

Texas A&M The Battalion

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Military exemption, bribes shake Israel A&M bid to dismiss language prof subject of hearings, testimonies

JERUSALEM (AP) — A scandal involving citizens paying thousands of dollars to avoid military service has shaken Israel, where the army is considered a sacred institution and most believe their nation is surrounded by Arab enemies.

The story of Israelis paying up to \$10,000 in bribes to avoid serving has been front-page news and dominated radio broadcasts Tuesday.

"Shock waves swept through the IDF (Israeli Defense Force, or army) following the disclosure that a network of army personnel and civilians had been arranging exemptions from military service in return for bribes," the English-language daily Jerusalem Post said.

Renaan Gissin, the deputy spokesman for the army, said the scheme that was revealed Monday with the arrest of 16 people, including high-ranking officers and doctors, and "touches on the very essence of the Israeli Defense Forces — the sacred principle here is to do military service."

Israel is a nation of 4.1 million residents where both men and women

are drafted at age 18, and men do reserve service of up to 62 days a year until age 55. Many job advertisements ask that applicants prove they served in the army. Avoiding service has long been a social taboo.

There are virtually no conscientious draft resisters in Israel and fewer than 300 people have refused service during the last decade in controversial military operations in places such as Lebanon and the occupied territories.

But after the scandal broke Monday, reports surfaced that about 60 people had paid thousands of dollars to escape the draft or reserve service. Newspapers reported Tuesday that several hundred people may be involved.

The army said dozens of more arrests are expected.

The scheme, which investigators say started in November, reportedly involved falsified medical statements and tampering with army computers to show men excused from reserve duty. Those arrested include two lieutenant colonels, two majors and an orthopedic surgeon.

By Stephen Masters
Senior Staff Writer

The Academic Freedom, Tenure and Responsibility Committee convened for a second day Tuesday to hear testimony on a contested move to dismiss a tenured Texas A&M professor.

In a December 1985 letter, Dr. Katharine Richards, an associate professor of modern languages, was notified by her department head, Dr. Luis F. Costa, that she would be removed from University payroll in May 1986. Because of continuing appeals, she is still on budgeted payroll.

Richards is contesting her dismissal and also has filed civil charges against Texas A&M with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. She has been crippled from poliomyelitis since she was 10. A deposition filed with the EEOC by Richards said she wears a leg brace and cannot walk or stand without crutches.

Tuesday's testimony was from the dean of the College of Liberal Arts, former and current department heads, and a former student.

Richards has been a member of A&M's faculty since 1970 and in Spring 1988 was elected to the Faculty Senate, where she serves on the Research Committee. She has had tenure since 1976.

The University charges say the move is based on "professional incompetence, continuing or repeated substantial neglect of professional responsibilities, moral turpitude adversely affecting the performance of duties or to the meeting of responsibilities to the institution, or to students or associates, and mental or physical disablement

of a continuing nature adversely affecting to a material and substantial degree the performance of duties or the meeting of responsibilities to the institution, or to students or associates."

Jerry Cain, associate general counsel for A&M, said the University is likely to drop the accusation of moral turpitude.

"We just threw that (moral turpitude) in to make sure everything was covered," Cain said.

Costa, who has served as department head since 1983, continued his testimony from Monday. He spoke of three different instances where students came to him to complain about Richards' class. He also said that Richards' student evaluations were consistently poor.

Costa said complaints were similar in that they indicated Richards gave few explanations, that students had problems understanding her, that she was absent-minded in class and that she tended to call on the same students for most of the hour and would ignore the rest of the class.

Costa also testified that students complained Richards often seemed unprepared. No students testified to this statement during the first two days of the hearings.

Dr. Daniel Fallon, liberal arts dean, testified after Costa. In a deposition for the hearing, Fallon agreed with Costa's recommendation and stated that medical conditions, not her sex or handicap, were the basis for her dismissal.

Richards said that the school is discriminating against her on the basis of her sex and handicap. She said the school is hiding behind vague terms and won't address actual charges.

"They won't say the exact charges," she said. "They are using vague terms from the faculty manual."

Dr. Anne Elmquist, modern languages department head from 1973 to 1983, gave testimony that agreed with both Costa and Fallon that Richards' mental condition was such that she should no longer serve as a professor. Elmquist said student complaints against Richards increased greatly in the 1981-82 school year.

