

Senate unable to kill Bush's veto of bill protecting Chinese students

WASHINGTON - The Senate on Thursday voted to uphold President Bush's veto of a bill protecting Chinese students from deportation, handing him a narrow foreign policy victory in his first showdown this year with the Democratic Congress.

The vote was 62-37, short of the two-thirds margin needed to override a presidential veto.

Just before the vote, Bush had renewed his promise that students would be fully protected even without the legislation. "No student, as long as I'm president, will be sent back," he said.

The issue, which would affect an estimated 40,000 Chinese students

studying in the United States, took on added importance as the year's first test of strength between Bush and the Democratic-controlled Congress and as a referendum on the president's China policy.

Republican Sen. William Cohen of Maine said in floor debate that he would vote against the president to uphold "America's symbol to a world that is struggling to throw off the chains of dictators."

But Sen. Frank Murkowski, R-Alaska, said the issue was "really a political challenge to the president's constitutional authority. I believe the challenge is ill-advised, works against

our national interest, and is likely to cause a further deterioration of our relationship with China."

In the days before the vote, the White House had mounted a fierce lobbying blitz which included telephone calls from Bush and other top administration officials to wavering senators and personal visits from Vice President Dan Quayle.

Former President Richard Nixon, who laid the groundwork for modern U.S.-China relations with a diplomatic opening in the early 1970s, telephoned some senators to say Bush's position was in the long-term interests of the United States.

Spire says historical society nit-picking

LINCOLN - Attorney General Robert Spire said Thursday he will go to court if necessary to force the Nebraska State Historical Society to stop its stalling and make records on Indian remains and burial goods available to the Pawnee tribe.

In the most strongly-worded statement that Spire has issued during the continuing controversy, he said that "both the open records law and LB340 require the Historical Society to make its records on human skeletal remains and related burial goods available to the tribe."

"When? Now. I repeat, Now," Spire said.

"Now means cut out the stalling and legal nit-picking," he said. "It means act like responsible, caring fellow citizens."

Spire said he had an obligation to see that the laws were followed.

"Therefore, I shall take whatever action is necessary to assure that the State Historical Society meets its legal obligations, both with regard to the Nebraska Open Records Law and the provisions" of the skeletal remains

law, Spire said.

Under LB340, Indians may reclaim a limited amount of skeletal remains and burial goods.

James Hanson, historical society executive director, said in an interview that "I am quite frankly anxious to have a settlement on this... we've had everybody's opinion on it and now I'd like to have a judicial ruling."

The society has filed action in the Lancaster County District Court, arguing that it is not a state agency within the meaning of the open records law and doesn't have to provide information the Pawnee have sought under that statute.

In an earlier, official opinion, Spire said the historical society was a state agency covered by the open records law.

He said this week he was shocked and disappointed by the society's decision to file suit against the Pawnee Tribe of Oklahoma and the Native American Rights Fund.

Spire said the society "clearly has both a legal and ethical obligation to

deal with the tribe and its legal representatives responsibly."

The Pawnee have asked for documentation and records showing how the society is preparing to comply with its request, under the open records law, for information on the remains and artifacts it is holding.

The historical society's suit contends that the skeletal remains legislation doesn't require that any information be delivered until next summer and that the society isn't subject to the open records law.

Hanson said the historical society "is in an effort to comply with LB340, and we find a pretty interesting and difficult conflict... that's why we've asked for a declaratory judgment, to get the courts to tell us how to proceed."

Hanson said the society board decided at its September meeting in Kearney to hire legal counsel. Lincoln attorney Ed Perry filed the suit for the society. Hanson said Perry was being paid with private funds and "this action is not funded with any state appropriated funds."

Colombian jetliner crashes in New York

COVE NECK, N.Y. - A Colombian Boeing 707 jetliner with more than 140 people aboard crashed in fog and rain Thursday night while on approach to Kennedy International Airport, authorities said. Numerous injuries were reported.

Avianca Flight 52 en route from Bogota crashed at about 9:45 p.m. in a sparsely populated area of northern Long Island, a Kennedy airport official said.

