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Meese claims no misconduct despite report

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Attorney General-designate Edwin Meese III said Tuesday he has met "ethical as well as legal" standards of conduct, but a report made public at the insistence of senators concluded he violated conflict of interest rules.

That finding was reached by two attorneys in the Office of Government Ethics, but they were overruled by the head of the office, David H. Martin, who was appointed by President Reagan.

Martin informed the committee Jan. 24 that no ethics violation by Meese occurred, never mentioning the staff report — which became known through a news account Monday.

The internal report by staff attorneys F. Gary Davis and Nancy Feathers was made public as the Senate Judiciary Committee opened new hearings into Meese's fitness to serve as attorney general.

Last year, the committee dropped action on Reagan's nomination of his longtime associate after independent counsel Jacob A. Stein was appointed to investigate allegations concerning Meese's financial dealings with associates who later won federal jobs.

Stein said there was no grounds to prosecute Meese on any violations of federal criminal law.

Feathers and Davis concluded, "There are two situations in which Mr. Meese violated the standards of conduct or other applicable statutes."

They said the violations included a rule that sets limits on receipt of gifts by White House employees and a regulation prohibiting federal employees from participating in matters in which they have a financial interest.

These potential violations involve financial aid Meese got from John R. McKean, who arranged two loans totaling \$60,000 to Meese in June and December 1981. In October 1981, McKean, who was Meese's accountant, was nominated to a seat on the U.S. Postal Board of Governors.

"Mr. Meese should not have participated when Mr. McKean came before the senior staff for approval with respect to positions on the Postal Board of Governors," the Davis-Feathers report said. "He had a financial interest in the matter."

The report also cited a delay in interest payments to McKean and "the appearance of impropriety created by his (Meese's) activities."

Meese, 53, originally appeared before the committee last March, but action on his nomination was postponed because of the investigation.

In opening statements by senators, only Sen. Howard Metzenbaum, D-Ohio, said he would oppose the nomination. Eight senators said they supported the presidential counselor and nine contended they were undecided. Thurmond said he wants the committee to vote Thursday on its recommendation to the full Senate.



Heave Ho!

Workers from the A&M Carpenter Shop put the finishing touches on the new MSC lounge and study area. The lounge is located

in the MSC basement near the snackbar and bookstore. The grand opening is scheduled for later this week.

Photo by ANTHONY S. CASPER

State legislators say get ready for tuition hike

This is the first article in a two-part series on the possible tuition increase for Texas students.

By JERRY OSLIN
Staff Writer

Texas has a tradition of offering low tuition to college students, but according to some state legislators, it is a tradition that is about to be broken.

"The (State) Senate is favorable to a tuition increase," said Sen. Kent Caperton, D-Bryan. "With the budget crunch we have in Texas right now, we don't have the luxury of offering the lowest tuition in the country anymore."

The Texas House of Representatives also is in favor of raising tuition, according to Rep. Gary Thompson, D-Abilene.

"There is a very good chance that a tuition-hike bill will be passed during this session," he said. "We have a \$1 billion shortfall in the state, and there is wide-spread agreement in the House that an increase in tuition is needed."

Even if the state had projected a revenue surplus, the legislature would still pass a tuition-increase bill, said Rep. Wilhelmina Delco, the chairwoman of the House Higher Education Committee.

"There have been several attempts in the past few sessions to raise college tuition," Delco, D-Austin, said. "If tuition is raised — and I think it will be — it will be because it's an idea whose time has come."

A bill sponsored by Delco would raise tuition \$2 per semester hour every year until it reached a level of \$24 per-semester-hour.

"I know an increase in tuition will hurt people," she said. "That's why my bill calls for 25 percent of the tuition raised to be set aside for student financial aid."

Delco said tuition for in-state undergraduates hasn't been raised since 1971, and this is the main reason for the increase.

But Caperton disagreed. "I have fought tuition hikes in the past," he said, "but I can't afford to take the political easy way out this time. We need the money."

Caperton said non-resident, graduate, medical and dental school tuition should be raised first and then

resident undergraduate tuition only if it is needed.

"We need a tuition adjustment, but I still strongly believe we have a responsibility to make higher education available to as many people as possible at the lowest cost possible," he said.

Thompson said a tuition-hike is needed because the poor are unfairly bearing the burden of supporting higher education.

"Students aren't paying their share of the education costs," he said. "We have a situation where students are getting a free ride at the expense of taxpayers."

