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# GOP candidate for U.S. Senate says Texans know little of primary

AUSTIN (AP) — Tuesday's GOP U.S. Senate primary could be like child's play because many Texans know little about any of the four candidates, one of them said Wednesday.

"We still have to change that a little bit, or for about 80 percent of the voters it might be 'eenie, meenie, miney, moe,'" U.S. Rep. Beau Boulter said of the low name identification for him, Milton Fox, Wes Gilbreath and Ned Snead.

"Even if it's 'eenie, meenie, miney, moe,' I'm ahead and would expect to win," said Boulter of Amarillo.

The four Republicans are battling to face Democratic U.S. Sen. Lloyd Bentsen in November. Bentsen faces

token opposition in the Democratic primary from Joe Sullivan, a little-known professor from San Antonio.

At a Capitol news conference, Boulter called on Bentsen to abide by campaign spending limits proposed in a Senate bill co-sponsored by Bentsen. The bill was recently defeated by Senate Republicans, but Boulter said Bentsen should still abide by the proposed limit of \$5.8 million.

Reports have indicated Bentsen could spend about \$10 million on his re-election bid. Boulter said Bentsen would be in "an embarrassing position" of exceeding the limits proposed in a bill he co-sponsored.

"The argument by all the spon-

sors, and I assume it's Sen. Bentsen's argument as well, is that too much money might tend to corrupt and might give some powerful senators too much access to special interest groups," Boulter said.

He said he would vote against the bill because it offers federal money for Senate races.

Jack DeVore, a Bentsen spokesman in Washington, chided Boulter's comments on spending limits.

"Mr. Boulter is opposing campaign finance reform," DeVore said. "Sen. Bentsen supports it. Talk about hypocrisy."

"The real irony is that the only reason Boulter is in this race is a promise from the Republican Na-

tional Senate Committee to give him more than \$1 million if he can win the primary. That's \$1 million from one committee."

Boulter called on Bentsen to return approximately \$2.5 million in contributions, including \$900,000 from political action committees, to drop his support for the limits.

"It's inconsistent to be advocating that that much money corrupts the political process... and then the other hand to raise and spend that much money," Boulter said.

He said he would spend about \$150,000 on his primary race, and nominated, hopes to have \$5 million for the general election.

# Five U.S. airmen held on charges by Panamanians

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Five Kelly Air Force Base servicemen detained by Panamanian officials for six hours were held on questionable charges, military officials said.

The five communications specialists were on temporary duty in Panama when they were arrested and held last week. Officials said Tuesday the arrest was the first of a three-day wave of harassment by the Panamanian Defense Force against the U.S. military.

On the day after the Kelly team was arrested, 25 soldiers and airmen were arrested and detained for two hours by Panamanian authorities. They were charged with driving to work on motorcycles with their uniforms on, a charge U.S. military officials southern.

U.S. Southern Command officials in Panama lodged a formal protest to the Panamanian government after the arrests, command spokesman William Ormsbee told the *Santo*

*Light* in a telephone interview from Panama.

The arrests follow the indictment of Panamanian strongman Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega on a series of U.S. drug smuggling charges.

Panama has been under military rule by Noriega since deposed President Eric Arturo Delvalle unsuccessfully tried to dismiss him last week.

The communications team from Kelly in San Antonio was driving back to Howard Air Force Base after having dinner at a restaurant Feb. 21. The team and a serviceman stationed at Howard were arrested at about 10 p.m. by Panamanian Defense Forces in the Canal Zone.

The five were told they were pulled over because they had too many people in their car.

"They were searched and fingerprinted and summarily charged with disrespect to Panamanian authorities and disorderly conduct," Ormsbee said.

# Mayor ferrets out solution to spare animal from death

FARMERS BRANCH (AP) — A city ordinance against exotic animals almost spelled doom for Felix the ferret, but a public outcry brought a pardon from the mayor of this Dallas suburb.

"He's got a reprieve," Farmers Branch Mayor John Dodd, who spared the animal, said. "We are going to ferret out a solution."

A city official said Wednesday that publicity over the fuzzy, pink-eyed ferret may lead to its recovery by the animal's owners.

opened the door and whistled, he said, the ferret jumped into his lap and snuggled against him.

Wallace took the ferret to the animal shelter and attached a note to his cage that said, "Please do not destroy. If no one claims it, I want it back."

As news spread of the ferret's plight, the animal shelter was deluged with requests to adopt Felix.

But, because of a city ordinance prohibiting exotic animals, officials said the ferret would be destroyed if his owner was not found.

Animal control officer Milton Worsham said his department could not take responsibility for placing Felix for adoption because there is no approved vaccine for ferrets and the animal sometimes bite.

The mayor said he spoke to the owner of an animal rehabilitation center about taking the animal.

# Language

(Continued from page 1)

with a provisional admission to the University and take this exam and possibly be forced to take courses in Texan English. It's an ultimate outrage."

