

Richards challenges Bush to tell truth about crime

WICHITA FALLS, Texas (AP) — Democratic Gov. Ann Richards accused GOP challenger George W. Bush of distorting her record Monday and said he's "literally lying" about new criminal-justice laws.

"It's time to tell the truth, George," she exhorted, saying he's trying to mislead the public about her record on crime, education, welfare and job creation.

"He says he wants us to take a stand for traditional Texas values. The most traditional Texas value that I was taught as a kid growing up and still holds me in very good stead is telling the truth," Richards told a luncheon crowd of about 250 at the Wichita Falls Activities Center.

Richards said a Bush television ad-

vertisement on crime is "the most outrageous piece of conclusion-drawing distortion, deliberate misleading that I've seen."

"He says that crime is up, and I think it's time to tell the truth, George," she said. The crime rate has dropped 25 percent in the last three years, and every category of violent crime is down, she said.

Bush spokesman Reggie Bashur said the facts support the Republican candidate's assessment.

"The governor may not like the facts, but the record is clear, even if her rhetoric is not. Violent juvenile crime has increased 52 percent during her term in office," he said.

Bashur said there have been more than 200,000 violent crimes in Texas over the past 18 months.

Richards took umbrage at Bush's remark that Texas took the first step toward legalizing drugs with a new criminal law package. After her Wichita

Falls stop, at a rally of more than 1,000 students at the University of North Texas in Denton, she said he's "literally lying" about the measure.

She said every Republican state senator voted for the package. Along with changing sentencing for drug offenses, it makes many other revisions, including doubling the time violent criminals spend behind bars and imposing the death penalty for murdering children, she said.

Bashur attacked the same penal code for providing automatic probation for individuals dealing in 1 gram or less of crack cocaine, which account for 92 percent of the drug cases in Texas. It also calls for automatic probation for car theft and burglary of a business, he said.

The Republican senators likely voted for the measure because they believed it "was the best they could get under the Richards administration," he said, adding that Bush's crime laws will be "a lot tougher and a lot better."

Richards said her job is not finished. She supports requiring prison inmates to pay for the use of telephones and using the money for crime victims; alcohol and drug intervention; and teen-age curfews and enforcement of truancy laws.

She also said she continues to oppose allowing Texans to carry concealed handguns: "I think suggesting in this violent time where people are afraid that you ought to arm more people is absolutely crazy."

Continuing the refrain that it is "time to tell the truth, George," Richards also said Bush has been deceptive about education and welfare under her administration.

State spending on public education has gone up \$7 billion over four years, and student test scores are up, she said.

Bashur said the opposite was true. "On (Texas Assessment of Academic Skills) testing, the standards were lowered. Students were exempted from taking the test. Clearly ... the Texas Edu-

cation Agency politicized the process in an attempt to help the governor in an election year," he said.

The state of Texas currently provides 44 percent of the amount spent on public education and "that is an all-time low." Meanwhile, property taxes have gone up an average of 44 percent statewide during Richards' term, Bashur said.

Richards finished the campaign day by attending a mass barbecue sponsored by a Harris County constable at Houston's Astrohall.

Beforehand, while repeating her message about crime at a news conference, Richards was challenged by a woman to toughen crime prevention in unincorporated areas.

Bettie Haaland, who lives outside Houston and described herself as a Bush supporter, said she is dissatisfied with law enforcement in unincorporated areas.



Gov. Richards



Bush

Bush questions appointments

Republican gubernatorial candidate focuses latest attacks on Richards appointees' "ethical lapses"

WACO, Texas (AP) — Republican gubernatorial candidate George W. Bush distributed copies of a memo Monday he says exemplifies a pattern of ethical lapses by appointees of Gov. Ann Richards.

The Bush campaign publicized an Oct. 4 memo from Jack Kyle, chairman of the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles, telling other board members and staff workers it would be "appropriate" for them to attend a function with Richards on Oct. 11.

Bush said the memo, written on state letterhead, was designed to coerce employees into showing up at Huntsville's Democratic Headquarters on behalf of the governor.

"It is an ethical violation to be using state time, or state paper in this case, to rally people to a political campaign," Bush said. "This man's job is not to be a precinct coordinator."

Richards said Kyle "should not have done that."

"I think it's totally inappropriate for Jack Kyle to use state stationery, or anything else, if it was something he felt was political in nature," she said. "And so whatever the cost of that is, I think he ought to reimburse the state."

But Kyle said he sent out the memo only as notification that Richards was scheduled to visit.

"I'm not telling them to go. The folks that are here in Huntsville are all Gov. Richards' appointees," he said. "If they wanted to, I wanted to make them aware that it was there."

The memo told employees and board members what time and where Richards would visit.

"If someone doesn't want to go, they can just answer the phones so everyone else can go," it said.

Kyle said he would do the same for Bush.

"Sure, I'd call it to their attention — if he let us know about it."

Bush fleshed out his point by bringing up Richards' appointment of Lena Guerrero to the Texas Railroad Commission. Ms. Guerrero acknowledged in 1992 she did not have a degree from the University of Texas as stated on her campaign handouts and resigned later that year.

Bush also mentioned Jane Hickie, director of the Texas Federal-State Relations Office in Washington, D.C., who was criticized by Republicans over her travel records, which she disclosed in June.

Congressional watchdog group takes aim at House members' postage use

WASHINGTON (AP) — With the election season upon us, a congressional watchdog group once again is taking aim at the taxpayer-financed newsletters that House members send their constituents.

The National Taxpayers Union Foundation doesn't see eye-to-eye with many members of Congress, who defend the mailings as a legitimate tool to stay in touch with constituents and keep them briefed about goings-on inside the Beltway.

