

Official says inmates lack appeals lawyers

AUSTIN (AP) — The state of Texas has executed inmates who were less than adequately represented by lawyers, the director of the Texas Civil Liberties Union said Thursday.

Death row inmates have died despite having important, unanswered legal questions in their cases, according to TCLU Director Gara LaMarche of Austin.

"There have been people who have been under-represented," he said. "What that means is the people who are representing them didn't raise every issue that was available to them."

The TCLU called the Thursday news conference to complain about a shortage of Texas attorneys willing to represent death row inmates. State law guarantees a court-appointed defense lawyer for trials and direct appeals of criminal cases.

But no lawyer is provided for post-conviction appeals, often the most complex portion of death penalty proceedings.

Henry Schwarzschild of New York, director of the American Civil Liberties Union's anti-capital punishment project, said as many as 60 Texas death row inmates do not have lawyers.

A&M police arrest two men in theft of T-top from car

A plainclothes stakeout by Texas A&M University Police resulted in the arrests of two men early Thursday morning in connection with the burglary of a car, said Bob Wiatt, director of security and traffic.

The two were taken to Brazos County Jail, where they were later released after each posted a \$2,500 bond.

Wiatt said plainclothes officers in Parking Annex 40 noticed a car cruising around the parking lot around 2:50 a.m. Thursday. The car stopped beside a Datsun with a T-

top, and two men got out, Wiatt said.

They both began kicking on the windows of the Datsun, and one of the men went back to his car and returned with a tire tool with which he proceeded to break out a window, Wiatt said.

He said both men then removed the car's T-top.

"As officers approached the men, both fled, threw the T-top down and threw the tire tool under another car" before they were caught, Wiatt said.

'Principals also need to be teachers'

Expert refutes educational advice

By Larry Keller Jr.
Reporter

The head of Texas A&M's Department of Educational Administration says he strongly disagrees with Secretary of Education William Bennett's suggestion that elementary school principals should come from outside the teaching ranks.

In an 83-page report entitled "First Lessons: A Report on Elementary Education," Bennett suggested that people in the business world or retired military officers be used as elementary school principals.

But Dr. David Erlandson says that people in business and the military don't have the background or understanding needed to really fulfill the most important function of a principal — instructional leadership. Erlandson has spent 27 years in the education field, and has been at A&M for the last nine.

As an instructional leader, Erlandson says, a principal must be able to go into a classroom, analyze the learning that goes on in that classroom and make comments for the teacher to use in conducting classes.

"It takes a deep understanding of the whole educational process," he says. "And the only way

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— Dr. David Erlandson, head of A&M educational administration department.

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Erlandson says his attitude might be different if Bennett had been talking about a high school setting, which is usually more complex and larger than an elementary school.

"With that level of complexity in a high school... I could at least listen to Bennett's argument that maybe you can do well with a manager," he says.

But Erlandson is quick to point out that high schools today are so departmentalized that a business principal "could get by" by surrounding himself with educational department heads.

"In elementary school," he says, "instructional leadership is so much more important and so much more significant than the managerial functions."

He says that an elementary school usually doesn't have the various departments that a large high school has, so the principal must be able to

communicate with the teachers.

Erlandson says maybe educators themselves are in part to blame for Bennett's suggestion. He went on to explain that for years it was common practice to take high school teachers — many times football coaches — and make them elementary school principals.

"It was a disaster in many cases," he says, "because that person was not selected for those qualities of understanding instruction at the elementary level."

He says the thought behind the idea of using former coaches was that if a coach was organized enough to run a football team he also could run an elementary school.

Erlandson says he sees a similarity between the idea of using a coach and Bennett's idea of using military officers.

Erlandson recommends taking principals from elementary school teachers and teaching them certain business skills rather than taking

them from the military or business world.

He says that the reason Bennett's statement could be highly business-oriented is that of the Reagan Administration.

He says that most people in business and society today are that most schools are inefficiently run.

"Much of that is a myth," Erlandson says. "We educators are a pretty good job when it comes right down to it."

Some local school principals also disagree with Bennett's suggestion.

David Ogden, principal of the Elementary School, says, "Our primary purpose as principals is as educational leaders."

"Some (military leaders) have leadership skills but no experience... and there's no placement for experience in the field."

Ernest Johnson, the principal of Crockett Elementary School, says, "I think it's easier for an educator to learn certain aspects of the business world than for a businessman to learn things about education."

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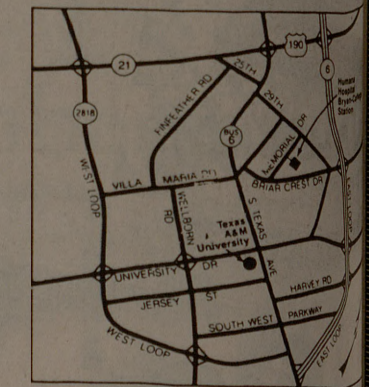
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