

Supreme Court tightens laws for abortion protesters

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A unanimous Supreme Court ruled Monday that protesters who block access to abortion clinics or in other ways conspire to stop women from having abortions may be sued as racketeers.

The decision, which could threaten Operation Rescue and other anti-abortion groups with financial ruin, also allows federal courts to order a halt to illegal protests at clinics.

Although focused only on interpreting a federal anti-racketeering law, the decision is a big victory for the National Organization for Women and the Clinton administration.

NOW had taken the case to the high court, and the administration had sided with NOW's view of the disputed law.

Lower courts had thrown out the nationwide class-action lawsuit that tried to

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— Helen Neuborne, NOW Legal Defense Fund

invoke the anti-racketeering law against Operation Rescue and other groups. Monday's decision reinstated the lawsuit, which stems from anti-abortion protests in Chicago and other cities.

"The court has added another weapon to our arsenal for attacking the terrorism of extremists in the anti-abortion movement," said Helen Neuborne of the NOW Legal Defense Fund. "We're very pleased."

But Randall Terry of Operation Rescue said, "The Supreme Court has told civil protest to go to hell." He said, "This is a vulgar betrayal of over 200 years of toler-

ance towards protest and civil disobedience. The iron heel of government now will be used to crush dissent."

Nothing in the ruling dealt directly with abortion. The court in 1992 reaffirmed the core holding of its landmark Roe vs. Wade decision of 1973 — that women have a constitutional right to abortion.

Monday's ruling focused on alleged crimes committed against abortion clinic employees and patients. The court said such conduct can lead to lawsuits under

See Abortion/Page 5

MSC Council OKs allocation of funds for China Club

By Jan Higginbotham

THE BATTALION

The MSC Council approved a proposal last night which will allow the L.T. Jordan Institute to allocate \$450 to the China Club for their Chinese New Year celebration Feb. 5.

Jeffrey Boyer, chair of the Jordan Institute, said the China Club hosts a program every year to celebrate the Chinese New Year.

"We have a large Chinese population at A&M," Boyer said. "This is a way for these students to celebrate the new year outside their country."

"Students that attend this program will definitely learn something about the Chinese culture."

— James Weinstock, executive vice president for human resources

The program, which will be held in Rudder Theater and will include sixteen programs, will highlight Chinese themes through music and dance.

"It's also a chance for U.S. students to get a look at the Chinese holiday," Boyer said. He hopes the program will provide a better understanding of the Chinese New Year and culture to both American and Chinese students.

James Weinstock, MSC Council executive vice president for human resources, said the China Club was selected from a group of recognized student organizations who were requesting funds for their international programs.

"Students that attend this program will definitely learn something about the Chinese culture," Weinstock said.

"I hope those who attend this meeting can go out having learned something about this Chinese holiday that they didn't already know," he said.

Boyer said the Jordan Institute and the Enrichment Fund are important because the international programs help promote international awareness.

"The fund is set up to give money to different groups that have an international program or theme to promote international awareness," Weinstock said.

Keeping clean



Louis Munoz gives a good cleaning to the back doors of the Academic Building Monday afternoon before giving them a fresh coat of lacquer.

Raun Nohawitza/THE BATTALION

Clinton fills defense department opening

Pentagon's No. 2 man takes over top position

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Filling an embarrassing gap in his national security team, President Clinton promoted the Pentagon's No. 2 man to defense secretary Monday. He called William J. Perry "a real pro," a man "you can depend on."

The reaction from Congress was enthusiastic, with predictions Perry would win easy confirmation. Though he is little-known to the general public, senators dealing with military issues are familiar with him from frequent testimony at hearings.

Seemingly a reluctant warrior, Perry said he told the White House Saturday he could not say yes at that point because "I did not want to drive my family into a decision — my decision — without their support."

After a talk with Vice President Al Gore and then a meeting with family members, he telephoned the White House on Sunday to say he would accept an offer if one were forthcoming.

"I did not have to be persuaded to take this job," Perry said. Perry, 66, will replace outgoing Secretary Les Aspin, who announced his resignation under pressure from the White House last month. Clinton's first choice to take Aspin's place, Bobby Inman, withdrew last week in a news conference filled with complaints about attacks from columnists and lawmakers.

Despite Inman's shocker — and comments from a handful of other job prospects that they were not interested — Clinton said hiring a new Pentagon chief was easy.

"It wasn't hard to fill," Clinton said. "I asked Secretary Perry and he said, 'Yes.'"

Perry, who also served in President Carter's Pentagon, is a former engineering professor and mathematician, a key early supporter of stealth technology who was later proven right. Unlike Clinton, he is also an Army veteran, perhaps positioned to help his commander in chief improve relations with military leaders and wrestle with a shrinking Pentagon budget.

