

## Three finalists named for A&M president position

By Lisa Elliott

THE BATTALION

A list of three candidates for the position of president of Texas A&M was presented to Dr. William Mobley, chancellor of the University System, Thursday by the Presidential Search Advisory Committee.

The finalists are Dr. Ray Bowen, interim president of Oklahoma State University; Dr. James Corbridge Jr., chancellor of

the University of Colorado at Boulder; and Dr. Luis Proenza, acting vice president for academic affairs and research of the University of Alaska System.

The list of candidates was sent to Mobley and the Board of Regents during a workshop session Thursday in Laredo.

The three finalists were selected by a 20-member committee comprised of students, staff, faculty and representatives from the Association of Former Students.

Brooke Leslie, judicial chair of student

government and a member of the selection committee, said the committee was looking for candidates who have a strong academic history with a talent for leadership, a vision for the future and a good relationship with students.

"An understanding of A&M is essential, but bringing in fresh and new ideas is also important," she said.

Leslie said the candidate who is selected as president will have a tough job ahead of him for the first few months in

trying to undo the controversy the University has been involved in recently.

"There's been a lot of controversy surrounding A&M lately," she said. "Whoever is selected will come in with a lot of package, but all three would be able to handle it."

Bowen has a bachelor's and a doctoral degree in mechanical engineering from Texas A&M and a master's from the California Institute of Technology and, prior to his appointment as interim president at

Oklahoma State, he was provost and vice president for academic affairs at the university. He also served as deputy assistant director for engineering with the National Science Foundation and as dean of the College of Engineering at the University of Kentucky and was a professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering at Rice University.

Corbridge has a bachelor's degree in

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## Justice system in need of redesign, officials say

Many offenders use loopholes to escape punishment

By Jan Higginbotham

THE BATTALION

Pressure is rising on government officials to get tougher on criminals, and some Texas A&M University officials said the justice system is not designed to work for victims.

Ben Crouch, associate dean of the College of Liberal Arts, said the justice system is designed to deter those individuals who might be public offenders.

"Historically, the victim tends to be left out of the equation," Crouch said. "Crime is a situation in which the state ultimately becomes the victim. If I kill you, the state moves as if it is the aggrieved party."

Crouch said loopholes exist in laws so that a single person does not decide a criminal's fate, the law does.

"Those safeguards can be avenues whereby offenders do get off," he said. "That is something we have to accept in a system that is ruled by laws not persons."

Bob Wiatt, director of the University Police Department, said the justice system is not the controller of violence; it is society's problem.

"The system is not responsible for all of society's problems," Wiatt said. "It is overburdened and overwhelmed by the number of people committing crimes. The system is incapable of taking care of all these cases."

Crouch said some criminals have to slip by if the system is going to work.

"If you remove the safeguards of a guilty party getting off, you've removed the technicalities for somebody who is likely to be innocent to get off," Crouch said.

People tend to expect too much from the

justice system, he said.

"We can't have a cop on every corner," Crouch said. "If we have to rely on police and the courts to keep peace, we are in trouble."

Wiatt said it is a determined fact that the justice system is weak.

"The system is weak to the point that criminals know the system is working for them," Wiatt said. "The criminals know that if they get 10 years, they are only going to serve one."

Wiatt said the weakness in the system stems from the overcrowding problem in prisons and the government must deal with that problem.

"What the justice system is looking at is the prisons should be used for violent offenders," he said. "We're looking at having minimum security prisons for less violent offenders."

Beth Price, coordinator for the Citizens Crime Commission, said building more prisons is not going to help.

"Prison is not a deterrent to crime," Price said. "Laws need to be tougher. Legislators need to change those laws that are no longer effective and which make favor the criminal."

Price said current laws do more to protect the criminal than the victim.

"The time is coming that society is tired of being victimized," she said. "The majority of the citizens have finally reached the point where they can take no more."

Wiatt said a solution will not be found until society realizes crime has gotten out of hand and decides to deal with it.

