

## World and Nation

### Stock market keeps rising, sets record high

NEW YORK (AP) — The stock market rolled up another gain to record highs Thursday, following through on its sharp rise in Wednesday's session.

The Dow Jones average of 30 industrials climbed 18.98 to 2,276.43, bringing its gain over the past three sessions to 55.96 points.

Volume on the New York Stock Exchange reached 205.43 million shares, up from 198.41 million Wednesday and the heaviest total in more than two weeks.

Analysts said the market was benefiting from a new mood of confidence inspired earlier in the week by General Motors' announcement that it planned to buy back as much as 20 percent of its stock over the next four years.

### Iran affair prosecutor to head new counsel

WASHINGTON (AP) — Attorney General Edwin Meese said Thursday he is appointing Lawrence Walsh to head a new office of independent counsel as "an insurance policy" against legal challenges by Lt. Col. Oliver L. North that threatened to torpedo Walsh's investigation into the Iran-Contra affair.

In doing so, Meese linked the independent counsel more closely to the executive branch of government, a result which Congress sought to avoid in enacting the 1978 Ethics in Government Act under which Walsh was appointed.

But Walsh endorsed the new arrangement.

In a statement, Meese said that a lawsuit filed by North, raising constitutional questions about the 1978

law, "places a question mark over . . . Walsh's activities. . . By creating a parallel position securing to Judge Walsh the powers, authority and independence that the Ethics in Government Act provides, we remove that question mark."

The Justice Department, meanwhile, filed a motion to dismiss North's lawsuit on narrow procedural grounds. But the department refused to join Walsh in asserting that the independent counsel statute is constitutional.

Without referring to the constitutionality of the law, the department simply said North had no legal basis for challenging the legitimacy of Walsh's investigation. Department officials have long had doubts about the constitutionality of the law,

which resulted in Walsh's appointment in December by a panel of three federal judges.

At a news conference, Meese also said he will meet with other independent counsels about the possibility of making similar arrangements, including the counsel investigating former White House aide Michael Deaver. Deaver has filed a suit similar to North's challenging the constitutionality of the 1978 law.

Meese was asked whether having an executive branch officer appoint Walsh gives the appearance of a conflict of interest. The attorney general denied that was the case and said Walsh will have "essentially the same independence that the Ethics in Government statute provides."

### Governor won't say if state to appeal judge's ruling banning 45 textbooks

MOBILE, Ala. (AP) — School workers began pulling books from shelves Thursday to comply with a federal judge's order banning 45 texts from Alabama classrooms on grounds they promote a goddess humanist religion.

Gov. Guy Hunt gave no indication whether he wants to appeal Wednesday's ruling by U.S. District Judge W. Brevard Hand.

However, critics all but guaranteed they will seek to throw out the order, which they called a frightening form of judicial censorship aimed at giving religious fundamentalists a foot inside the schoolhouse door.

Hand, ruling that secular humanism is a religion, said Wednesday the use of the textbooks in public schools violates the Constitution's prohibition against the establishment of a religion by the state.

According to fundamentalists, secular humanism is the elevation of transient human values over eternal spiritual values, and secular human-

ists believe that humans can handle their own affairs without divine intervention.

"With these books, the state of Alabama has overstepped its mark, and must withdraw to perform its proper non-religious functions," Hand said.

Some of the books appear to be used by tens of thousands of students, though textbook records showed that most would be replaced anyway by this fall.

In Mobile, spokeswoman Jo Peary said three home economics books and one history book covered by the court ban are in use by nearly 7,000 pupils.

School officials began removing the books Thursday, she said.

"If these books are not removed right away, then the local board would be subject to contempt citation," said Robert Campbell, attorney for the schools.

Meanwhile, at a news conference, former U.S. Rep. John Buchanan, chairman of the Washing-

ton-based People for the American Way, said Hand "sadly erred" in ordering the books banished.

But Hunt, a Primitive Baptist minister who is chairman of the State Board of Education, the main defendant in the case, refused to give an opinion on the matter.

"We will continue to watch this very important litigation as it moves through the federal court system and, of course, the state of Alabama will comply with all final orders of the court," he said.

Press secretary Terry Abbott said Hunt would discuss the issue when the school board takes it up later. A date for such a session was not set.

Buchanan, a Baptist who was a moderate Republican in Congress, said the ruling will reinforce efforts by conservative religious groups in similar cases nationwide.

