

# The Battalion

## OPI releases candidate names interviewed in president search

By Stephen Masters  
Senior Staff Writer

Texas A&M's Office of Public Information released the names of the four candidates interviewed during A&M's presidential search this summer.

James C. Miller, director of the Office of Management and Budget in Washington D.C.; James Howell, senior vice president of the First National Bank of Boston, and James Meindl, senior vice president for academic affairs and Provost for Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute were interviewed in New York in late June. Former executive deputy chancellor William Mobley was interviewed a week later. Mobley was named president July 18.

The Board released a list of 57 candidates updated monthly during the summer, but more than 25 per-

cent of those listed told *The Battalion* they were not actively pursuing the position.

Two candidates told *The Battalion* they were not aware they had been nominated for the position, although their names appeared on lists dating back to March 31. Mobley, Meindl and Howell all referred questions on the matter to the Board, but Bill Presnal, executive secretary of the Board, said no instructions were given to the interviewees. Miller was not available for comment.

*The Battalion* repeatedly requested lists of candidates interviewed, but Presnal and James Bond, deputy chancellor for legal and external affairs, said the information was exempted under Texas Open Records Act.

The law states that the entity with the requested information has 10

days to respond to written requests, either to approve the request, deny the request or ask for a new opinion. If the information is denied, a previous Attorney General's opinion is to be cited as the reason, or a new opinion is to be requested within 10 days. If the request is agreed to, the information must be surrendered within 10 days. After 10 days, all information is considered open.

*The Battalion* ran a story based on anonymous sources July 15 that said Mobley would be the new president. During the following weekend, the *Eagle* confirmed these reports with two Regents.

*The Battalion* and the *Eagle* requested a list of candidates interviewed for the position after Mobley was appointed. Bond requested an Attorney General's opinion on whether the candidates' names could be withheld under exemptions of

the Texas Open Meetings Act. The Attorney General's office sent a letter opinion dated Sept. 27 stating that the exemption did not apply.

Presnal said his office received the opinion letter from Bond's office Thursday and received approval to release the vitae of the four interviewees Sunday from Board Vice Chairman Joe Reynolds.

Presnal said the candidates interviewed do not comprise a list of finalists. He said a list of finalists would have included more people, but would not say how many or who.

He said it is increasingly difficult to find quality candidates during searches when nominees are made public.

"It's a bad policy to have the people you interview made public because you won't have some of the best qualified people interview because they're not willing to take the risk," he said.

## Publishers, bookstore managers say students aren't getting burned

Editor's note: The following is the first of a two-part series that will continue Thursday.

By Scot O. Walker  
Staff Writer

It is not uncommon to hear a student say that the process of buying and selling textbooks is a conspiracy among professors, publishers and retailers to rip off students. But the publishers, local bookstore managers and Texas A&M professors say that perception is completely false.

Lawrence E. Cremer, former president of William C. Brown College Publishing Division, said that publishers should not be made out as villains because of the increase in new book prices.

According to a National Association of College Stores comparative pricing study of 30 basic texts in use

in 1965 and still in use in 1985, the average cost of a new text has risen from \$7.93 to \$28.27, an increase of 365 percent. But Cremer said that those numbers don't tell the whole story.

"Figures don't lie, and the information (the 365 percent price increase) is absolutely true," Cremer said. But he listed several reasons that he said helped to explain the price increase.

"Just 10 years ago, an average introductory text was 400-700 pages, revised every four to five years, and made minimal use of color," Cremer said. "Printing costs were cheaper, illustrations were simple and the free instructor's manual was usually around 50 pages."

He said that in comparison, the average text is now 700-1,200 pages and is revised every three years.

"There are also more full-color il-

lustrations, and the quality of the illustrations are better," he said. "The free instructor's manual usually runs to 200 pages, and the publishers usually include a free lecture kit with suggestions for lectures, acetate (overhead) reproductions of selected concepts and computerized testing services."

Cremer said that those facts indicate that today's books are better and that the array of free extras is substantial.

"But what is 'free'?" Cremer said. "When publishers provide an item free (to an instructor) it should say, 'Free thanks to the students or their parents.'"