"Society has got to deal with this and you can't dump it on a small part of society in the justice system," he said. "Nobody knows the proper solution, because the proper solution is going to take lots of money."

## Monkey around



Amy Browning/THE BATTALION

Fifth graders from Henderson Elementary School in Bryan play on the jungle gym at Spence Park Thursday afternoon. The children were on a field trip to visit the

Mimbres art exhibit as part of their social studies class and were enjoying the park during their lunch break before going to visit the military museum.

## Wild West revisited

Texans question use of harsh self-defense to protect property

The Associated Press

HOUSTON — In the days of the Wild West, the theft of a horse could easily endanger one's life by stranding the rider hundreds, perhaps thousands of miles from food and safety. The solution? Shoot first, if it prevents the theft.

But the recent fatal shootings of a visiting Scottish businessman and a car repo man in Houston has some raising questions about the broad applications of the Texas self-defense statute, which allows homeowners to defend both property and self with "deadly force" during nighttime hours.

In Texas, crimes as minor as say, egging a house, can legally be greeted with gunfire — if the homeowner proves his property or personal safety is threatened.

"Compared to most states, it is very harsh," said Robert Schuwerk, a University of Houston Law Center professor.

In the early 1970s states were asked to adopt or tailor what became known as the modern penal code.

"Almost every state is going to be fairly liberal in protecting yourself, your child, whatever," said Schuwerk. "But most states take the view that property is a much lesser issue than a self-defense type of issue."

For instance, in New York, deadly force can only be used to protect property in cases of arson or burglary. The Texas law, in comparison, extends it to include such minor offenses as theft and criminal mischief during the nighttime.

"Criminal mischief can be just about anything," said Sandra Guerra, an assistant law professor at the University of Houston and former Manhattan prosecutor. "It can be egging your house."

"It's very broad," Guerra says of the Texas statute. "It gives homeowners the right to deadly force in many more situations that even involve trivial violation of property rights."

In 19th century Texas, crimes such as criminal mischief and theft of property were much more serious.

"If I were in West Texas and someone stole my horse, I would probably die," reasons Schuwerk. With a lack of police force, property owners literally had no choice but to take the law in their own hands.

But in 1994, what is the threat? Schuwerk gives an example.

"Say you've got this crazy guy in the back yard, yelling and shouting that he needs to make a phone call," explains Schuwerk. "...All you have to believe is, that if you go out there, the guy will take the gun away. Even if I believe that I don't really need to use deadly force, I can because I might get hurt if I didn't."

Sound far-fetched?

On Jan. 7, Andrew De Vries, a visiting businessman from Aberdeen, Scotland, was fatally shot in the predawn

hours by homeowner Jeffrey Agee.

De Vries and another Scottish businessman, Sydney Graves, were winding up a night on the town when the shooting occurred. The two were being driven back to their hotel by a man and woman they had met when De Vries for some reason wanted out of the car, police said.

Graves got out too, and the two men then started knocking on doors in

**"It gives homeowners the right to deadly force in many more situations that even involve trivial violation of property rights."**

— Sandra Guerra, assistant law professor

Agee's upscale west Houston neighborhood around 4 a.m. De Vries rang Agee's doorbell twice, hiding each time Agee came to the door. He then jumped a backyard fence and banged on glass doors. Agee, fearing for his family's safety, shot De Vries. Agee was cleared of the shooting by a grand jury last month.

Then on Feb. 25, in the early morning hours, Jerry Casey Jr. fired on Tommy Dean Morris, whom he thought was stealing his car. Morris was legally repossessing the car because Casey was three days late on a payment.

## Israelis wound 16 Palestinians after attack on Jewish enclave

The Associated Press

HEBRON, Occupied West Bank — Palestinians still angry two weeks after a Jewish settler massacred Muslim worshipers attacked the main Jewish enclave with stones and burning tires Thursday.

Israeli troops answered the attack, which occurred after a curfew was briefly lifted, with bullets and tear gas. Sixteen Palestinians were wounded, one seriously, and two dozen were treated for tear-gas inhalation.

