

EDITORIAL/OPINION



Washington Hot Line

by Congressman Ron Wyden

Who pays the doctor?

"America is on the mend," Ronald Reagan told Congress and the nation Tuesday. Then he proceeded to tell who is going to pay the doctor.

The first to pay will be the senior citizens on social security and on federal pensions as Reagan requested a six-month freeze on cost-of-living increases on social security and a one-year freeze on government pensions, including military pensions.

Second, Reagan will ask Congress to put a lid on spending for the programs he calls "the longest single cause of the built-in or 'structural' (economic) problem"—food stamps and welfare programs for the children, the elderly, the unemployed.

This cut in programs for the poor will allow Reagan to keep his promise of a 10 percent tax cut that benefits large corporations and high-income individuals.

Taxing tuition credits and tax breaks in savings accounts for education will aid middle and upper income families who can save, while aid to disadvantaged students declines.

But... the military budget will increase by 14 percent, because "we should be proud of our

role as peacemaker... In Central American and the Caribbean Basin we are likewise engaged in a partnership for peace, prosperity and democracy."

Yes, the problems confronting us are large and forbidding, he said, and no one should minimize the plight of millions of friends and neighbors who are living in the bleak emptiness of unemployment. But over the years our citizens have had similar problems and "they met the crisis of their time and lived to see a stronger, better and more prosperous country."

Reagan is right to some degree—people have survived past crises. But the doctor bill was not so high nor the illness so great. Our country and the world has never been in as serious an economic crisis as today, and the world has never before been faced with a nuclear holocaust that could eliminate all life. And perhaps never before has the man with his finger on the button had so little basic knowledge and understanding and so little compassion for humanity.

If the nation is to become well it certainly needs a new doctor and a new medical plan.

President Reagan's State of the Union message this week left Americans with more questions than answers, more problems than solutions.

The speech, the second such address the President has given to the nation, did have its high points. During his 45-minute talk, he acknowledged the need for improved math and education programs in our nation's schools. He spoke of the importance of better job training and retraining programs. He conceded that the government has to take the lead in getting the economy back on track. And he admitted that only a bipartisan effort could do the trick.

But behind all the high-sounding rhetoric, some serious questions remain.

The biggest is the issue of fairness.

While the President proposed a spending freeze for domestic programs, he advocated allowing defense spending to continue to rise at nearly three times the rate of inflation.

While he professed a great deal of compassion for the unemployed, he didn't offer much in the way of a plan for ending unemployment.

And while he suggested a standby tax increase beginning in 1986 for all Americans (if the federal deficit deficit does not drop to acceptable levels), he refused to consider cancelling the scheduled 10 percent tax cut this July which will help only upper-income Americans.

The President is right that Congress and the Administration must work together to get America moving forward again. But he must recognize that this can never happen as long as he refuses to budge on mat-

ters as critical as budget fairness.

Congress will not be willing to simply give lip service to the need for jobs and training programs, while millions of Americans remain unemployed.

And Congress will not agree to a program that cuts taxes only for the well-to-do, increases defense spending and pretends we can still balance the budget. To achieve economic recovery, we must get interest rates down. And we can never do that as long as federal deficits remain sky-high.

I sincerely hope that the President and Congress can work together this time in a new spirit of cooperation. We need this kind of cooperation if we are to get the job done—and in a timely fashion. But if the President is unwilling to compromise, Congress will have to make the needed changes itself. The economic well-being of the country demands it.

No human rights in El Salvador

(Continued from page 1 column 3) Roberto Cuillar, Director of the Office of Human Rights established by the Archbishop.

The responsibility for the thousands of crimes falls on the government forces that develop counterinsurgent operations, on the paramilitary bands that kill in the middle of the night with the complicity of the security organizations.

The origins of the political violence are the structural injustices and the traditional political forms of government exercised by the dominant groups.

These two fundamental causes provoke the increasing popular uprising, on one side, and the acuteness of the violent repression by the state on the other. The latter has already caused 40,000 murders and a million Salvadoran refugees either abroad or displaced within the country.

During the past year the violence exercised by the government bodies was not modified. In October alone, for example, 14 peasants, 13 workers, four students, three teachers, one professional, six businessmen, and 433 unidentified persons were murdered.

While one dozen soldiers were judged for one dozen crimes, an average of 15 persons were assassinated each day of the year.

All of the bodies established to investigate these crimes implicate the military. Included were the cases of the four nuns, and the two American technicians, the four Dutch journalists, the Belgian architect, and the American Michael Klein who was called a Vietnam mercenary, and the human rights activist Pamela Cuellar. For the 40,000 Salvadorans killed, there are no trials pending.

After the March elections, thousands of Salvadorans looked forward to democracy. In that month there were more murders than in any other in 1982 and in the follow-

ing month there was no return to democracy.

1983 will be the fifth year of assassinations in the most tragic period of El Salvador's history, or it will be the beginning of what appears to be the rational path: in dialogue among all the political and social interests for peace.

"But the fruit in which we believe is the fruit of justice," wrote Monsignor Oscar Amolfo Romero. "Those violent conflicts, as is demonstrated by a simple analysis of our structures and confirmed by history, will not disappear until their ultimate roots have disappeared."

Salem watch

The battle for the Salem superbowl ought to keep fans on the edge of their seats for at least five more months. The Senate didn't choose up committees until the second week of the session, but the House has been warming up since team assignments were announced in mid-December. Although Senate players may suffer higher than normal injuries due to lack of pre-conference practice, teams on both sides are promising to keep political sports fans entertained in the coming months.

