

'Republic' prepares for fight

FORT DAVIS, Texas (AP) — Day after day, Richard McLaren scours the woods of the Davis Mountains for signs the law has come to drag him away.

A pistol at his side, armed guards at his back, the leader of the Republic of Texas secessionist movement waits for the onslaught he feels is inevitable.

"These boys are asking for a total military assault," said McLaren, who draws parallels between his situation and fatal stand-offs at Waco and Ruby Ridge. "Our defense forces will fire because we would consider it an invasion."

McLaren's trailer and crude wooden cabin bear all the trappings of a fortress under siege, with rifles readily at hand. But there is no invading force creeping up these forested slopes outside Fort Davis.

Authorities are in no hurry to serve two

arrest warrants issued for McLaren, one stemming from a burglary charge, another from his failure to appear for a federal court hearing.

The local sheriff and the U.S. Marshal's Service have said the warrants will be executed, but suggest arresting McLaren isn't the priority he wants everyone to believe it is.

"He's a nut," said Jeff Davis County Sheriff Steven Bailey, who has faxed McLaren a letter urging him to surrender. "He's a nothing."

Yet he has succeeded in drawing international attention. News crews are regularly tramping up the dirt roads of the Davis Mountains Resort, the rugged rural subdivision where McLaren has lived for 18 years.

The interest stems largely from McLaren's association with the Republic

movement, which seeks to re-establish Texas as a sovereign nation based on the contention that Congress never legally annexed the Lone Star State in 1845.

The Republic, which since its inception has splintered into three factions, claims to have thousands of backers and has set up several institutions, including a government, defense forces and courts.

McLaren is the self-styled ambassador with duties similar to those of a secretary of state. His embassy is the house at the end of a nine-mile stretch of road winding through trees and dry creek beds. Two armed men with him on a recent day described themselves as "embassy guards."

Long before the Republic gained notoriety last year, McLaren's name was already widely known in Fort Davis, located 220 miles southeast of El Paso.

Grape juice lowers platelet clotting

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP) — Toasting the day with a glass of red grape juice may be an especially good start for the heart.

A study found that a serving of eight to 10 ounces a day has a potent effect on the blood cells called platelets, making them less likely to form clots. Clots can lead to heart attacks.

Red grape juice may be even more potent than aspirin, which is widely recommended as a way of warding off heart attacks.

The researchers compared grape with orange and grapefruit juice and came to the conclusion that grape juice is better, at least for the heart.

"I would prefer to drink red grape juice to citrus fruits because I think there is an extra benefit," said Dr. John D. Folts of the University of Wisconsin Medical School.

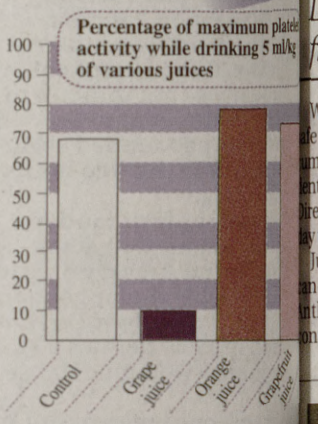
Folts' research has been funded for several years by the Nutricia Research Foundation of the Netherlands and the Oscar Rennebohm Foundation of Madison, Wis., and more recently by Welch's, which makes grape juice.

Folts noted that 10 companies make red grape juice in the United States, and all probably work equally well. Red juice appears to be more potent than white.

Heart attacks occur when blood clots stick to fatty deposits on the walls of the heart's arteries, choking off the supply of blood.

Grape juice

Red grape juice appears to slow the activity of blood platelets, making them less likely to clot and cause heart attacks. Eight to 10 ounces of juice is effective.



Source: American College of Cardiology

Two decades ago, Folts

among the first to show aspirin is good for the heart because it slows blood clotting.

Now, he is looking at the clotting properties of a group of natural substances called flavonoids that are found in many different kinds of foods.

Folts presented his latest findings Tuesday at a conference of the American College of Cardiology.

Senate passes bill banning phony liens

AUSTIN (AP) — Filing phony court documents, a problem-causing tactic used by members of the Republic of Texas group, would become a crime under a bill approved by the Texas Senate.

A leader of the Republic movement, which contends Texas was illegally annexed by the United States in 1845, said Tuesday's action doesn't carry much weight.

"To date, they (state lawmakers) have never been able to prove they are a lawful body

to sit on the soil of Texas to pass a law. That's what we're dealing with here," said Richard McLaren, who describes himself as chief ambassador and consul general of the Republic of Texas.

McLaren said the group is moving forward with the establishment of its own court and will likely sue all lawmakers there.

"When we get a judgment against them for unlawful acts, we'll sell their property," he said.

The filing of phony liens in particular can cause problems when property owners attempt to sell their properties or list them as assets.

The Senate bill would make filing such documents a criminal action and make it easier for property owners to clear their records of fraudulent liens.

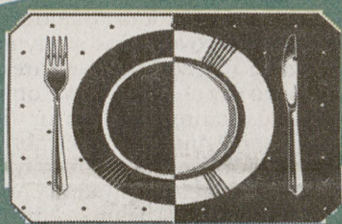
The House last week passed a similar measure. Each chamber now can consider the other's bill.

Sen. Teel Bivins, author of

the measure OK'd Tuesday, said it's not aimed at the Republic of Texas, although it would include the group. He said the bill stemmed from a meeting a year and a half ago with county clerks in his Senate district.

"I heard anecdotal stories of aggrieved ex-husbands and former business partners that have engaged in this type of larceny that have really created problems for people, and it wasn't just peculiar to Texas," said Bivins, R-Amarillo.

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