



A plane from the past

Photo by BOB CASTER

This T-6 Texan belonging to The Confederate Air Force was one of over a dozen "warbirds" from the 1940s and 50s that descended on Easterwood

Airport this weekend. The CAF, based in Harlingen, restores vintage aircraft and displays them across the country.

Black death

Bubonic plague spreading across western states

United Press International
ARLINGTON — Bubonic plague, carried by fleas in wild animals, appears to be drifting across several western states and has caused a record number of human infections, veterinarians reported Friday.

"Last year was the worst year on record," said veterinarian William Rosser in a speech to delegates at the annual "Diseases in Nature" conference. "We hope that this year will be an improvement, but there's just no telling."

Rosser said the disease — which killed a third of the population of Medieval Europe — spread steadily from its origin in California 80 years ago, and now exists in at least 14 western states including New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado and Texas.

"Texas is at the extreme eastern edge," he said. "It's been pretty much confined to the west so far," he said. "But many people feel the epidemic is steadily drifting eastward."

He said a record 40 human cases were reported in the United States last year, compared to 19 the previous year.

In Texas, the last case was reported in January, striking a rabbit hunter from Kermit,

where another man had died of the plague two years earlier.

"The 45-year-old Kermit man complained to authorities of sweats, head throbbing and groin pain," Rosser said.

Initially misdiagnosed, blood tests eventually revealed the plague bacteria and he was successfully treated with antibiotics. Rosser said 15 rabbits shot by the man and a companion were tested, and three carried the plague.

"The disease is treated easily, but it must be diagnosed quickly," he said. "Most victims in Europe died within two or three days."

NAACP executive says judicial system biased

United Press International
PHILADELPHIA — A judicial system biased against blacks is responsible for the ordeal of a black engineer who spent 16 months in prison before being cleared of robbery charges, the head of the NAACP says.

NAACP Executive Director Benjamin Hooks charged Saturday that the engineer, Lenell Geter, was arrested because of his race.

"He was arrested and his picture was circulated basically because he was black and had a bag in his hand, and there were reports that a black man with a bag in his hand held up a store."

"That is ludicrous, and abso-

lutely ridiculous and repugnant to the whole concept of American justice," Hooks said. "I guess it will only be when a white man is arrested for having a bag in his hand and convicted that we'll get a lot of help."

Geter ended a two-year legal battle last week when prosecutors dropped charges he robbed a suburban Dallas fast food restaurant of \$600. He had been convicted of the charges in 1982 and sentenced to life in prison.

"What happened to Geter could happen anywhere in America because the criminal system is flawed and, particularly in the South, it's flawed

against black people," Hooks said.

Geter, an engineer from Denmark, S.C., was freed from prison on bond last December after a retrial brought about by national publicity. NAACP attorneys aided in Geter's defense.

Hooks said Geter deserves "hero's welcome" for his ordeal.

"We should give Mr. Geter the kind of hero's welcome that was extended to Robert Gorman," he said, referring to a Navy airman held captive in Syria for one month after his plane was shot down over Iranian-held positions in Lebanon last Dec. 4.

Meese files yield information on Carter's last TV appeal

United Press International
WASHINGTON — Edwin Meese, who denies taking a major political role in the 1980 Reagan campaign, was provided details of President Carter's final, election-eve television appeal three days in advance, Meese's campaign files show.

Also among files recently turned over to the Senate Judiciary Committee by House investigators are several memos in which Robert Garrick, director of political development for the Reagan campaign, describes materials picked up from sources in or close to the Carter camp.

Garrick reported to Meese, who has said he handled only issues and policy for the Reagan campaign.

Meese, whose nomination as the new attorney general is embroiled in a controversy over his financial dealings, has denied in writing that he knew the Reagan campaign obtained material generated for Jimmy Carter's re-election bid.

Meese told investigators for a House subcommittee recently that he remembers few of the memos, found in his campaign files, referring to tips or other information flowing from the

Carter campaign or White House.

The Nov. 1, 1980, campaign memo from Peter Dailey, an advertising man for the Reagan campaign, advised Meese and seven other campaign officials, "I've just learned that Carter's 20-minute presentation on election eve will consist of a pre-recorded format with Henry Fonda as the narrator-host."

Dailey said the ad, which ran as scheduled, would include, "approximately three minutes of Henry Fonda setting the stage ... segments of political types such as (House Speaker Thomas) Tip O'Neill and others endorsing Carter ... segments featuring statues of famous presidents with the narrator (giving) quotes by each of these presidents ... Carter in the Oval Office in a cardigan sweater making a five-minute appeal to voters" and a closing scene showing "Harry Truman beseeching people to vote the Democratic Party."

Dailey, who recently resigned as U.S. ambassador to Ireland, could not be reached for comment.

The memo and others found in Meese's files rekindles questions, being investigated by the

House Post Office and Civil Service subcommittee, about how the Reagan campaign obtained inside information from Carter strategists. The House investigation began with disclosures last summer that material from Carter's debate briefcase book reached the Reagan campaign.

Rep. Donald Albosta, Mich., chairman of the panel, asserted last fall that months-long inquiry had turned up evidence of an "organized effort" by the Reagan campaign to obtain Carter materials.

Albosta's staff is preparing a final report detailing this and sources said Sunday would emphasize the poor collections of Reagan's top campaign officials about the Carter material.

Meese, in an affidavit submitted to the subcommittee recently, wrote, "I have no knowledge of any effort by the Reagan-Bush presidential campaign, or anybody associated with that campaign, to obtain from the Carter administration or the 1980 Carter-Mondale presidential campaign, any private materials or information."

Radar gun training delayed

United Press International
EL PASO — Training on the controversial Sgt. York air defense gun has been delayed, Fort Bliss officials said Friday.

The first model of the weapon system has arrived at Fort Bliss, almost six months behind schedule.

Because of the delivery delay, training on the weapons system has been set back from June to November, said Maj. Gen. James Maloney, Fort Bliss commander.

The Sgt. York, named for Sgt. Alvin York, the Tennessee rifleman who was a World War

I hero, was shipped to the Army on March 13 from the Ford Aerospace and Communications Corporation at Newport Beach, Calif., said Donald Flamm, the company's director of public affairs.

Flamm said the delay in delivery was caused by "software integration problems." He said officials "don't feel they'll require hardware changes."

"There is a lot of concern about the DIVAD program," Maloney said, referring to the Sgt. York by the acronym for its original name — the Division Air Defense gun. "Last year the plan was to start the training this June, but this has been delayed until November."

Army sources said the delays were caused by "quality control" problems with the Sgt. York. Flamm, however, pointed out that the Army did not refuse to accept delivery of the system.

Company officials have been performing a series of 75 tests on the Sgt. York, and Flamm

said the radar-equipped gun performed well in most tests. On three of the tests, results "just weren't up to parameters," he said.

Flamm said there were "insufficiencies of target" problems with the radar system. He is not specific about the problems.

The General Accounting Office and congressional investigators criticized the Pentagon for failing to analyze the effects of producing and fielding the Sgt. York gun with its deficiencies uncorrected.

Rep. Lawrence Smith, D-Pa., charged the weapon has deficiencies uncovered by the Defense Department's Operations Test and Evaluation Agency.

Maloney defended the Sgt. York, calling it in an earlier interview, "a devastatingly effective weapon" and pointed out that Ford has the responsibility for correcting any deficiencies.

The Army plans to buy 100 of the guns, which are equipped with twin, turret-mounted mm cannons, officials said.

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