Republican as well as Democratic senators were quick to praise the nominee.

"A great choice ... a real professional with depth of experience," said Sen. Joseph Lieberman, D-Conn., a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

"I have worked well with Dr. Perry in the past and he has done a good job," said Sen. Strom Thurmond of South Carolina, the ranking Republican on the committee.

Clinton said he made the choice "based on his lifetime of accomplishments and his solid leadership at the Pentagon."

"He has the right skills and management experience for the job. He has the right vision for the job," said Clinton, who credited Perry with being on the "cutting edge of defense issues."

Clinton predicted Perry would reform Pentagon spending procedures, keep a tight reign on the shrinking defense budget and maintain the nation's strong military force.

He said many people have told him, "Bill Perry is real pro — you can depend on him."

In contrast to Inman, who said he needed to reach a "comfort level" with Clinton, Perry quickly endorsed his commander in chief. "I have a great respect for the way you have been guiding national security," he told the president.

Perry said the end of the Cold War offers "a window of opportunity" to reform the way the Pentagon spends its money, especially the rules under which it purchases goods.

"This is a time of great change, great challenge and great opportunity," Perry said.

Program focuses on teaching college juniors leadership skills

By Geneen Pipher

THE BATTALION

Texas A&M University is one of 28 higher education institutions selected to participate in the Eisenhower Leadership Program, a project aimed at teaching college juniors to be more effective leaders.

The one semester program, which is entirely funded by the

U.S. Department of Education, is an intensive leadership development program for liberal arts and business majors.

Lyle Schoenfeldt, co-director of the Eisenhower Program, said the students will earn three credit hours toward their degree through participation in a variety of classroom activities during the semester.

"The semester will consist of a combination of classroom lecture

and study in the community," Schoenfeldt said. "In the classroom through presentations by community and business leaders, they will discover what leadership is and the qualities that make a good leader."

The group's activities will also include field study outside the classroom to give students experience in solving community problems.

"Outside of the classroom they

will be divided into groups of seven or eight and they will work with groups in College Station or Bryan on creating projects to help bring leadership into city agencies," he said.

Sandra Medina, a spokeswoman for the project, said citizens of Bryan-College Station are assisting in the program by giving students access to carry out these projects.

"The students will take a spe-

cific aspect of a community problem and research it and make their recommendations to community leaders," Medina said.

Letita Alston, an administrative assistant for the Eisenhower Project, said the leadership program will teach students how to deal with, and ultimately lead diverse groups of people.

"Through this program, students will feel more confident about their leadership skills and

have an insight into group dynamics," Alston said. "Many of these students are going into fields like international business and diplomacy and this increased knowledge of these areas will help them in the future."

Camille Berzen, a junior accounting major and participant in the program, said she believes the country needs more effective leaders and hopes she will learn skills traditional classes do not teach.

Students, faculty split on Clinton's performance

By Eloise Flint

THE BATTALION

A recent national poll indicates more than half of the population approve of the way President Clinton has done his job during his first year, and Texas A&M professors and students expressed mixed views on his progress.

According to the latest New York Times/CBS News Poll, 54 percent of the public approve of Clinton's first year in office.

Dr. Jon Bond, professor of political science, said Clinton has had a successful year with many accomplishments.

"If you count the victories, he ranks as high as other presidents," Bond said. "President Roosevelt was most successful in passing legislation, and just like President Clinton, it doesn't necessarily mean everybody is happy with it, but it

went through."

Bond said Clinton has done an adequate job fulfilling his promises.

"When politicians make promises they're sincere, but realities of politics are more difficult than anticipated," he said. "It is the case that (Clinton's) popularity is not as high as it should be."

Traditionally, approval ratings start out high and decline after a period of time. However, Clinton's public support is increasing largely because of improvements in the economy.

One of the major platforms of Clinton's campaign was a promise to fix the economy. Joseph Thomas, a senior political science



Clinton

major and a member of Aggie Democrats, said Clinton has taken the initiative to control the economy.

"He's gotten off to a good start stabilizing the economy, but I think he needs to focus more on the original campaign promises," Thomas said.

According to the poll, 42 percent of the population approve of the way Clinton is handling the economy.

Phil Meuret, a senior geography major and president of the College Republicans, said Clinton receives more credit than the general public should allow him.

"Clinton has pulled a lot of fast ones and most Americans feel he has told so many lies that they don't worry about it anymore," Meuret said.

See Clinton/Page 2

Inside

Aggiefife

- Brazos Animal Shelter deals with pet population woes
- Interview with UPD Director Robert E. Wiatt

Page 4,6

SPORTS

- Slocum expects top recruiting class

Page 7

OPINION

- Editorial: A&M makes good move, follows Honor Code

Page 9