Numerous ambulances and helicopters were at the scene, but there was no immediate report of the number of injuries, nor of any deaths. CBS-TV reported that doctors on the scene said at least 80 survivors were being cared for there.

The jet broke into four pieces upon impact, said Coast Guard Petty Officer Jeff Crawley. There was less than half a mile of visibility and it was raining at the time of the crash, according to the National Weather Service.

The tower at Kennedy lost contact with Flight 52 at 9:34 p.m. when the Boeing 707 was about 15 miles northeast of the airport after a five-hour flight, said Port Authority Police Officer Phil Montouri.

"It was coming in from Bogota and supposed to land at eight o'clock," Montouri said. "There was no radio communication at all

to the tower. It just went down."

The airliner went down in the town of Cove Neck, located at about the same place where the tower lost contact, said Officer Peter Franzone of the Nassau County police. The plane carried 142 passengers and a crew of seven, authorities said.

Crawley said several cutters and boats were en route to the area just in case some debris or victims were in the water.

"We have reports that the crash is on land and that it's in four major pieces," Crawley said.

Control tower officials said the plane may have lost one of its four engines.

The area of the crash is near Oyster Bay Harbor on the north shore of Long Island, just south of the Sagamore Hill National Historic Site, home of President Theodore Roosevelt. It is a isolated, wooded area of expensive homes.

The New York City Emergency Medical Service, asked for help by Nassau County police, sent five ambulances and a Mobile Emergency Room Vehicle to the crash scene, an EMS spokesman said.

According to Radio Colombia, Flight 52 left Bogota with a stopover in Medellin, the city named for its notorious cocaine cartel, en route to New York.

Bush asks for increased funds for war against drugs in 1991

WASHINGTON - President Bush Thursday proposed a national drug control strategy for 1991 that includes a budget of \$10.6 billion, a 12 percent increase over current spending of \$9.5 billion.

The strategy also designates five regions -- New York, Los Angeles, Miami, Houston and the Southwest border of California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas -- as high-intensity drug trafficking areas eligible for millions of dollars in additional help this year and in 1991.

The document, released by the White House in advance of a speech by Bush, is an updated version of the strategy he presented last September.

The updated strategy developed by national drug control policy director William Bennett does not represent a switching of gears. It says the fundamental principle "remains

unchanged: to make drugs undesirable and hard to get through a mix of supply and demand policies."

The strategy emphasizes "the crucial role that state and local governments play -- and must play -- if a national drug strategy is to work." To that end, it calls for \$2.6 billion in 1991 to be sent to the states for law enforcement, treatment and drug prevention efforts, a 108 percent increase over the past two years.

Overall, said Bennett's budget director, Bruce Carnes, the money is split 71-29 between supply and demand efforts.

Last September, the Bush administration sought \$7.9 billion for the war against drugs in 1990, but Congress increased that to \$8.8 billion. The current proposal also is subject to congressional approval.

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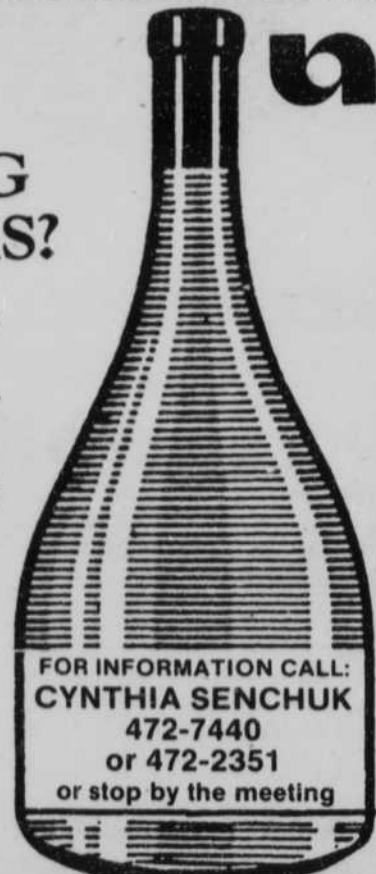
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