Some of the protesters yelled "settlers out!" and others set fires ablaze and rolled them toward army positions. Protests also erupted near the Tomb of the Patriarchs where the massacre took place.

Troops protecting the Beit Hadassah settler compound fired tear gas, live ammunition and rubber bullets into groups of Palestinians, some hurling stones with slingshots.

The PLO has demanded that Beit Hadassah and several other settlements be evacuated to reduce tensions and clear the way for resumption of Israel-PLO peace talks.

Palestinian sources said Thursday that PLO leader Yasser Arafat and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin were expected to meet in Washington within two weeks to try to get

the talks back on track.

Israel rejected a pitch by Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev to gather all parties to the Middle East peace talks in Moscow, with Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres saying they had to focus on the agreements already signed.

But Kozyrev is due in the region Saturday bearing a message from President Boris Yeltsin to Israel and the PLO.

Thursday's unrest began after the army lifted the curfew for two hours to allow Palestinians to shop for this weekend's Id Al-Fitr holiday marking the end of Ramadan, the holy month of fasting.

Noam Arnon, a spokesman for the 450 settlers in Hebron, said Palestinians used mosque loudspeakers overnight to threaten the settlers in Hebrew. "Your day will come, and we will destroy all of you," he quoted the message as saying.

Danny Hizmy, a Beit Hadassah resident, said the army asked settlers to stay indoors while the curfew was lifted, but several defied the request to show they could not be cowed.

Also Thursday, Israeli troops shot and killed an 18-year-old Palestinian, Moussa Dawas, during a clash in the Deir el Balah refugee camp in the occupied Gaza Strip, Arab reporters said.

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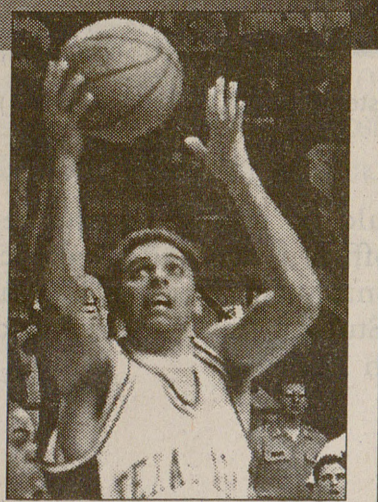
•A&M women's tennis beats Baylor

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## Controversy arises over meaning of Iron Cross

By Geneen Pipher

THE BATTALION

Some members of Texas A&M University's German Club are upset over the group's decision to include the Iron Cross on its T-shirts, saying the cross is a Nazi symbol of racism and white supremacy.

Julie Gray, a senior German major and former treasurer of the German Club, in a letter to The Battalion called the club's use of the Iron Cross "offensive" and "belligerent."

The cross is a symbol of a "vicious, white supremacist war machine bent upon genocide," Gray said.

"The symbol has been used in the past military history, but it was reissued during the second World War by Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich," she said. "What the Iron

**"What the Iron Cross symbolizes to most people today is racism and white supremacy."**

— Julie Gray, a senior German major and former treasurer of the German Club

Cross symbolizes to most people today is racism and white supremacy, especially to Jewish people. I just find that extremely offensive."

John Bartram, a senior German major and president of the A&M German Club, said the Iron Cross is an ancient Germanic symbol that has been used by the German people

since 1190 and is in no way a symbol of racism.

"Racism and Nazism are ugly to me," he said. "I don't hate—I am not that kind of person. The history of the Iron Cross goes way back to medieval times and has never been a symbol of white supremacy. It is a religious symbol."

"It is the cross that the German knights wore when they went off for the Crusades. The cross was first made into a medal in 1813 and was presented to soldiers to commemorate the freeing of the German states from Napoleon."

Bartram concedes the Iron Cross was issued in 1939 by the Nazis, but maintains it is not a symbol of racism, but a symbol of German heritage.

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