Cremer said that several other intangible factors add to the value of a text. He said that the author spends years planning and writing, then the publisher works with the author throughout a lengthy developmental

period using the collective talents of many professionals.

"And then there is the money invested and risked, which for an introductory textbook can exceed \$500,000 before printing even begins," Cremer said.

Dr. Larry Christensen, professor of psychology and author of two textbooks, said that the benefits to an instructor for writing a textbook are not as great as some might think.

"From beginning to end, writing a book can be a three- to five-year process," Christensen said. "But writing a textbook is not viewed among the academic community as a scholarly activity like research is."

Christensen said that he decided to write his first book, *Experimental Methodology*, because he saw a void in the market of available texts. Because that work was well-received, his publisher asked him to write another book, *Introduction to Statistics for the Social and Behavioral Sciences*.

He said that the monetary reward for writing a text is not always great.

"The standard royalty is usually around 8 to 15 percent," he said, "but you don't write textbooks to make a fortune."

John Raney, manager of the Texas Aggie Bookstore in Northgate, said that his store charges the customer 25 percent more than it pays for books from the publisher. He said that a 25 percent markup is average compared to what other area stores charge for books and how other products are marked up.

According to *MacWorld Magazine*, an Apple Macintosh SE computer is marked up 300 percent when Apple sells it to a dealer, and the dealer usually adds an average of 45 percent to make the retail price.

Based on the average markup on books in context of marketing, Raney said, a 25 percent increase on textbooks is not unreasonable.

"We have to hope that 25 percent is going to cover all of our overhead and then leave us a little margin of profit," Raney said.

Rosalyn Mauk, textbook manager of the Texas A&M Bookstore in the MSC, said that the store marks up used books by 50 percent, but that used books are still a good deal for students.

"As long as a used book is in good condition, we pay the student 50 percent of the new book price," Mauk said. "So the student might pay \$20 for a new book, use it and then sell it back to us for \$10. After the 50 percent markup, we sell it for \$15, so that is a good deal for us, for the student selling the used book and the student who buys it."

Raney said that Texas Aggie Bookstore doesn't necessarily pay 50 percent of the new book value when buying a used book.

"There are a lot of factors to consider when we decide what a book is worth to us," Raney said. He cited the age and condition of the book, its wholesale value, and the number of books needed for the next semester compared with the number the store already has on hand as variables that influence the price he is willing to pay for a used book.

Mauk said that some students make the mistake of waiting until after Christmas or until the beginning of a new semester to sell their textbooks.

"By that time, we probably have all the books we need for that semester, so the student can get stuck holding a book they want to sell but can't," she said.

## Proposal to end loan program draws heavy fire

HOUSTON (AP) — Higher education officials are preparing to fight a state commission's staff recommendation to abolish a student loan program that has helped more than 160,000 needy Texans go to college.

The Texas Sunset Advisory Commission staff has recommended that the Hinson-Hazlewood loan program be shut down and its multimillion dollar assets be sold, the *Houston Chronicle* reported Tuesday.

A hearing on the proposal is scheduled for Friday in Austin.

A staff report recently released by the Sunset commission, the state's oversight agency, suggests that the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board close out its student financial aid activities and that lending powers be handed over to the Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corp.

The Hinson-Hazlewood program issues up to \$25 million in federally guaranteed student loans yearly to Texas college students. It was named for the late state Rep. George Hinson and former state Sen. Grady Hazlewood, who sponsored the legislation that created the program in 1965.

It was originally financed by selling \$205 million in bonds during the 1960s and 1970s but now relies on loan repayments and federal allowances to make new loans.

The recommendation to abolish it is drawing heavy fire from financial aid administrators, who charge that the state should be doing more — not less — to encourage students to go to college.

The one-time profit the state

would gain from liquidating the loan program, administrators contend, would come at the expense of future generations of Texas college students. According to the report, the state loan portfolio could be worth \$102 million if sold by competitive bid.

Some college officials also said it would be inappropriate to give lending authority to the TGSCLC, the non-profit entity that guarantees most student loans.

