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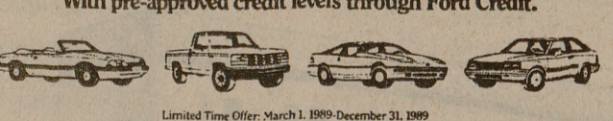
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High court braces for Webster case

Officials expect 'extraordinary day' with new test of abortion law

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court will hear arguments Wednesday in a Missouri abortion dispute that has become its most closely watched case of the 1980s. Court officials are bracing for "an extraordinary day" at the usually placid building on Capitol Hill.

State officials and the Bush administration are urging the court to use the case to overturn or substantially limit its 1973 decision that women have a constitutional right to abortion.

Even if the court rules on the Missouri abortion regulations narrowly, the decision will be viewed as a barometer of the current justices' commitment to the 16-year-old ruling in Roe vs. Wade.

The justices are considered closely divided as to the wisdom and continuing vitality of the landmark decision.

They will take their initial vote in the Missouri case Friday, discussing their views and beginning the process of drafting and redrafting opinions to accompany the announcement of the court's decision, expected by July.

In an attempt to sway the justices, Americans in record numbers have been writing and telephoning the court to express their views. Tens of thousands of letters arrive each day, and the court's two switchboards were so flooded with calls that a rarely used third board had to be activated.

"Many people have indicated they've been asked to call by televangelists," court spokesman Toni House said. "These people believe we are conducting a public opinion survey. We are not."

But court officials, reacting to the outpouring of public sentiment, will take unusual security measures Wednesday.

Police lines will keep demonstrators off court property, but House said 50 members of a group calling itself Oppression Under Target have informed the court of their plan to engage in civil disobedience that could lead to their arrest.

"Pro-choice" and "pro-life" activists plan to conduct competing news conferences outside the court building.

Inside the courtroom, House said, "We have no reason to believe the conduct of this oral argument will be any different, any less respectful than any other."

Court police said they would allow

people to begin lining up at midnight for the chance of seeing the hour-long argument session that begins at 10 a.m. EDT. Police said they expect hundreds to be in line when the building opens at 9 a.m.

Between 150 and 200 members of the public usually can be seated in the imposing courtroom on a first-come, first-served basis.

But because the justices and other court officials have reserved an unusually high number of seats for friends and family members for the argument, only 40 to 50 seats will be available for the general public, House said.

Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist refused to allow radio and television coverage of the proceedings.

But a record number of news media representatives — 113 — are to be squeezed into the courtroom's press section, where only 35 seats offer an unobstructed view of the action. Some journalists were turned away, told they applied too late to be accommodated.

The Roe vs. Wade decision is based on the constitutional right to privacy. The court said a woman's decision to have an abortion during the first three months of pregnancy must be left to her and her doctor.

The court said states may interfere in the abortion decision during the second trimester only to protect the woman's health, and may take steps to protect fetal life only in the third trimester when the fetus can survive outside the womb.

State authority to regulate abortions after the first trimester was not made absolute, however.

A federal appeals court, relying on Roe vs. Wade, struck down as unconstitutional five key provisions of the Missouri law now under scrutiny:

- A ban on the use of public hospitals or other facilities for performing abortions not necessary to save a woman's life.
- A ban prohibiting any public employee from performing or assisting an abortion.
- A ban on using taxpayer money for "encouraging or counseling women to have abortions."
- A requirement that doctors determine whether a fetus reasonably believed to be older than 19 weeks viable, capable of surviving outside the womb, by determining lung maturity and other testing.
- A declaration that the "life of each human begins at conception."

Prosecutor, defense attorney appeal for release of convict

ARCADIA, Fla. (AP) — A defense attorney and a special prosecutor joined Tuesday in an extraordinary appeal for the release of a man convicted in the poisoning deaths of seven of his children in 1967, saying his trial was unfair.

"James Richardson did not receive a fair trial. James Richardson did not receive justice," special prosecutor Janet Reno said about the man who has spent 21 years in prison after being convicted on one count of murder in 1968.

