut, the panel's chairman, "we have to understand it's going to be a different kind of war."

NEWS IN BRIEF

College Station City Council considers tax rate increase

A proposed tax increase is on the agenda for the College Station City Council meeting today.

The proposed property rate hike would raise taxes to \$0.4777 per \$100 valuation.

The proposed tax increase would generate an estimated \$11.9 million to offset the city's general debt and help fund the city's maintenance requirements. If the council considers increasing tax revenues by more than three percent over the effective tax rate, it must hold a public hearing.

The city council will schedule a public hearing for the tax rate and announce when the vote on the tax rate will be taken.

Also on the agenda, the council will vote whether or not to adopt a proposed budget for the 2001-2002 year. The total of the proposed budget is \$154,835,922, a decrease from last year's total budget of \$172,387,643. This decrease follows the decrease in the number of College Station capital projects.

Other issues to be discussed include the donation of properties to Habitat for Humanity, consideration of professional auditing contracts, rezoning and gas operations.

Prior to the regular meeting, a workshop will be held to discuss issues that are important to College Station residents. The workshop will begin at 3 p.m.

Bryan City Council approves \$215 million budget, sanitary rates increase

The Bryan City Council approved a \$215 million budget Tuesday for the 2001-2002 fiscal year, which will begin Oct. 1.

The council did not raise property tax rates, but rates for city services will increase. Property owners will have to pay more for water, sewage and garbage collection.

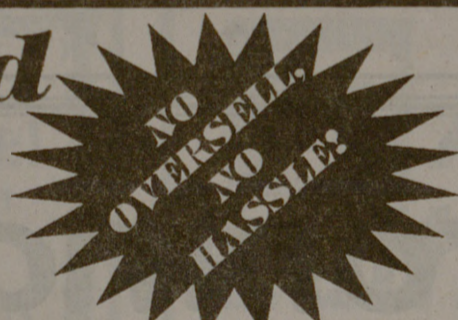
While the budget focused on maintaining current city services, it did give funding to some new programs. The city will spend \$4 million on a radio and mapping system that will improve communication between police, fire and other city departments. The city will also add a litter-cleanup program, which will consist of four new employees who will pick up trash on city streets daily.

The budget, which is \$49 million less than the previous year's budget, was passed unanimously and without comment from citizens or council members.

See BRYAN on page 6.

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Darwin's Unpaid Debt

Darwin's deadline has come. The claims of Darwin's theory have not been verified, and evolutionary theory continues to face problems it cannot solve.

Meanwhile, information theorist William Dembski claims another explanation for life's origin:

Intelligent Design

William A. Dembski is a mathematician, philosopher and associate research professor at Baylor University and a senior fellow with Discovery Institute's Center for the Renewal of Science and Culture in Seattle. Dr. Dembski has taught at Northwestern University and the University of Notre Dame. He completed postdoctoral work in mathematics at MIT, in physics at the University of Chicago, and in computer science at Princeton University. At the University of Illinois at Chicago he earned an M.S. in statistics and a Ph.D. in philosophy. He also holds a doctorate in mathematics from the University of Chicago and a master of divinity degree from Princeton Theological Seminary. Dr. Dembski has published articles and books on mathematics, philosophy, and theology. His book titled *The Design Inference: Eliminating Chance Through Small Probabilities* (Cambridge University Press) examines the design argument in a post-Darwinian context and analyzes the connections linking chance, probability, and intelligent causation.

The Christian Faculty Network at Texas A&M University will be hosting the Veritas Forum and Distinguished Lecture program series for the 2001-2002 academic year. **Dr. Bill Dembski's lecture on Intelligent Design is titled "Darwin's Unpaid Debt"**

September 18, 2001
8:00 pm
Rudder Theater

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