If the state declines to appeal, the parties backed by People for the American Way and the American Civil Liberties Union indicated they would not let the ruling stand unchallenged.

### Study sparks dispute among experts

#### Critics say lap-only safety belts not replaced fast enough

WASHINGTON (AP) — Seven months after a controversial federal study raised doubts about the protection afforded by lap-only automobile safety belts, critics charge that the Transportation Department has been slow in getting the belts replaced.

The study by the National Transportation Safety Board last August sparked controversy among highway safety experts because it for the first

time suggested that rear-seat passengers might be better off in certain crashes not to wear the lap-only belts.

The findings continue to be hotly disputed by the government's top highway safety agency, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and some other safety organizations, which claim the study has wrongly persuaded some people not to use lap belts.

But critics say everyone agrees that shoulder belts provide better protection than the lap-only belts, which are available on the rear seats of most cars.

They complain that the highway safety agency, part of the Transportation Department, has been too timid in getting automakers to make available kits that would allow car owners to replace the lap belts they now have. Also, they charge that the

agency has done little to publicize the kits when they are available, and refused to initiate new regulations requiring shoulder belts on all new cars.

The highway agency's response to the NTSB study "has been lethargic at best," complains Clarence Ditlow, director of the Center for Auto Safety. "Basically NHTSA has put its head in the sand . . . about this safety problem."

### Roberts obsessed with death, author says

TULSA, Okla. (AP) — Long before Oral Roberts claimed last year that he will die unless contributors donate money, the Tulsa evangelist focused attention on his own death and struggles with the devil, the *Tulsa Tribune* recounted Thursday in a copyright story.

"He has been obsessed with death for a long time," said Jeffrey Haden, sociologist at the University of

Virginia and author of a book on television evangelism.

Roberts, 69, has said his life was changed when he was 17 and a evangelist saved him from tuberculosis.

In 1947, he said his national ministry was launched when gunshots barely missed him at one of his tent revivals. Police arrested a man for discharging a weapon in the city lim-

its, but the charges later were dismissed.

In 1982, Roberts said a three-car accident involving a Mercedes-Benz driven by his wife, Evelyn, in Hollywood, Calif., was caused by the devil. In 1985, he said police warned him of a death threat if he did not raise \$8 million for medical missionary scholarships.

Diane Steed, head of the highway safety agency, has indicated several times since the NTSB report last August that she intends to examine whether additional regulations are needed on the rear-seat belt issue.

"We haven't seen anything yet," says a staffer on the Senate Commerce Committee, where a consumer subcommittee is expected to raise the issue with Steed during an appearance Friday.

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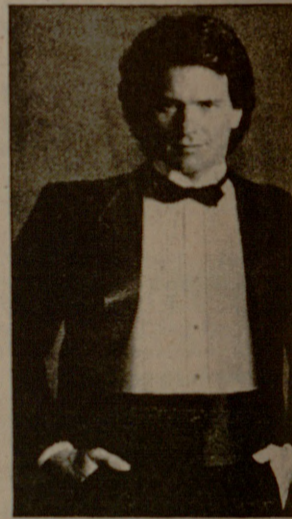
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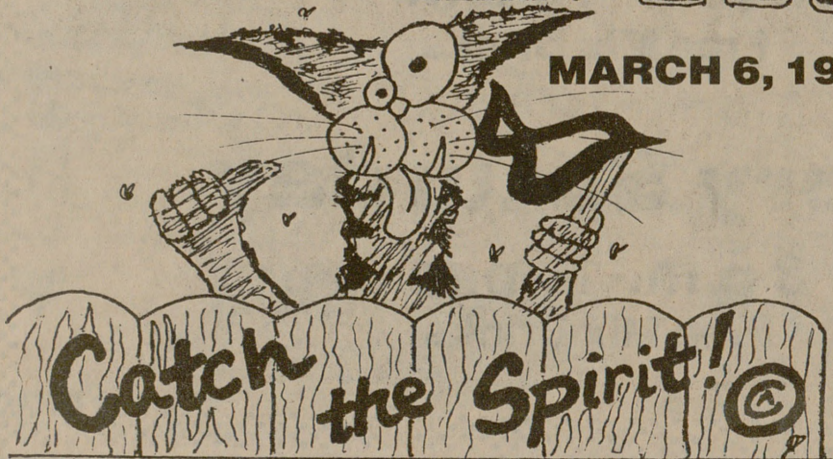
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