

Reagan's choice of new FBI director praised by Texan

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sitting stiffly between U.S. Sens. Lloyd Bentsen and Phil Gramm, the San Antonio jurist nominated by President Reagan to become the next FBI director listened as Senate Judiciary Committee members showered him with praise.

to your home state and the cause that's the best known against an ailment known as mac fever," Heflin said, referring to the river that flows through the state.

At that, Sessions' wife, Alida, daughter, Sara, both sitting in the audience, exchanged smiles.

The 57-year-old judge, a stranger to Washington, was chief of the operations section of the Justice Department's criminal division and prosecution of obscenity, draft and election fraud cases. He was U.S. attorney in San Antonio when President Ford nominated him to his judgeship in 1974.

In a three-page statement to the committee, Rep. Lamar R-San Antonio, took credit for recommending Sessions to Reagan as replacement for outgoing FBI Director William Webster, who heads the CIA.

"While he said that would be a fair yet tough judge, Gram, R-Texas, compared him to 'an old-fashioned western marshal with a shining star on his chest... totting a big gun.'"

The greatest accolades for U.S. District Judge William S. Sessions came from his natural allies — representatives from his home state. "I was delighted as I listened to these statements of support," said Bentsen, D-Texas, suggesting it would be wise of Sessions to obtain a videotape of the proceeding because it would likely be the most unanimous support he would get in Washington.

Harkening to Sessions' reputation as a fair yet tough judge, Gram, R-Texas, compared him to "an old-fashioned western marshal with a shining star on his chest... totting a big gun."

Gramm is examining a group of 23 potential replacements to fill the vacancy on the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas if Sessions is confirmed as expected.

From Sen. Ted Kennedy, D-Mass., Sessions was hailed not only for his outstanding record, but "for his willingness to pull up stakes after many years in Texas to take on this enormous challenge."

Offering similar praise from the conservative right, Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, said he has not received a single piece of negative comment on the Sessions nomination.

One bit of lighthearted forewarning was offered by Sen. Howell Heflin, D-Ala., himself a former federal judge.

"In the future you need to return

Widow lives in poverty while battling courts for right to oil leases

EASTLAND (AP) — Millions of dollars in oil leases are tied up in a legal dispute that has left a widow penniless because the word "all" did not appear in a document.

Since her husband's death six years ago, Norma Jean Harlan has tried to straighten out his accounts, which consist mainly of mineral leases that he consigned to her before he died.

without running water, a telephone or an automobile because she has no money to pay the bills.

Eugene Harlan, a former university professor, had been six years before his death. The couple had lived mainly on the \$50,000 income from mineral leases he had obtained in 1952 from the Harlan family, who owned United Energy Corp.

Texas courts have held the oil wells, which were worth \$8.3 million in 1981, because they could not identify the property her late husband Eugene owned in Texas.

In an appeal to the state Supreme Court filed July 24, Harlan's lawyer, Bobby Mann of Mineral Wells, says an appellate court in 1954 allowed a similar conveyance with the difference being the inclusion of the word "all."

Under Texas law, a deed conveying real property must describe the grantor, a grantee, words of conveyance and a reasonable description of the property. The Texas Supreme Court has ruled that if a deed does not contain a description of the property, the document is void.

A judge ruled that the deed was insufficient to convey mineral leases and gave the Harlan children from a previous marriage, reserving one-third of the property for Mrs. Harlan.

"A reasonable person looking at the magnitude of the property discussed would reason that the property interests referred to in the legal document would indeed be all that Eugene Harlan possessed," Mann said.

Harlan, 55, said "I have a right to inherit what my husband left me. They (the lower courts) have no right to look for ways to prevent me from inheriting it."

"When a court can zero in on one word and you lose your inheritance, it's wrong. Is the state of Texas going to take me on welfare when I lose my home?"

Harlan, who is a diabetic, has been living alone in Alexandria, Tenn.,

She appealed, but Justice Arnott on the 11th Court of Appeals agreed with the lower court ruling saying the property could not be identified.

But the deed, records at the Royalty and land documents office in Eastland County courthouse, contain descriptions of the property.

Harlan said most of her net estate was in the mineral leases 99 percent of them are in Texas.

Harlan signed an affidavit turning the mineral leases over to her wife and left no other will.

Family gains from investing in broadcasting company

FORT WORTH (AP) — Robert M. Bass' investment in Taft Broadcasting Co. has turned out to be the second most profitable deal ever for the family that is renowned for its money-making skills.

The Robert M. Bass Group's 1985 investment of \$205 million in Cincinnati, Ohio-based Taft is now valued at about \$718 million.

Huge profits have been made by investing in an asset-rich, profit-poor entertainment company that was embroiled in a takeover attempt. But while the family helped prevent a takeover of Disney, Robert Bass and family associates are about to profit from the split up of Taft.

Taft's properties will be divided among three investment groups.

The Bass group is the biggest single stockholder with 24.9 percent and will get \$157.5 million in cash, a

Columbus, Ohio, television station and two large cable TV companies.

The deal represents a big gain for all Taft shareholders.

The cost of buying out the shareholders, who together own 40 percent of Taft's shares, is \$718 million. Those shareholders are offered either \$157.5 million in cash and one share of FMI Corp.

FMI is the company owned by Cincinnati financier Carl Lindner that will get Taft's entertainment division, producers of "The Doo" and "Huckleberry cartoons. Lindner owns 16.2 percent of Taft.

The third major shareholder, Dudley Taft, son of the founder, will get a television station and assistance to build a broadcasting company.

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