McIntyre says he does not think this story is an exception but rather a clear signal that a problem exists with A&M's English proficiency system.

that." Wormuth also says there is a method built into A&M system for appeal after a student has taken the proficiency test.

"The department can request a waiver or postponement of the student's placement in this program," Wormuth says. "It's an appeal done by the departmental people through the dean of their college, and when they look at that information they can make a decision."

not uncommon with the use of standardized tests.

"Like any other standardized testing situation, there is generally always a means of getting copies of things like that," Wormuth says. "The TOEFL exam is the same way."

Four components of the six-section ELPE come from the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency. Dr. Sarah Briggs, a research associate in the test office of the English Language Institute at the University of Michigan, says that retired components of the MTELP are sold to colleges and universities around the country for screening purposes.

Briggs says the University of Michigan no longer uses the MTELP and has developed another proficiency test called the Michigan English Language Assessment Battery. New versions of the test are constructed every year, she says, in order to avoid the type of security problem that exists at A&M.

"That's a serious problem," Briggs says. "We don't use it here because when you're using a test widely like that, you have to revise it every year."

Aside from the complaints about who takes the test and the security problems, some, such as Colegrove, argue that the test itself is not a fair measure of students' English proficiency.

"Ladies and gentleman," he told a recent Faculty Senate meeting, "I have the feeling that if you took some of the other graduate students from the U.S. and had them take this exam, you would find a certain percentage that did not pass it."

Dr. Ry Young, a tenured professor of biochemistry who has been outspoken against the ELI system, also voices concerns about the fairness of the A&M proficiency exam.

"Apparently we give the most exhaustive and extensive English language proficiency test that's given

anywhere," he says, "at least as hard as anyone else's."

But Dr. David Martin, assistant search psychologist with A&M's Test and Measurement Services, says ELPE "for the most part" provides an accurate evaluation of foreign students' English proficiency.

Martin says A&M chose to use the Michigan test because of its credibility.

"It's a test that has a long history of development, so it was secure because it's one of the better tests of the type," he says.

Before A&M began using the ELPE, Martin says, the University tested it on entering A&M freshmen whose native language is English. They were given the four Michigan components — testing reading, listening, vocabulary and grammar, and the composition component, which is designed locally.

"It was just a check to make that it was something that was reasonable to give international students," Martin says. "The main thing was to make sure that it wasn't something that native speakers would have difficulty with, because it would be unfair to expect international students to do better than (native speakers)."

Foreign graduate students score an 80 on each test section; foreign undergraduates must score 70.

On the listening, grammar and vocabulary sections of the test, the trial run with native English speakers, all the freshmen scored below 80. But 20 percent scored low 80 on the reading comprehension section of the test, and 30 percent scored below 80 on the composition section, Martin says.

But Martin said he's not sure how reliable those results are.

"Certainly... trying to determine the level that's required of graduate students from testing under conditions is kind of hard," he said, "requirements are a lot different

"There are an infinity of stories of this sort that one hears," he says. "And the bottom line that I have reached in trying to research quite a number of them is that almost all of them are largely true, and that we do have a problem."

At a recent Faculty Senate meeting, Lloyd Colegrove, president of the Graduate Student Council, touched on this same problem.

"I have talked to people from India who maintain that they learned English from when they were a child, yet they've had to go through ELI," he said at the meeting. "And I have spoken with people from other countries who learn English as a second language, and since their country is a protectorate, they walked right on in. And there's a lot of graduate students out there who feel this is very unfair."

As the system currently stands, Wormuth says, there is no consideration of a foreign student's background in English before he takes the English proficiency exam. As a result, students with bachelor's and master's degrees from American universities end up taking the exam and, potentially, enrolling in ELI courses.

"I think there have been occasional students for whom there may have been an anomalous situation, and they're asked to take the test because that's policy," Wormuth says. "I think the concern becomes in looking at the work that has been done at a previous university. Somewhere someone has to be evaluating

Upon arriving at A&M, most international students already have taken an English proficiency exam called the Test of English as a Foreign Language. The student's TOEFL and Graduate Record Exam scores are primary factors in their admission to the University.

University officials say there are two main reasons why students are retested after arrival. First, the TOEFL does not test a student's proficiency in written or spoken English. Also, administrators have cited concerns about the security of the TOEFL exam, saying that they worry about its validity since it is administered under circumstances not governed by A&M.

But students, professors and administrators admit that there are serious security problems with A&M's English proficiency exam.

Dr. David Martin, a research associate in the Office of Measurement and Research Services, says about eight or nine different forms of the test are recycled for administration of the test, which takes place six times a semester.

But several foreign student associations have copies of all the forms of the test, and one association even has the test forms on microfilm.

The Battalion was able to obtain two different forms of the test.

Wormuth says she is aware that copies of the ELPE are circulated. She says that fact does raise questions about how accurate a measure of a student's proficiency the test actually is. But she says that problem is

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