

Bentsen discredits defense chief rumor

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Record freezing temperatures in the nation's capital are doing little to chill the white-hot rumor mill about President Clinton's next defense chief now that retired Adm. Bobby Inman has abruptly withdrawn his name and left the administration in the lurch.

Under one scenario, the White House was contemplating transferring Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen across the Potomac River to the Pentagon. That's a rumor discredited Thursday by the 72-year-old Texan and one that economists, political observers and those close to him don't buy.

Bentsen did discuss possible candidates for the defense job with Clinton during an overnight telephone call, but said the president didn't indicate he was among those under consideration.

"He didn't offer and I sure didn't ask for the defense post," Bentsen said while traveling in China during one leg of his Asian trade mission. "I expect to remain secretary of the treasury," he said. "I am happy where I am."

Other names mentioned to replace defense

chief Les Aspin, who resigned last month under pressure, include Deputy Defense Secretary William Perry; Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Sam Nunn of Georgia; CIA Director James Woolsey; and John Young, former head of Hewlett-Packard Co.

Names that surfaced previously include Norman Augustine, head of the defense contractor Martin-Marietta Corp.; former GOP Sen. Warren Rudman of New Hampshire; and James Courter, a former GOP congressman from New Jersey and chairman of the government's base-closing panel.

Treasury watchers suggested there would be little incentive for Bentsen to leave a post where he is drawing kudos as the administration's economic front man for a Defense Department buffeted by everything from budget squeezes and controversy over gays in the military to problems in Somalia, Bosnia and Haiti. With the economy expected to continue im-



Bentsen

proving through 1995, Bentsen would be trading a stable future for one full of uncertainty and inevitable budget woes, they said.

"Bentsen is in a perfect position and has made a major contribution to the one really bright spot the Clinton administration has right now, which is the economy," said David Jones, an economist with Aubrey G. Lanston & Co., a New York government securities dealer. "Bentsen is almost invaluable where he is now."

Of the defense job, Jones said: "It's a huge headache."

That view was echoed by Bruce Buchanan, a University of Texas professor of government who has long followed Bentsen's career.

"It seems to me just from the personal side that it's not likely that he would want to take on a tangled and difficult job like that at this point in his career," said Buchanan.

"I can't see him buying into a new can of worms at this late date."

Bentsen's rumored differences with Clinton over some aspects of the administration's economic policy might become more substantial over military matters, said Michael K. Evans of Evans Economics Inc., a Boca Raton, Fla. economic consulting service.

First woman takes class with Citadel Corps of Cadets

The Associated Press

CHARLESTON, S.C. — Shannon Faulkner walked into a biology class at The Citadel on Thursday and made history. She became the first woman in the school's 151-year history to take a class with the corps of cadets.

"It wasn't like walking into any other class, when there are 30 guys in the class and you're the only woman," said Faulkner, who also celebrated her 19th birthday Thursday.

"My first day of class went well," she said. "The cadets have spoken to me. I don't think I'll be having any problems."

She got a \$10 ticket for parking in the faculty lot. Faulkner said she thought school officials told her she could park there.

Faulkner, who had all gender references removed from her high school transcript, first was accepted by the school, then rejected when Citadel officials found out she is a woman. So she sued the state-supported military college last year, saying its all-male policy was unconstitutional.

A federal judge ruled she could attend day classes, although not as a cadet, while her lawsuit proceeded. The Citadel went to the Supreme Court to try to keep her out, but Chief Justice William Rehnquist on Tuesday said she could attend classes.

The Citadel and Virginia Military Institute are the nation's only state-supported, all-male military colleges. VMI's admissions policy is also being challenged in federal court.

Faulkner walked alone through 25-degree temperatures and a horde of reporters to Duckett Hall for her 8 a.m. biology class, a 75-minute lecture on plant reproduction. Cadets watched from the courtyard and the windows of Stevens Barracks across the street, yelling as she passed by.

"It's real upsetting for a lot of the guys," said John Johnson, a junior cadet. "But they have enough humor, enough spunk, to see it through."

"It's difficult. It's going to be a change," senior Jay Hart said. Hart said he came to The Citadel for a single-sex education.

