



world beat

Congress ready to work

WASHINGTON (AP) — Congressional Democrats are ready to fight for a tax plan that will benefit middle-income Americans but are not about to rubber stamp President Ronald Reagan's proposal, the chair of the House Ways and Means Committee said Tuesday.

"We will make some changes — correct some imbalances — seek to make it fairer," the chair, Rep. Dan Rostenkowski, D-Ill., said in the party's formal, nationally broadcast response to Reagan's tax plan.

"We will clearly measure the effect of the president's reforms on middle-income taxpayers," the veteran lawmaker added. "We will also be sensitive to American industry's increasing struggle to maintain a competitive edge overseas... Democrats will not,

however, give the president's reform plan a rubber stamp."

Rostenkowski's committee originates tax legislation on Congress, and that role gives the Chicagoan perhaps the most important voice in Congress on the fate of Reagan's proposal.

Sen. Bill Bradley, D-N.J., who has been leading the tax-overhaul fight for four years, said he was elated that Reagan "has committed himself to supporting tax reform."

Sen. Howard Metzenbaum, D-Ohio, called Reagan's plan a letdown after the Treasury proposal. "Special interests have won the first round" of the fight, he said, accusing Reagan of giving "middle-income families the short end of the stick" while looking out for the wealthy and the oil industry.

MCI wins lawsuit, will appeal decision

CHICAGO (AP) — American Telephone & Telegraph was ordered Tuesday to pay \$37.8 million to MCI Communications Corp. for denying MCI access to its long-distance telephone lines in the mid-1970s. Under federal antitrust law, the award will be tripled to \$113.3 million.

MCI had sought \$5.8 billion in damages, while AT&T said

the U.S. District Court jury in the civil case should consider a figure between \$7.5 million and \$36.4 million.

"We are not happy with the damages," William McGowan, chair and chief executive officer of MCI, said after the decision. "We should have gotten a lot more."

McGowan said MCI would appeal the decision.

Speed-limit bill dead

SALEM (AP) — A bill to raise Oregon's "basic rule" speed limit from 55 mph to 65 mph on freeways and some highways was officially killed Tuesday by a House and Senate negotiating committee.

The House-passed bill had called for a token \$5 fine for exceeding the 55 mph "fuel con-

servation" limit and an increase to 65 mph of the state's basic speed law on major highways.

However, opponents said raising the speed limit would jeopardize federal highway money and that any move to raise the limit faced a certain veto by Gov. Vic Atiyeh.

Christians picket capital sites

WASHINGTON (AP) — Almost 200 Christian activists, praying and protesting against "violence, militarism and injustice," were arrested Tuesday in demonstrations outside the White House, the Soviet Embassy and other major buildings in the nation's capital.

They were among more than 1,000 demonstrators protesting against a range of issues, including nuclear policy, war in Central America, the death penalty and abortion, tying them together as anti-Christian "assaults on the sanctity of human life."

Through the protests, said organizer Jim Wallis, "we hope to serve notice that wherever there are policies of violence, militarism and injustice, they will be resisted by the churches."

Wallis, editor of Sojourners magazine, said demonstrators at the White House were protesting "nuclear weapons and the abandonment of the poor," while the State Department was the rallying point for protest of "U.S. war in Central America," and the Soviet Embassy was the focus for reaction against "war in Afghanistan."

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Gillis takes the stand

SALEM (AP) — Former state Rep. Pat Gillis of Portland, taking the stand in his own defense, testified Tuesday that he didn't know he lacked a master's degree until after a newspaper reported the fact.

But under cross-examination, Gillis said he learned in

September 1984 that he got lower grades in two classes than he'd been told he would need to graduate.

That was three months before his lack of a degree was first reported in a Portland weekly, Willamette Week, and two months before the November general election.

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