The TGSCLC is one of 58 agencies across the country that insure student loans made by private lenders. In turn, the federal government reinsures the loans backed by the guarantee agencies. Some officials involved in student loan programs argue that guarantors should not be lenders because there is a potential conflict of interest.

"Student loan programs should be operated in a carefully controlled environment," Carol McDonald, executive director of Independent Colleges and Universities of Texas, said.

McDonald said the TGSCLC is not a state agency and does not function under the extraordinary oversight that the coordinating board does.

College financial aid administrators praise the Hinson-Hazlewood program, saying it offers students certain advantages over guaranteed student loans from a private lender.

The state's 7 percent interest rate, compared to 8 percent from a private lender that increases to 10 percent four years after repayment begins, is one advantage.

## U.S. called upon to make next move for Mideast peace

ALGIERS, Algeria (AP) — PLO chief Yasser Arafat said Tuesday it was up to the United States to make the next move toward Middle East peace now that the Palestinians have formed an independent state that implicitly recognizes Israel.

"The ball is now in the American court," Arafat said a few hours after the Palestine National Council, the PLO's parliament-in-exile, solemnly proclaimed Palestinian independence in a ceremony early Tuesday.

The declaration accepted U.N. Security Council Resolution 242, which implicitly recognizes Israel when it refers to the right of all countries in the region to live within secure and recognized borders.

The proclamation topped the list of issues taken up during the council's four-day special session in Algiers, which ended Tuesday. The 450-member council also voted to form a provisional government at a future date and pledged to restrict guerrilla operations to military targets in Israeli-occupied territories.

The council's move, largely symbolic and clearly aimed at capitalizing on the 11-month-old Palestinian uprising in Israeli-occupied lands, sought to remove obstacles to U.S. and Israeli dealings with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Referring to the intifadeh, or uprising, Arafat told a news conference: "It is true that this is the intifadeh session of the (council), but it also could be the session of peace with the U.S. administration and Israel."

The PLO chief said the council had given him a mandate to pursue a political settlement. "But if we are met with a rebuff," he said, "only God knows the outcome."

"Let it also be clear, I can always come back to our (council) and declare that moderation does not pay," Arafat said.

Israel immediately rejected Arafat's declaration, calling it "double talk" and denying that it recognized Israel or truly renounced terrorism.

"They mentioned rejection of terrorism outside Israel, but they did not denounce terrorism inside Israel," Foreign Ministry spokesman Alon Liel said. "So we still see the PLO as a terror organization, and the government decision not to negotiate with the PLO stands."

Washington also rejected the move, saying that the Middle East conflict had to be resolved by nego-

tiations, not a unilateral act on either side.

The United States has demanded the PLO recognize Israel and renounce terrorism before there could be any dealings.

The declaration did not specifically describe the new state's borders.

## Commuter jet almost hits Air Force One

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal investigators on Tuesday called for an immediate review of air traffic control procedures in the Northeast after finding that a string of errors allowed a commuter plane to fly alarmingly close to Air Force One last month.

The incident, which had been reported previously without detail, occurred Oct. 12 when Air Force One with President Reagan aboard and a Bar Harbor Airlines commuter plane flew within 500 feet vertically and 1.5 miles horizontally as both planes were preparing to descend to Newark, N.J.

Standard separation for aircraft is 1,000 feet vertically and five miles horizontally. At the time of the incident, White House officials said the president was never in danger.

But the incident prompted a broad investigation by the National Transportation Safety Board which said Tuesday that numerous managerial, operational and training deficiencies at four Federal Aviation Administration facilities near Washington, at Philadelphia and near New York were at fault.

These errors reflected a serious lack of effective management and quality assurance, the NTSB said. It called on the FAA to conduct an independent investigation of air traffic control performance at the facilities involved similar to a probe recently concluded after a series of controller errors at Chicago.

The board also said it was particularly concerned about its findings because the FAA on a number of occasions dating back to 1986 had investigated similar shortcomings at the facilities and indicated improvements had been made.

