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Wright defends actions

Speaker sees no wrong in selling books to SWT in lieu of fee

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Speaker Jim Wright, under investigation by a House ethics committee, acknowledged Wednesday that he sold 504 copies of his book, "Reflections of a Public Man," to a Texas university instead of accepting a $3,000 speaking fee that would have violated the chamber's rules.

Wright's income from the book sales — about $1,600 — would not have been subject to House limitations, but the speaker defended his actions to reporters as he commented publicly on the arrangement for the first time.

"I don't think there's anything wrong with that," Wright said.

At the time, in October 1984, Wright already was bumping against the maximum amount he could accept in speaking fees for the year under House rules. In addition, the fee offered by the school, Southwest Texas University, was $1,000 more than the rules permit per speech.

Wright's bulk sales of the book, and whether he used them to evade House limits on outside income from speaking and writing fees, have become a focus of attention by the House ethics committee, which is looking into the speaker's finances.

The panel resumed its closed-door deliberations Wednesday after a two-week Easter break, and committee chairman Rep. Julian Dixon, D-Calif., said he expected some conclusion would be reached in the case next week.

Wright said he had been invited by Bob Hardesty, the university president, to present the fall lecture in the school's Lyndon B. Johnson lecture series.

He said he had not asked for an honorarium for the speech and was surprised when a check arrived at his office. When an aide suggested that the speaker sell the school $3,000 worth of books, he agreed to do so.

"I said, if he wants to buy some books, that'll be fine," Wright, D-Texas, told reporters at his daily news conference. "I don't think there's anything wrong with that."

Wright then sent 504 copies of the book to the school, said university spokesman Pat Murdock. That would have yielded Wright income of about $1,650, which he could then accept because book royalties do not fall under the 30 percent-of-salary limit that applies to speaking fees.

Wright had neared that limit — $24,630 for the majority leader's pay he then held — in June of that year, according to his financial disclosure form.

In addition to the issue of evading income ceilings, the ethics panel also was deliberating whether the speaker should have reported gifts a series of benefits he received from a business partner, Fort Worth developer George Mallick; whether Mallick had "a direct interest" in legislation, which would have made the gift over $100 improper; and whether in working for "forbearance" language in a bill dealing with savings and loan institutions, Wright improperly used influence on behalf of a business partner.

While acknowledging those areas of inquiry, ethics committee members said there may be other potential rules violations, as well, but declined to cite specific rules.

Ejection doors blow off two Air Force bombers

ABILENE (AP) — The same ejection hatch on two different B-1B bombers mysteriously blew off on training flights just a day apart, a Dyess Air Force Base official said Wednesday.

No one was hurt in either incident, and training flights are continuing, Maj. Mary Beth Kilgore said. Both bombers were based at Dyess.

"At this time, both incidents are under investigation," Maj. Kilgore said. "They're looking at them now, but there's no evidence to link these two (incidents)."

The Air Force had placed B-1B bombers back in training service just Monday, after cancelling training runs for a week due to a March 27 incident in which another Dyess B-1B punctured a fuel tank because of a malfunction in its moveable wing.

The first hatch-blowing incident occurred about 11 a.m. Tuesday as the jet was climbing from a low-altitude exercise near the Texas-New Mexico border, Maj. Kilgore said. The three-foot by four-foot hatch blew off at about 12,500 feet.

About 11:45 a.m. Wednesday, a hatch in the same place on a different B-1B blew off at about 19,000 feet as the jet flew over La Junta Training Range near Pueblo, Colo., Maj. Kilgore said.

Both airplanes returned to Dyess for routine landings, she said.

Both hatches were above the offensive systems operator's seat, on the right rear side of the cockpit. The B-1B regularly carries four crew members, and each — the pilot, co-pilot, offensive systems operator and defensive systems operator — has his own ejection hatch.

The hatch is one or two feet above the crew member's head.

Police Beat

The following incidents were reported to the University Police Department from March 27 through Sunday:

ASSAULT:

• A student reported that she was hit in the side of the head by someone while she was getting in her vehicle in PA 60.

FELONY THEFT:

• Someone stole a Macintosh laser printer, a Compaq computer and a Wedge mother board from the Engineering-Physics Building.

• Someone stole a digital balance from the McNew Laboratory.

• A 1983 Buick Regal that had been reported stolen from a campus parking lot was found two days later by the College Station Police Department in the same lot.

BURGLARY:

• Someone stole 24 exotic birds and five cages from Building 1040.

• A Walton Hall resident reported that someone entered his room and stole both his and his roommate's wallets.

• Someone stole a telephone from the Biological Sciences Building East.