Instead, the organization contends the newsletters function as an incumbent-protection plan. Since January 1993, House members have spent just under \$63 million in public funds on postage for mailings to constituents.

"Despite members' claims, these millions of newsletters, cards and letters do not help voters get a better understanding of Congress, but are first and foremost a gimmick aimed at congressional self-promotion," said John Berthoud, the foundation's vice president for research.

To buttress that point, NTUF calculated that House incumbents spent \$8.4 million on so-called franked mail in July and August — up from \$4.5 million in the same two months in 1993, a non-election year.

"This last-minute scramble shows the franking perk is being abused," said NTUF President David

Keating. "Many frightened incumbents spent millions of tax dollars to send out propaganda aimed at boosting their images with angry voters."

Figures released Monday by the foundation show that the majority of Texas' 30-member House delegation spent more money on franked mail in this election year than for the first nine months of the session that began in January 1993.

The biggest increase was posted by Rep. Martin Frost, D-Dallas, who is perennially among the biggest frankers in the Texas delegation. From January 1993 through September of this year, Frost has spent \$274,938 on mailings — tops in the delegation.

Frost, who is in a tough re-election battle, spent \$76,247 on mailings during the first nine months of the 103rd Congress. In the subsequent 11 months, he spent \$198,691.

He explained the increase as constituent interest in the twists and turns over health care reform, sending out notices for town-hall meetings, and newsletters explaining the opening of a new district office in Corsicana.

Frost said he also had to do introductory mailings to the 60 percent of constituents in his district whom he hadn't represented before. His district changed significantly during the redistricting process.

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Class of	Photographed	Last Day
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'96 Juniors	215	November 11
'97 Sophomores	114	November 25
'98 Freshmen	114	December 16



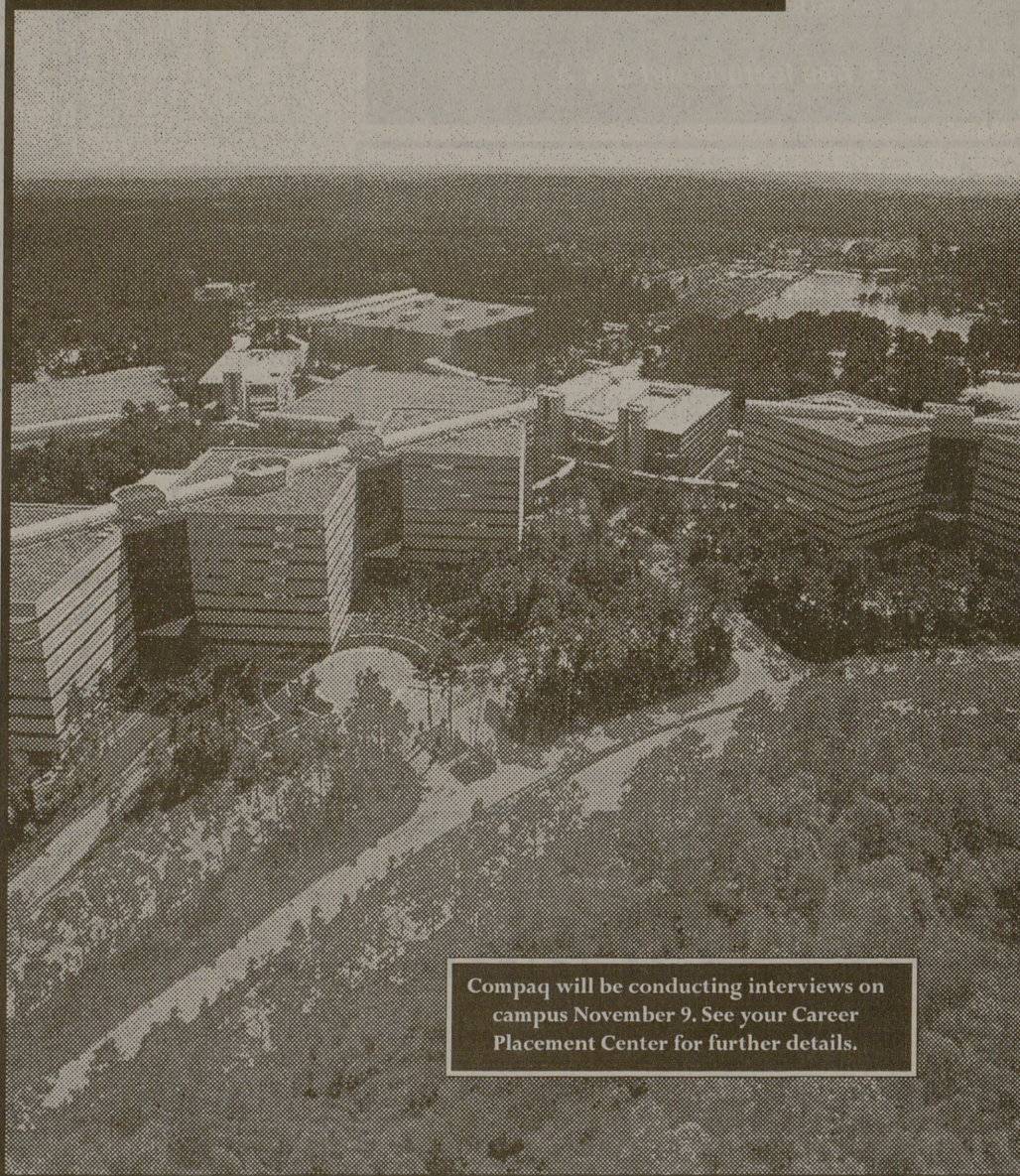
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