Not all committees promise to be hot. Like any league, a few teams will sleep their way through the season; others will play the kind of ball the fans come out to see. Here are some of the hotter teams in each league (D = Democrat; R = Republican):

Senate

Business and Consumer Affairs: all business.

Commerce, Banking and Public Finance: Well-balanced party-wise, but heavily urban in orientation.

Economic Activities: Heavy on agriculture and timber interests.

Education: Very pro-education.

Energy and environment: environmentally oriented; should take more of a consumer approach to issues than Business and Consumer Affairs.

Human Services and Aging: Solid committee oriented toward resolving human needs.

Judiciary: Two lay members join seven lawyers to form a basically liberal committee.

Labor: Heavily pro-labor.

Local Government and Elections: Balanced between liberal/conservative and D/R; expect either some good arguments or a stifling stalemate.

Revenue: Same as above.

Trade and Economic Development: Heavily liberal to moderate; only one conservative D on the committee and no Rs.

Ways and Means: Frank Roberts is joined by four of the seven senators who spoiled his recent bid for Senate president, so the committee could smolder or ignite.

House

Business and Consumer Affairs: Tipped toward business affairs, but not as badly skewed as in the Senate

committee.

Housing and Urban Development: Even split between Ds and Rs, with Jolin (a conservative D) as the wild card.

Agriculture and Natural Resources: Balanced between agriculture and natural resource interests, with all committee members but VanLeeuwen appearing open-minded toward each other's interests.

Education: Same as the Senate: very pro-education; school and teacher-related issues should find no difficulties in either chamber.

Environment and Energy: Same as the Senate: environmentally oriented with sympathy for the consumer.

Human resources: An all-star liberal team.

Judiciary: A bunch of lawyers working up a storm; look for stress fractures among members of this team.

Labor: Leaning strongly toward labor, not bothered by heavy business interests.

Revenue: politically balanced, but this is where many of the state's economic problems will be aired; look for a lot of action from this team.

Trade and Economic Development: With a slight conservative edge on this committee, there might well be some spectacular philosophical conflicts of interest.

Ways and Means: Four liberal Ds, one conservative D, and three Rs could either balance or stalemate this committee.

In the Senate, the skirmish for chairs of these committees was conducted in the locker room, but the story is now out to the press. The much-heralded stalemate in the Senate president's race was touted as a battle between liberal and conservative, urban and rural. In truth, this time- and money-wasting gambit was largely a test of the game-playing skill of the winning candidate, Sen. Ed Fadelly (D-Eugene). In the end, there was something for everyone—for incumbent Democrats, that is. Here's that score:

Rural conservatives: six chairpersonships (as the legislature is wont to call these positions).

Urban liberals: six chairpersonships.

Switch voters (alternated between liberal and conservative caucuses during voting on the president): two

(Sen. Bill McCoy, D-Portland, chairperson of Human Services and Aging; Sen. Cliff Trow, Chairperson of Education).

Slots on the critical Joint Ways and Means Committee were offered to the four Democrats who received no top committee spots: Sen. Mike Thorne (D-Pendleton), the potential coalition candidate of conservative Ds and Rs, whose presidential campaign never came out of the huddle; Sen. Frank Roberts (D-Portland), the quarterback of the urban liberal caucus who couldn't garner the last two votes needed to make him Senate president; Sen. Rod Monroe (D-Portland), the urban liberal who held out for Roberts while urging Fadelly to tip his hand on committee appointments; Fadelly never gave away the game plan, and Monroe lost his former starting position as chairperson of Education; Sen. Walt Brown—somewhat of a populist, Brown has yet to be easily classified; his former position at the head of Business and Consumer Affairs went to satisfy conservative hold-out Sen. Mae Yih (D-Albany).

The Republicans, of course, got no committee chairs, although they received one slot on Senate Ways and Means; Sen. Tony Meker (R-Amity). Republicans dominated the Senate from 1883 through 1955, and without listing the spoils, he assured the victors kept most for themselves. The House, though also dominated by Democrats, did give three Ways and Means positions to Republicans.

In summary, these are the apparent qualifications for Senate committee chairpersons: belonging to the dominant political party; developing the staying power needed to gain seniority; pledging one's vote to the winning presidential candidate soon enough to appear loyal, but late enough to maintain bargaining power.

After reviewing these statistics and observations, it's anyone's guess as to which House and Senate teams will rank number one at the end of the season. But if you still don't believe politics is sport, settle down to the Super Bowl in Pasadena and watch the football players knock each other around. The battle for the Salem superbowl will be equally brutal.

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DMV asks new law on address changes

Car owners and drivers who do not let the Motor Vehicles Division know when their addresses change may run the risk of a ticket, but their fines do not compare with the costs to the division in wasted postage and added work when people fail to let DMV know they have moved.

As one result of the fact that thousands do not keep the license agency informed of their addresses, the 1983 Legislature requires car owners and drivers to notify DMV of changes in address.

The current law allows 30 days to notify the agency. DMV wants that time reduced to 10 days. That, says DMV Administrator David P. Moomaw, is what is expected in many other states, including California and Washington.

The change from 30 days to 10 days should help people remember to notify DMV right away, and it also emphasizes how important the change of address is to the division. Thirty days makes it easy to forget it, he said.

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