MISDEMEANOR THEFT:

• Four bicycles and two backpacks were reported stolen from various locations on campus. One bicycle previously reported stolen was found in the Married Student Housing area.

• A student reported that someone stole his keys from where he had left them in the restroom at the Sterling C. Evans Library.

THEFT OF SERVICE:

• A man at Easterwood Airport reported that someone has been flying one of his planes at night without logging flight hours.

• A student left the parking garage without paying for visitor parking. The student was contacted by police and paid the fee.

CRIMINAL MISCHIEF:

• A man reported that someone slashed the tires on his car.

• A student reported that someone broke out the window of his car.

• A student reported that someone sat on the hood of his car and left two dents.

• Someone broke the glass out of a fire extinguisher cabinet in the parking garage.

• A student reported that someone scratched her car.

DRIVING WHILE INTOXICATED:

• Two people were arrested on charges of driving while intoxicated.

INDECENT EXPOSURE:

• A student reported that a male approached her in the Research Park and pulled down his shorts, exposing himself. She said he then left the area.

What's Up

Thursday

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF PETROLEUM GEOLOGISTS: will have a membership barbecue and officer elections at 6 p.m. in 64 Halbouty. James Milliken will then speak about integrating 2D and 3D seismic data for stratigraphic and structural mapping at 7 p.m. in 104 Halbouty.
BETA ALPHA PSI: will have a professional meeting with Ernst and Whinney at 6:30 p.m. at the Hilton.
A&M SYMPHONIC BAND: will have its spring concert at 7:30 p.m. in Rudder.
MSC POLITICAL FORUM: will present "S.O.S. (saving our savings): A forum about the banking industries in Texas" at 7 p.m. in 701 Rudder.
COMPUTER SCIENCE DEPARTMENT/ACM/IEEE-CS: will present "Robotics: Challenges in motion control, planning and vision" from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. at the KAMU-TV facilities.
MEXICAN AMERICAN ENGINEERING SOCIETY: will have officer elections and credit applications at 7 p.m. in 104B Zachry.
LATIN AMERICAN CATHOLIC STUDENTS: will discuss abortion at 8:30 p.m. at St. Mary's Student Center.
SWAP: will discuss the weekend camp-out at 8:30 p.m. in 502 Rudder.
TAMU EMERGENCY CARE TEAM: will have a team meeting at 7 p.m. in 301 Rudder.
SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS: will meet at 7 p.m. in 214 Reed McDonald.
NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS: will meet at 8:30 p.m. Call the C.D.P.E. at 845-0280 for more information.
ADULT CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS: will meet at 6 p.m. Call the C.D.P.E. at 845-0280 for more information.
AGGIELAND: Staff applications are available in 230 Reed McDonald through April 19.
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS: will meet at noon. Call the C.D.P.E. at 845-0280 for more information.
THE BATTALION: Editorial Board and Staff applications are available in 216 Reed McDonald. Editorial Board applications are due April 13, and Staff applications are due April 20.

Friday

CAMPUS CRUSADE FOR CHRIST: will have Friday Night Alive at 7:30 p.m. in 108 Harrington.
VENEZUELAN STUDENT ORGANIZATION: will have a Latin party from 9-11 p.m. at the Parthenon.
HILLEL JEWISH STUDENT CENTER: will have Shabbat services at 8 p.m. at Hillel.
PARENT'S WEEKEND COMMITTEE: will have yell practice at midnight at Rudder fountain.
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FORUM: Dr. George Bates will lecture about "The Nutritional Geography of Central America" at 7 p.m. in 410 Rudder.
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH: will have poetry reading by Clayton Eshleman at 7:30 p.m. in 102 Blocker.
RHA CASINO: will begin at 7 p.m. on the second floor of the MSC.
SOUTHWESTERN BLACK STUDENT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE: Applications for directors and several assistant directors for the 1990 conference are available through April 12 in 151 Bizzell.
MELTING POT: will meet at 7 p.m. at St. Mary's Student Center.
RECREATIONAL SPORTS: will have registration from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. in 159 Read for the following events: Penberthy softball tournament, Kayak workshop, baseball/homerun hitting contest and a canoe trip.
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS: will meet at noon. Call the C.D.P.E at 845-0280 for more information.

Items for What's Up should be submitted to The Battalion, *216 Reed McDonald, no later than three business days before the desired run date. We only publish the name and phone number of the contact if you ask us to do so. What's Up is a* Battalion *service that lists* non-profit *events and activities. Submissions are run on a first-come, first-served basis. There is* no guarantee *an entry will run. If you have questions, call the newsroom at 845-3315.*

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