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2-23-1984

## **Newsletter - 1984-02-23**

E. De la Garza

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# NEWSLETTER

98-937

February 23, 1984

Washington DC

A GOVERNMENT OFFER YOU SHOULDN'T MISS. The Executive Director of the Texas Surplus Property Agency recently visited my office and left a wealth of information that could prove vital for city managers and county officials in our area. The TSPA is an independent agency established in 1946 by the Governor, and it receives and donates excess federal government property. If you are not already aware of TSPA's activities, I want to tell you a little bit about this agency.

Let's say your city or county--or hospitals, schools and other institutions run by the city or county--are in need of typewriters, office desks, miscellaneous supplies, electronic equipment and so on. The TSPA (after certifying your public agency as eligible) will donate the goods to you on the condition that you utilize the material according to pre-arranged agreements. The only cost to the city or county agency would be handling fees and possibly other special fees depending on the product donated. For a city our county agency hard pressed for funds, this can be a lifesaver. If the county needed a trash truck--the TSPA might even be able to find you such an item in federal surplus inventory!

In our area, the impact of TSPA can be felt. Pan American University has already received surplus property valued at about \$167,140 and the Delta Lake Irrigation District has received surplus property valued at about \$187,210. The Hidalgo Independent School District has received property worth about \$154,000.

Any public agency wanting more information on the TSPA can write to the Executive Director, Mr Marvin J Titzman, Texas Surplus Property Agency, P O Box 8120, 2103 Ackerman Road, San Antonio 78208. This is the San Antonio District office of the TSPA, and the telephone number is 512/661-4267.

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THE DEBT SERVICE PROBLEM IS OVER TAKING US. It is unlikely that the President will push too hard for more domestic spending cuts during an election year which leads me to make an observation on that subject.

The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that legislative changes in the budget since January 1981 have reduced federal spending by \$39.6 billion below what it would otherwise have been in 1985. That's good, but the CBO also notes that the federal government will pay \$47.4 billion more under the proposed 1985 budget from the President for interest payments on the national debt than it did in 1981!

**KIKA DE LA GARZA, 15TH DISTRICT, TEXAS**

The President's big problem involves more than just year-to-year budget deficits.

Those deficits mean the Administration must borrow money--and then pay yearly interest on the amount borrowed. The CBO estimates that from 1982 through 1985, the cumulative total of all savings in social welfare programs through budget cuts will be about \$110 billion. But for the same period of time, the government's interest payments on the national debt will increase by \$124 billion.

Here's the bottom line. The Administration's much heralded budget cuts and cost savings have been wiped out by the massive increase in yearly interest payments on the money the government must borrow to stay afloat. Every time the federal government runs a yearly deficit, money must be borrowed to make up the difference--and that means an interest payment on the borrowed amount. And that, my good friends of South Texas, is the atmosphere in which my colleagues and I in the House are looking at the President's 1985 budget suggestions.

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PUBLIC MEETING TO BE HELD ON LAGUNA ATASCOSA REFUGE. The U S Fish and Wildlife Service is beginning development of a long range master plan for the future direction and management of our Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge. This beautiful wildlife refuge at the eastern end of Cameron County on the Laguna Madre will be discussed at an open meeting arranged by the Fish and Wildlife Service on February 29th at the Harlingen Holiday Inn (1901 West Tyler) at 7:30 p.m.

The master planning process for Laguna Atascosa NWR will involve questions of future land use, management practices, deer hunting, fishing, public access and visitor opportunities. The prime objective of the refuge is to provide food and shelter for wildlife, especially for some of our area's more exotic creatures such as the ocelot. The 45,204 acre refuge is an important resting ground for migratory waterfowl--and an equally important area for preserving brushland and plant life native to the valley area. If you wish to attend the meeting and make comments on the future of the refuge, please contact Gary Burke, Refuge Manager, Laguna Atascosa NWR, P O Box 450, Rio Hondo--telephone 512/748-3607.

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AGRICULTURE DAY PROCLAIMED. On February 13th the President issued an official proclamation naming March 20, 1984 "National Agriculture Day." The proclamation is the result of House Joint Resolution 311 which authorized the President to name the day. The proclamation urges all citizens to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities. Agriculture is the nation's largest industry with combined assets of about one trillion dollars!...And speaking of agriculture COTTON IS STILL A KING--and my former House colleague Edward Derwinski (who is now Counselor for the State Department) has invited me to attend a reception in the State Department Diplomatic Rooms to honor the 25 largest export countries for American cotton on February 29th. Many Embassy officials as well as the 1984 Maid of Cotton will be there. This is my kind of night--it will give me a chance to tell everyone of the excellent quality of Valley cotton. This reception is a way of saying thank you to the best customers of US cotton.

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VISITORS FROM HOME. Melba Wolff, Postmaster of Three Rivers. Jim Drake and Ernesto Gonzalez of Weslaco --accompanied by Dr Juan Sanchez of Brownsville.