In an unusual move because of schedule conflicts, a witness for Richards, Marion Abbey Phillips, a 1986 microbiology graduate who now lives in Austin, who was in Richards' Spanish 205 course in Fall 1985, testified Tuesday on Richards' behalf, before A&M had finished presenting its evidence.

Phillips said Richards was very prepared, courteous and spoke Spanish regularly in class.

A&M is scheduled to call its final witness today. Richards also is expected to begin calling witnesses today.

Testimony is being heard by the six-member committee consisting of four regular members and two alternates; however, only five members of the committee will vote. Once testimony is completed, lots will be drawn by the alternates to determine which will vote.

The Texas Open Meetings Act calls for meetings over personnel to be closed to the public or to be held in executive session unless the person under discussion wishes the meeting to be open. Richards requested the meeting to be open and for *The Battalion* to attend.



Three rascals

Spanky McFarland, 59, of the *Little Rascals* fame, signs autographs for the Teston family from Centerville Tuesday afternoon at Cavendish

ers Boot City. Spanky, wearing the small boot in the center of the photo, starred in 95 episodes of the show.

Photo by Sam B. Myers

Road construction rerouts A&M traffic Dorm parking added

University News Service
Traffic on the north side of the Texas A&M campus will be temporarily rerouted beginning at 9 a.m. Thursday while the State Department of Highways and Public Transportation completes work on Houston Street at University Drive.

Houston Street will be temporarily closed from University Drive to Hogg Street beginning at 9 a.m. Thursday so that highway department crews can complete work on the adjacent section of the widening of University Drive.

To ease traffic problems caused by the closure, Asbury Street will become two-way from University Drive to Hogg Street, also effective Thursday morning. Asbury will remain one-way off campus from Ross Street to Hogg. Ross will remain closed to through traffic from Asbury to Spence Street while construction continues on the on-going storm sewer project.

Flagmen and patrol officers will be posted in the area to direct motorists while the street is closed.

The street is expected to be re-

opened by Monday morning.

To ease overcrowding in campus parking lots, Texas A&M parking officials have opened the temporary lot behind the University Police Station to dorm students only.

Major Linda Lively, head of parking administration, said the gravel lot was designated for dorm students at the beginning of the semester, but lack of use prompted her to open the lot to all students with parking permits Tuesday.

The spaces are currently restricted to dorm students until the department can gauge how many dorm students will use the lot. The lot may be opened to all students in the future.

"It's virtually empty," she said. "We've got almost 300 spaces and people are running around all over the place and they don't know it's back here."

The lot is in the former location of the married student apartments. Students can get to the lot by turning off Houston Street at the University Police Station.

Water level recedes, flooding still possible

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Floodwaters were receding in most of Mexico on Tuesday but communities in northern Veracruz, hit by Hurricane Debby last week, feared rain in the mountains would send rivers out of their banks again later in the week.

"It takes five days for the water from Mexico City rains to arrive here. That's what we're afraid of," said Fortunato Guzman Rivera, mayor of Panuco, 190 miles northeast of the capital on the Panuco River.

At least 34 people have been

swept away by swollen rivers or died in mudslides and thousands were evacuated during more than a week of rain dumped by two hurricanes, Debby in the Gulf of Mexico and Kristy in the Pacific. An undetermined number of poorly built homes were damaged or destroyed.

Remnants of Debby continued to cloud skies over parts of southern Mexico on Tuesday. Kristy, which never crossed land, moved out to sea earlier.

More than 200 people were evacuated from the banks of the Panuco and the town of La Barranca on Tuesday, and several hundred U.S. tourists stranded in resort areas of the south for three days were flown out to Mexico City.

Along the shattered 220-mile southern coast road between the resorts of Ixtapa and Acapulco, a motley fleet of buses, trucks and jeeps provided transportation in relays. Passengers had to carry their luggage past army troops across damaged or washed out bridges before starting the next leg of their journey.

The Panuco, which overflowed in three communities Monday, appeared to stabilize one foot below the floodline Tuesday, Guzman Rivera said in a telephone interview.

