

Local

# State officials cite flaws in Texas voting procedures



Photo by Steve Kennedy

Texas Secretary of State George Strake was in College Station Wednesday along with assistant Secretary of State David Herdon to

address the 9th Annual County and District Clerks' Seminar.

By **NANCY FLOECK**  
Battalion Reporter  
Inadequate Texas voting procedures should be corrected to provide citizens with an efficient electoral system, two Texas officials told about 300 county clerks Wednesday morning.

County clerks and state officials are responsible for correcting them, said George Strake, secretary of state. And David Herdon, assistant secretary of state, agreed.

"We have a goal in common — protecting the rights of each and every individual in the state of Texas," Strake said at the 9th annual County and District Clerks' Seminar.

Speaking at the Ramada Inn in College Station, Strake said several areas of the electoral process in Texas are under attack for being inefficient and delaying the voting process.

He said the accuracy of voter registration lists is a major factor in the state's electoral efficiency.

Herdon agreed and said that social security numbers or driver license numbers on voter registration cards would help reduce registration duplications and frauds.

He said about 75 percent of voters voluntarily put their social

security numbers on their cards. Federal law prohibits requiring voters to record their social security numbers.

Driver license numbers or Department of Public Safety identification numbers could be used for the other 25 percent of voters, Herdon said.

"It would be a pretty simple means of catching duplicate registration," he said.

The allocation of voting machines in Texas precincts is also under attack, the two men said.

Sixteen counties, about 50 percent of the voting population, use these machines, Strake said. He said a formula for allocating the machines is being considered in the legislature.

Herdon said the formula is designed to provide a flexible, objective guideline for allocating machines among precincts.

"It should do a lot to eliminate the criticism and pressure on you clerks to allocate machines," he said.

Strake also said opposition to the punch-card voting system has grown since the November election, but two bills to ban them are being revised in the Texas legislature.

"I had nothing to do with any

legislation to ban that," he said. "I will not be a party to such a move." The punch-cards are a financial burden to some precincts and must be carefully accounted for, but when used properly, Strake said, the system is highly effective.

Strake said it is important that state officials and county clerks

work together to devise long-range solutions, not "simplistic, quick fixes" to voting problems.

"We must not allow ourselves to band-aid every little problem that surfaces," he said.

The clerks' co-operation and input is necessary to create the most perfect system man can construct, he said.

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## Speech to focus on space war weapons

Dr. Robert S. Cooper, former assistant director of the Defense Department's Space and Advanced Systems Program, will speak at 8 p.m. in Rudder Theater on "The Weapons of Space Warfare."

His speech, sponsored by MSC Great Issues, will focus on the use of lasers in space warfare.

Cooper recently served as director of NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center where he was involved in programs including the Landsat photographic satellite, the space telescope and the Tiros and Nimbus weather satellites.

Prior to his service in the Defense Department, Cooper was head of the optics division at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and was an assistant professor of electrical engineering at MIT.

He currently serves as a member of the Defense Science Board and is a Defense Department consultant.

Admission to the speech is 50 cents for students and \$1 for others.



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