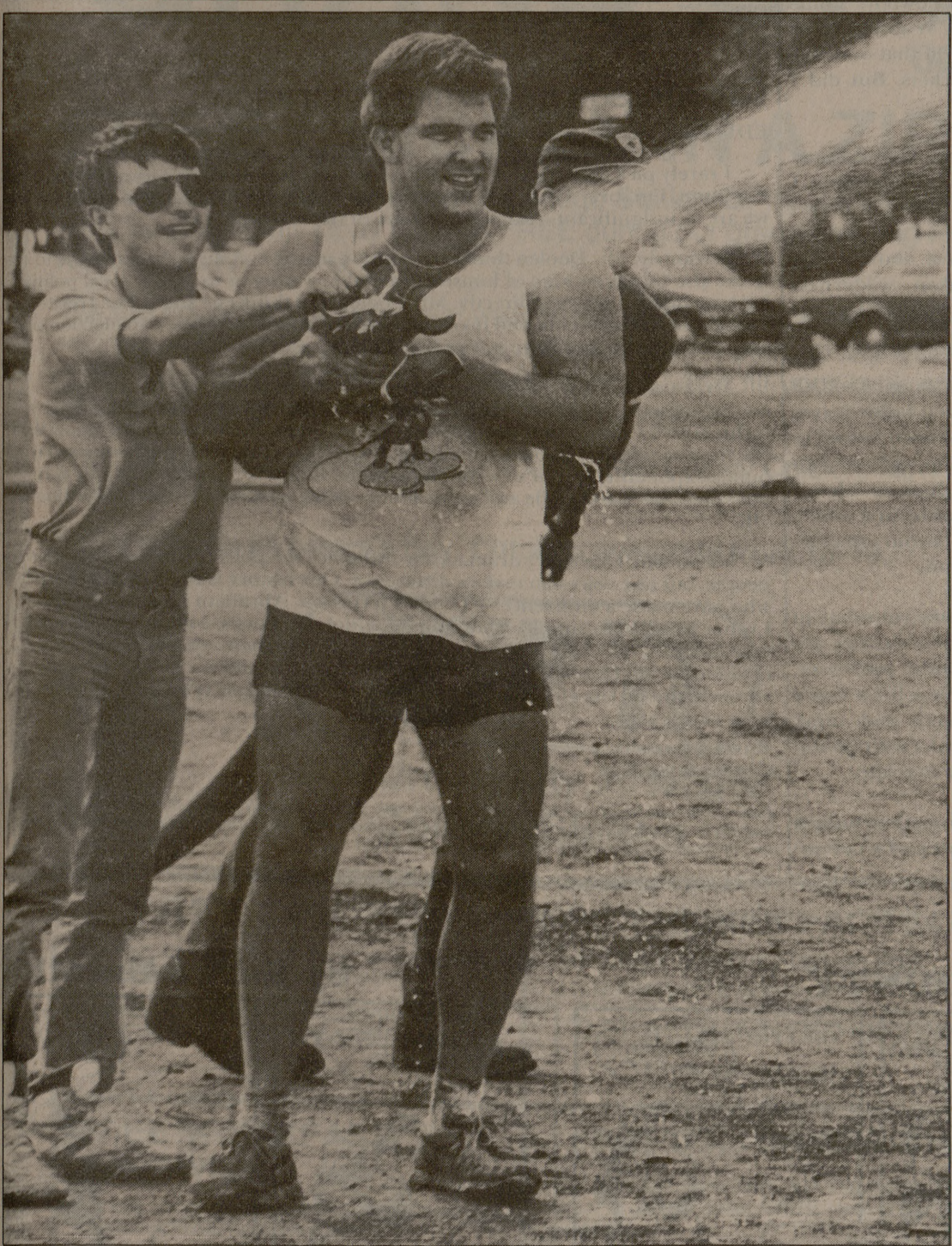


Photo by Kathy Havenian

### All washed up

Charles McCaleb, senior geography major, steadies a fire hose aimed at the bonfire with the help of

Andy Townsend, senior civil engineering major. It is being wettened in preparation for lighting.