

Warped *(Sorry, somebody already ripped out today's strip. It was pretty good too.)* by Scott McCullar

Reagan answers questions on secret arms shipments

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Reagan, silent for weeks on the arms sale scandal, answered "a" questions' Monday.

Robert C. McFarlane, Reagan's former national security adviser, has told Congress that the president had prior approval for the shipment of the Iran-Contra affair since before Christmas, and has not answered any questions since a Nov. 19

Waldo by Kevin Thomas



Study of flu vaccine intends to eliminate harmful effects

By Joe Lowe Reporter

About 1,100 Texas A&M students and faculty members are participating in the first four-year study of the effectiveness of reduced doses of the standard influenza vaccine on the virus.

The study, coordinated by Dr. John Quarles for the Baylor College of Medicine, is designed to test protection from the flu produced by half dosages of the current vaccine.

Students were chosen for the study last semester on the basis of whether or not their blood contained antibodies to the Taiwan flu, the most common strain this flu season, Quarles said. The flu season traditionally begins at the beginning of the spring semester.

When a person has the flu, his body produces antibodies that make him immune to that particular strain. But when the composition of the flu virus changes, his body hasn't developed a system to fight the new virus yet, Quarles explained.

He said his team chose to test the vaccine on people without these antibodies. Quarles' team also looked for people who will be around for the duration of the study — freshmen, faculty members and five-year engineering students.

The drug, Amantadine, protects against all current flu viruses classified as type-A influenza, Quarles said, but it has unfortunate side effects, including blurred vision, swelling and increased risk of seizure among patients with a history of seizures.

These side effects are similar to those produced by antihistamines, but they are especially dangerous to the sick and elderly because the drug increases their chances of contracting pneumonia, he said.

Decreased dosages, Quarles said, should reduce these side effects — if not completely eliminate them — allowing the drug to be used safely on all patients, particularly the elderly.

The study focuses on two particular questions, Quarles said. It will compare the protection and side effects resulting from nose drop vaccines, as opposed to the standard flu shot, and will determine how long protection lasts with the lower doses.

Cyclotron grant designated for equipment

By Ronda Tapp Reporter

A \$3.7 million Department of Energy grant recently awarded to the University Cyclotron Institute will provide new equipment for research and student training, as well as funds for research conducted over the next three year period.

Dr. Dave Youngblood, director of the institute, said the equipment will be used for a new cyclotron, now being built by Texas A&M staff.

The estimated \$8 million used to build the new cyclotron was provided by the Robert A. Welch Foundation, which specializes in chemical research performed in Texas.

The new cyclotron is expected to be operating this summer, Youngblood said, and will provide new experimental capabilities not available anywhere else in the United States.

The institute's building was expanded in 1982 to accommodate the new cyclotron.

"When the new cyclotron goes into operation," Youngblood said, "the old one will be shut down. We don't have the demand or the resources to keep it operating."

The cyclotron primarily is used to gain an understanding of the properties of nuclei as well as what holds them together. Youngblood said it is used for basic research, but in the process, new technologies and applications to industry and medicine are discovered.

The new cyclotron will allow researchers to probe deeper into the nucleus of the atom because it will accelerate ions to high speeds and because it contains a magnet three times stronger than the one used in the old cyclotron, he said.

Youngblood said students will be able to carry out better research projects for their theses with the help of the new cyclotron.

The approximately 25 graduate students now working with the cyclotron will help build a new apparatus to accompany the new cyclotron.

"Nearly all research done here is done in conjunction with graduate students," Youngblood said. "We also train individuals to later make contributions to research."

Three officers implicated in jail sex scandal

DALLAS (AP) — Two detention officers resigned and another was placed on leave following an investigation into allegations that jailers obtained sexual favors from female inmates in exchange for cigarettes, authorities said Monday.

Three county detention officers allegedly received sex from as many as 10 inmates in an elevator at Lew Sterrett Justice Center, said Jim Ewell, a spokesman for the Dallas County Sheriff's Department.

"One officer still faces a hearing," Ewell said. "We expect him to follow the same line that the others did and resign."

He said the first detention officer resigned Sunday, the second quit Monday and a departmental hearing on the third was pending.

Officials said all incoming inmates, male and female, are processed into the county's four jails through the central intake section at the Sterrett center.

Female inmates are processed on the center's first two floors, officials said. Jailers transport them by elevator to the second floor where the inmates receive prison clothes.

The investigation began Jan. 17 after jail officials heard rumors among inmates that several jail intake officers were sexually involved with female prisoners, Ewell said.

Ewell said Lt. John Slovak, a watch commander, saw a jailer and a female prisoner enter an elevator and was curious because the jailer was not assigned to escort prisoners.

Slovak told investigators he took an adjacent elevator to the second floor, where he waited for about 12 minutes for the jailer and his prisoner to arrive.

The prisoner told officers the man had propositioned her in the elevator, but that the two had not had sex. Ewell said Slovak reported the incident to the department's Internal Affairs Division.

Ewell said the prisoner told internal affairs officers six days later that she had sexual intercourse with the jailer in exchange for cigarettes. She also told investigators she had sex with another officer on March 3.

Two jailers have told investigators that they have had sex with female inmates, Ewell said.

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