

Republicans succeed in stalling voter registration bill

WASHINGTON—The Senate failed by a single vote Tuesday to end GOP stalling tactics barring passage of bill making voter registration easier.

The 59-41 vote fell one short of the 60 needed to end a filibuster.

Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell of Maine said a second attempt to limit debate on the bill would be held Wednesday morning.

The vote came moments after Mitchell accused Senate Republicans of perpetuating legislative "gridlock" by repeated stalling and delays.

Three Republicans who had previously voted with the chamber's 57 Democrats to limit debate reversed course on concerns about

the bill's provision enabling voter registration at public assistance offices. They were David Durenberger of Minnesota, Bob Packwood of Oregon and Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania.

Two other Republicans, Mark Hatfield of Oregon and James M. Jeffords of Vermont, voted to limit debate as they have in the past.

Sen. Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., said it was feared that citizens applying for welfare and other benefits would be subjected to coercion to register and vote for the party favored by welfare workers.

Democrats said there was no evidence that such coercion would occur.

Mitchell complained that Republicans first forced a two-day

delay in bringing the bill to the floor for debate, then caused repeated delays as the Senate debated the merits of the voter registration bill in the two weeks that followed.

"The problem is those who don't want the Senate to vote on this legislation," Mitchell said.

"No one should be fooled or misled about who is causing delay," Mitchell said.

He called on Republicans to "stop filibustering every bill the Senate wants to bring up and end legislative gridlock."

Sen. John Chafee, R-R.I. called the legislation "petty" and said that states should be allowed to decide the rule of voter registration for themselves.

No one should be fooled or misled about who is causing delay.

Mitchell Senate majority leader

"I think it is bad legislation and I hope it goes deservedly down the drain," Chafee said.

Mitchell said the problem for Republicans was that the more convenient voter registration permitted by the bill would allow Americans to vote in greater numbers than ever before.

"And they are afraid that they won't vote for them," Mitchell said.

"Let's get every American registered and voting and then let the chips fall where they may," Mitchell said.

The so-called motor-voter bill would permit registration by mail, at motor vehicle offices, at welfare agencies and at a host of other places where Americans apply for the benefits and services of state and local governments.

Treasury secretary calls for \$45 billion to finish S&L cleanup

WASHINGTON—Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen asked Congress Tuesday for \$45 billion to finish the savings and loan cleanup and asserted the nation would pay "a far greater price, and deservedly so" if lawmakers refused.

The request would bring the total spent or promised on S&Ls since 1988 to more than \$200 billion.

The size of the Clinton administration's request to the House Banking Committee was \$13 billion higher than the estimate issued by the Bush administration in January.

Private analysts contended Bentsen had inflated his request but they said it was better to ask for too much rather than seek too little and have to ask for another politically painful vote.

Rep. Jim Leach, R-Iowa, told Bentsen that gaining approval even once for additional S&L money would be tough. Leach advised the administration to include the money in a larger appropriations bill.

The treasury secretary said lawmakers had little choice but to continue paying for the cleanup. The alternative, he said, was to allow failed institutions to remain open and run up even larger losses.

The cleanup agency, the Resolution Trust Corp., has been without

spending authority since April, and Bentsen said that has added \$1.1 billion to the cost.

"I know ... it is a tough vote," he said. "But I also know that this is a vote for depositors, for the safety of our financial institutions, and that if we fail to meet this obligation, we will pay a far greater price and deservedly so."

Bentsen said he believed this would be the last request to Congress for S&L cleanup money but could not promise that. "If the full amount provided is not needed, it will not be drawn from the Treasury," he said.

He praised Albert Casey, who resigned effective Monday as president of the RTC but promised "dramatic improvements" in management now that Deputy Treasury Secretary Roger Altman is interim head of the agency. Rep. Toby Roth, R-Wis., said Bentsen had forced Casey to resign, and he asked why, noting that Casey had promised to finish the job for \$25 billion.

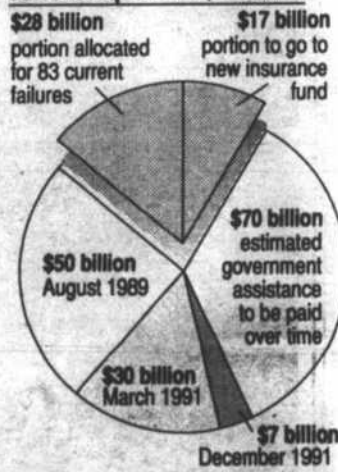
Bentsen never replied directly but said he believed Casey arrived at that figure largely by shifting the responsibility and some of the cost to another agency, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.

The \$45 billion requested by

S&L Bailout

If Congress approves the new appropriation of \$45 billion, it would bring total bailout spending since 1988 to over \$200 billion. This includes \$70 billion estimated cost of fulfilling the FSLIC's promises made in 1988 bailout deals, and \$87 billion in three other appropriations.

Current request for \$45 billion



Bentsen would be split between the RTC and a new insurance fund for the S&L industry, the Savings Association Insurance Fund (SAIF), which will operate under the control of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.