Faulkner had an education class and a biology lab later in the day, then planned a private birthday celebration with her family and her attorneys.

BRANCH DAVIDIANS TRIAL

Waco reporter says first shots fired from complex

The Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO — The first gunshots erupted from inside the Branch Davidian compound during a raid by agents of the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms early last year, a newspaper reporter who covered the raid testified Thursday.

"Based on what I saw and heard, I believe whoever was inside the building fired first," Marc Masferrer, a reporter with the Waco Tribune-Herald, told jurors in the federal murder trial of 11 Branch Davidians.

Masferrer, under questioning by prosecutors, said a wild barrage of gunfire exploded like "firecrackers" seconds after ATF agents arrived at the compound last Feb. 28.

Defense attorneys, who have said the issue of who shot first is critical to their clients' claim of self-defense, attempted to show on cross-examination that Masferrer's sight and hearing may have been impaired by distance.

Masferrer's testimony marked the first time the eight-woman, four-man jury has heard from someone other than ATF agents that the Branch Davidians started a 45-minute gun battle. Koresh's followers claim they retaliated only after being fired upon.

Also Thursday, ATF special agents Kris A. Mayfield and Kevin Richardson described watching fellow agent Robert Williams being gunned down in front of the compound. Both men blamed gunfire coming from the compound for Williams' death.

"I looked up and saw him take a shot," Mayfield said. "His head jerked back, and he slumped to the ground on his back, face-up."

"Once the cease-fire was negotiated, I made my way over to where special agent Williams was. I could tell he was dead," Mayfield said.

"He had been shot in the head."

Williams and agents Steven Willis, Conway C. LeBleu and Todd W. McKeehan were killed in the gun battle while 16 others were injured. Six Branch Davidians also are believed to have died in the exchange.

The failed attempt by the ATF to arrest Koresh and search his compound for weapons touched off a 51-day standoff that culminated in an inferno April 19. Koresh and 85 followers, including at least 17 children, died in the blaze.

The 11 defendants, who face up to life in prison if convicted of murdering and conspiring to murder federal agents, contend they were forced to defend themselves against an ill-conceived raid by a government agency seeking to prove itself before federal budget review.

The Davidians claim they retaliated only after being fired upon by dark-clad agents who fanned out from the two cattle trailers with their weapons drawn.

Masferrer said he had been sent to the compound by an editor with orders to expect "some sort of law enforcement activity." He said he didn't know his editor's source.

He, another reporter and a photographer from the newspaper were roughly "225 yards" from the building on a road adjacent to the compound when they saw ATF agents arrive, Masferrer said.

The gunfire started almost immediately and Masferrer said he concluded the shots were coming from Koresh's followers, in part, because "at that time, only four or five agents were out of the truck."

But attorney Mike DeGeurin, who represents Branch Davidian Paul Fatta, revealed on cross-examination that Masferrer was only focused on the second of the two ATF cattle trailers.

Reports reveal Austin residents view UT as insensitive to minorities

The Associated Press

AUSTIN — Black and Hispanic residents of Austin view the University of Texas as aloof and insensitive to minorities, if not actually racist and hostile, according to two new reports commissioned by the university.

"The perception that racism is tolerated is a real barrier for the University of Texas as far as recruiting students and faculty," said one African-American interviewed for the reports.

"Remember, blacks could not even walk on the UT campus, and that image is still there," said another interviewee. "The institution still sends the message that it is elitist, and they need to change that."

Those interviewed were not identified.

Almost 100 residents, primarily UT officials and community and opinion leaders, were interviewed for the reports, which have been presented to the university's executive officers and deans.

The reports are being used to make changes in the way the university operates.

"We are really trying to make an honest effort to see what the problems are and what the perceptions are," said UT President Robert Berdahl.

Ed Sharpe, UT's vice president for administration and public affairs, said, "Historically, this institution, and I think a lot of research universities, have a tendency not to listen, not to hear

"The institution still sends the message that it is elitist, and they need to change that."

— an interviewee

what's going on in the community they are involved in. This was part of a concerted effort to start listening."

Many of the problems at UT date to the days of segregation. While Hispanics always have been admitted to the university, it took a U.S. Supreme Court ruling in 1950 to open the doors to blacks.

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