A recent study by the Texas Research League, an Austin-based public policy research group, revealed tuition and fees charged to Texas resident undergraduate and graduate students are the lowest of any state in the nation. It also said Texas ranks last in non-resident graduate tuition and next to last in non-resident undergraduate tuition.

"Studies have shown that the children of the well-to-do are more likely to go to college than the children of the poor," Thompson said. "We are at a point where the poor are subsidizing the rich to go to school."

The TRL report also said resident students' tuition pays for only about 3 percent of their educational costs while non-resident students' tuition covers 31 percent of their educational costs.

A House bill, sponsored by Thompson, would raise the cost of resident tuition 2 percent of the educational costs every year until it reached 15 percent. It also calls for an immediate increase of non-resident tuition to 75 percent of students' educational cost.

Thompson admitted some students would be hurt, but said his bill allows an increase in student financial aid.

"The plan has a very generous scholarship fund for students who cannot afford the cost of the increase," he said.

Thompson's bill also calls for tuition to be indexed to the inflation rate to keep up with rising education costs.

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System crash result of tampering, malfunctions

Library patrons suffer from breakdown

By GIGI SHAMSY
Reporter

A computer hacker's tampering and a system malfunction caused the breakdown of the Sterling C. Evans Library computers and forced library personnel to resort to slower manual operations since Jan. 12.

A hacker is a person who illegally

invades a computer system and alters data within the computer's memory.

Library Director Dr. Irene Hoadley said this interference combined with a common disk drive malfunction, called a "head crash," has resulted in the breakdown of all library computers for more than two weeks.

Library Systems Analyst Tim Saito said a head crash sometimes is caused by a particle of dirt which jostles the 300-megabyte disk in the computer and halts the system.

Since the malfunction, Saito said he has been working around the clock with library staff to protect the library's data.

Hoadley said the library staff has been forced to restrict the number of books checked out to five books per person.

"We have two CRT (cathode ray tube) screens operable on the first floor," she said. "Since we are performing all functions manually, we will limit these screens for checking

out books and for necessary library transactions."

The malfunction has inconvenienced both library staff and patrons, Hoadley said. A team of workers is investigating ways to prevent the problems from occurring again, she said.

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Doctors face ethical dilemma in abortion

This is the third article in a three-part series on abortion.

By MICHAEL CRAWFORD
Staff Writer

Medical technology is moving faster than the law.

In the landmark Roe vs. Wade case, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down Texas' statutes which prevented abortions except when the mother's life or health was threatened. That 1973 ruling was based on medical technology which the justices used to divide pregnancy into three equal sections.

As time progresses, the mother has fewer options available when deciding on having an abortion or not.

The Court declared that in the first trimester a woman may receive an abortion on demand. During the second trimester, the state may regulate abortion procedures, yet the woman's right to an abortion remains. And, according to medical knowledge at that time, the fetus could survive outside the womb in the third trimester and therefore the state can prevent abortions except where the mother's life is threatened.

That definition of third trimester viability is threatened by the medical profession's ability to save younger and younger fetuses. Such advances increase the possibility that a doctor

"Once you start treating a fetus surgically or medically, that acknowledges that fetus as a patient. It leaves the doctor in the paradox of treating it as a patient or aborting it." —Medical Ethicist Thomas Murray.

may someday be forced to abort a fetus he might otherwise be able to save.

"At the time of the Supreme Court decision in 1973, the decision was based, in part, on the stage the fetus could be sustained," says Steve Heartell, director of the Greater Dallas Maternal and Family Plan-

ning Clinic. "Advances in technology have lowered the age at which a fetus can survive without aid. That's a problem."

Medical Ethicist Thomas Murray at the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston says, "Once you start treating a fetus surgically or medically, that acknowledges that fe-

tus as a patient. It leaves the doctor in the paradox of treating it as a patient or aborting it."

Murray says that fetuses 24 or 25 weeks old may be able to survive, but they would probably be severely damaged.

Parents no longer must wait until birth to discover if their child has certain deformities. Amniocentesis can detect certain genetic defects like Down's syndrome by withdrawing and analyzing fluid from the amniotic sac. Unfortunately, amniocentesis cannot be performed until the 14th week of pregnancy and the results take several weeks. When the results are finished, the fetus is al-

ready capable of movement.

Another improvement in fetal monitoring is ultrasound scanning. That test enables doctors to accurately determine the age of the fetus and provides a visual check for deformities.

The fuzzy image resembles that of a child capable of surviving outside the womb. Because the mother can observe the fetus, Murray says, the mother's decision to abort becomes more difficult.

"It is less than a full-term baby, but it is still something quite significant," Murray says.

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