The RTC would get \$28 billion to protect depositors in the 83 failed institutions operating under its direction and in at least 35 more S&Ls expected to fail by Sept. 30.

The rest of the money would go to the insurance fund, to handle an estimated 157 failures between October 1993 and the end of 1998.

Fire guts Chicago hotel; 14 dead, 20 hospitalized

CHICAGO—A fire that ripped through a residence hotel Tuesday killed 14 people, including three who jumped to their deaths rather than face the flames and smoke. Others tied sheets together and climbed out upper floors.

Some of the 130 residents registered at the Paxton Hotel weren't accounted for. Twenty people were brought to hospitals.

When firefighters arrived at the four-story hotel, dozens of panicked residents were gathered at windows or dangled from them as wind-whipped flames rose 15 feet in the air above the roof and blazed out other windows.

The 65-year-old building had neither sprinklers nor fire escapes, though officials said it met all city codes.

"The smoke was so intense, I couldn't see the flames, and it was driving people out the windows," said 45-year-old resident Minnie Byrd, who was reading in her third-floor room when she smelled smoke from the early morning fire. "I thought I had to jump, too."

"I was praying real hard. I got one leg out the side and a fireman said, 'Wait! Wait!' and got the ladder to me." Some of the roughly 130 residents registered at the four-story Paxton Hotel weren't accounted for by Tuesday afternoon.

Rescuers used heavy equipment to search the rubble because the partially collapsed building was too dangerous to send searchers inside.

Victims lay on the ground, some

The smoke was so intense, I couldn't see the flames, and it was driving people out the windows.

Byrd Hotel resident

shouting in pain, while firefighters concentrated on rescuing people rather than fighting the blaze.

Robert Crowder, 61, complained that bars on the windows of his first-floor apartment prevented him from escaping.

"There was no way to get out," Crowder said. "So I had to yell until I could attract the attention of firemen. They came up with a saw to saw through the bars. By this time, flames were coming through the door, and smoke was curling under the door."

Some residents tied sheets together and climbed out upper floors. Others jumped.

Authorities found 10 bodies inside the building. One person pulled from a window was later declared dead.

Some people apparently were overcome as they slept. Several died after being trapped on upper floors and one body was found in a closet.

The fire was under investigation because it traveled quickly up two of three stairwells in the building, 1 1/2 miles north of the downtown Loop, blocking escape for dozens of people.

Yeltsin: Russian lawmakers trying to restore Communism

MOSCOW—Warning that Russia's democratic reforms are in grave danger, President Boris Yeltsin charged Tuesday that the hard-line parliament is trying to "restore the Communist regime" and appealed for greater Western aid.

In his first public appearance since storming out of a humiliating session of Congress of People's Deputies on Friday, Yeltsin said he had not decided how to respond to the growing political crisis.

"The results of the Congress give us serious grounds for alarm. The Congress did not solve, rather it deepened, the constitutional crisis," Yeltsin said at a Kremlin news conference with French President Francois Mitterrand.

Mitterrand made a one-day visit to show Western support for Yeltsin after last week moves by the 1,033-member Congress to sharply curb the Russian president's power to carry out reforms.

"I see a very serious danger posed to democracy and reform. I can see there is an attempt to restore the Com-



Boris Yeltsin Brian Shellitor/DN

munist regime of the Soviets," Yeltsin said.

Mitterrand's visit was the latest in a series of meetings with Western leaders concerned about Yeltsin's political survival.

Last week, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl met with the Russian president in Moscow for 90 minutes. In two weeks, he will meet President Clinton in Vancouver, British Columbia, for a two-day summit.

WORLD WIRE

Serbs renege on pledge to allow aid

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina—Bosnian Serb leaders played with the hopes of the hungry in eastern Bosnia Tuesday, first pledging to allow aid in, then later imposing conditions.

And as leaders of the warring factions prepared to resume peace talks in New York, Serb forces besieging Sarajevo subjected the Bosnian capital to its heaviest artillery pounding in weeks.

Ham radio operators in eastern

Srebrenica reported four or five more villages in eastern Bosnia fell to Serb forces sweeping southward on a two-week offensive. That could not be independently confirmed.

Tens of thousands of refugees from the Serb advance are crowded into Srebrenica.

They have pinned their hopes on an aid convoy, halted since Thursday by Serb forces at the Yugoslav-Bosnian border.

Marine wounded in Somalia firefight

MOGADISHU, Somalia—Fighters for the man known as Gen. Morgan reportedly captured the southern port of Kismayu from a rival clan leader Tuesday. A third Somali warlord accused the United States of taking sides.

In a separate incident in the Bakara market, a U.S. Marine was wounded in a firefight with two

Somalis, one of whom was shot to death by three other Marines.

Marine Col. Fred Peck, the U.S. military spokesman for Operation Restore Hope, said Mohamed Said Hirsi, called Gen. Morgan, broke the cease-fire that had produced a semblance of peace for the 170,000 residents of Kismayu.

Daily Nebraskan staff list including Editor Chris Hopfensperger, Managing Editor Alan Phelps, and various other roles.