Mark Lane, one of the 53-year-old former migrant farm worker's appeal lawyers, argued before Circuit Judge Clifton Kelly that the state attorney and the DeSoto County sheriff at the time of the trial railroaded Richardson by manufacturing and encouraging perjured testimony and by withholding essential evidence from the defense.

Now, the state and the defense "both say the judgment of conviction must be vacated," said Lane, a Washington, D.C., lawyer and author who first alleged a frame-up in the case in his 1971 book "Arcadia."

With former State Attorney Frank Schaub waiting his turn to speak before the judge, Lane said: "The illegal actions of Mr. Schaub ... sought to distort the judicial process and murder an innocent man."

Schaub has said he remains convinced of the defendant's guilt, and is suing Lane and attorney Ellis Rubin for alleged defamation of character.

Richardson, a black man convicted by a white jury, was sentenced to death in 1968 on his conviction of first-degree murder in the death of his 8-year-old daughter. His sentence was later commuted to life in prison.

Richardson was applauded by many of the 120 spectators when he entered the courtroom. A woman who later identified herself as stepdaughter Jannette Stanley asked the judge: "Could I hug my father?" The judge nodded and the two embraced in the aisle.

Reno, a state attorney from Miami appointed by Gov. Bob Martinez to determine if Richardson received a fair trial in 1968, agreed with some of Lane's conclusions that the prosecution and the sheriff had aided in violating the defendant's right to an impartial trial.

She said Schaub and then-Assistant State Attorney John Treadwell had withheld "six key pieces of exculpatory evidence . . . that could have changed the outcome" of the trial.

Lane was highly critical of Schaub, Treadwell and then-sheriff Frank Cline. He charged that they "manufactured testimony" by forcing jail inmates and others to testify against Richardson and suppressed evidence favorable to the defendant.

At one point, Lane charged that Cline was friendly to Bessie Reece, the babysitter who originally came under suspicion in the poisoning case, and lied to protect her. In fact, Lane said, Cline was with Reece on the morning Richardson's children were fed lunch laced with parathion, a since-banned deadly insecticide.

"The sheriff was on the murder scene after the Richardson were out in the field," Lane said. "There is a better case against Frank Cline than there is against James Richardson. At least he was on the scene."

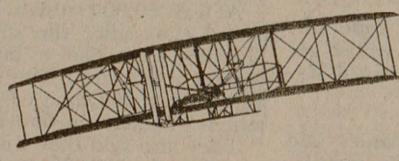
Lane quoted Treadwell as saying at one time that "He (Treadwell) always thought Bessie Reece instigated and the sheriff went along."

The form letter from the Texas A&M Board of Regents gave every legal abortion and any. It also says a raise families who provide love and s. The letter con no vote on the S you represent m you will urge the

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FAMOUS FIRSTS



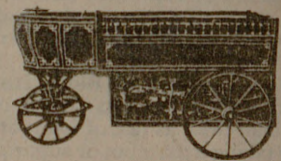
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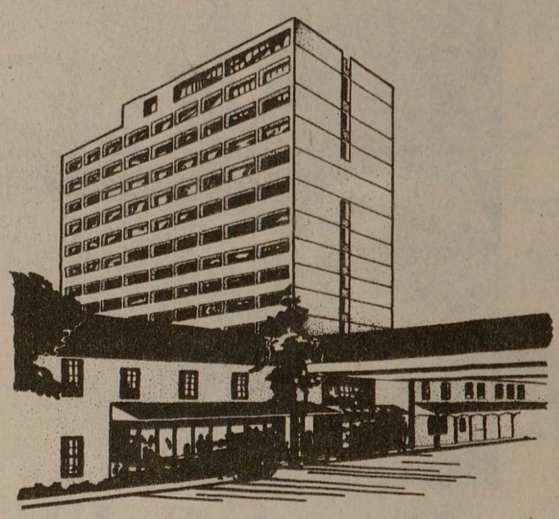
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Texas A&M
Vol. 88 No. 14
Pro
By Holly Becka
REPORTER
In an effort to turning the U.S. in Roe vs. Wade, the right to have campus groups h choice form letter U.S. Attorney G burch.
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The Texas A&M Board of Regents gave every legal abortion and any. It also says a raise families who provide love and s. The letter con no vote on the S you represent m you will urge the
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