The Santiago River in the west-central state of Nayarit was flooding Tuesday, but the Papaloapan in southern Veracruz and other major streams were within their banks, an Agriculture Department spokesman said.

He said 10,000 people had been evacuated from nine communities near the point where the Santiago empties into the Pacific.

Officials warn investors of gold scams

WASHINGTON (AP) — Thousands of American investors will lose millions of dollars this year in what authorities on Tuesday branded the "fool's gold rush of 1988" — various swindles offering the chance to buy gold at below-market prices.

State securities regulators and the Council of Better Business Bureaus warned in an "investor alert" that the gold schemes represented the fastest growing fraud threat in the country. Since the spring of 1987, they said, the number of known gold scams has jumped from eight to 52 under investigation currently.

Officials said last October's stock market collapse had created a climate allowing the swindles to proliferate.

"Thousands of individuals fled the markets, turning their backs on mainstream investments," James C. Meyer, director of the Tennessee Division of Securities, told a news conference. "The result: a huge pool of potential, cash-rich victims ripe for exploitation by the promoters of exotic investment swindles."

Meyer, who is president of the North American Securities Administrators Association representing 50

state securities offices, estimated that tens of thousands of Americans nationwide would lose \$250 million in the bogus gold deals this year.

The typical "dirt pile" swindle works this way:

A high-pressure salesman calls from a boiler-room telephone operation, offering to sell 100 tons of dirt for \$5,000. The con artist guarantees that the dirt pile will yield at least 20 ounces of gold, an effective price of \$250 an ounce, far cheaper than current gold prices.

"The problem is the gold doesn't exist beyond microscopic, economi-

cally unrecoverable levels," Meyer said. He said investigators have found that many of the mine sites contain less gold than can be found in sea water.

"Why people will commit their life savings over the phone, when they wouldn't think of buying a car or house sight unseen, is a continuing and troubling mystery to those of us whose job it is to promote investor protection," Meyer said.

Officials urged consumers to hang up on high-pressure telephone sales tactics.

Remedial classes may cause trouble

AUSTIN (AP) — Many community colleges and universities could face problems next year when they will be required to offer remedial instruction to students who fail a basic-skills test in reading, writing and mathematics, educators say.

A major problem may be finding enough qualified teachers for the remedial programs, which according to some estimates may be needed by at least 25 percent of next year's freshmen statewide.

It is not yet known how many students will need the instruction at each school, since the test is still being developed and the minimum passing scores have yet to be set, officials said.

Some educators say the greatest impact is likely to be felt by universities that have relatively low admission standards and have not been offering remedial programs.

But even institutions that have experience with remedial education — such as the community colleges — will probably need to greatly expand their efforts and hire additional teachers.

"The need for these qualified people is going

to hit this state like a bombshell next year," said Rollo Newsom, vice president for academic affairs at Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos.

SWT has begun planning master's degree and certification programs in "developmental education" to help train teachers and administrators who will be needed for the remedial courses.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has recommended that the Legislature provide \$34 million for remedial instruction for the two-year budget period that begins next September.

Some educators have said the skills test should be canceled if funds for remediation are not approved.

The test and the remedial instruction are parts of the Texas Academic Skills Program, which is planned as a way to identify students' deficiencies and help them acquire the basic skills necessary for success in higher education.

Institutions cannot use the test as an admission requirement, but students must pass all parts of

the test before they can receive an associate degree from a community college or before they can take university courses beyond the sophomore level.

Some community college students who are seeking a vocational education certificate also must pass the test.

Freshmen entering colleges and universities next fall are the first group required to take the test.

Institutions will be required to offer remedial courses, but participation by students will be voluntary.

Educators will have a better idea of how many students will need the remedial courses after the minimum passing scores are set early next year, said William Sanford, the Coordinating Board's assistant commissioner for universities and health affairs.

An early idea about the difficulty of the test will be available after October, when a group of students at colleges and universities will volunteer to take the test in a trial run.

Columns give look at past

As a special feature, we at *The Battalion* decided to re-run some of the more popular columns that have appeared on the Opinion Page over the years.

For some of the older students, the columns will bring back memories. For the younger undergraduates, they will give you a glimpse into the past of Texas A&M and *The Battalion*.

Opinions expressed in *The Battalion* are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the opinions of *The Battalion*.