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... abuses of this bill ...
... to monitor this situation closely.
We will be communicating our concerns to those agencies we perceive as abusing this benefit. We must point out, however, that only 370 retirees — out of a statewide total of more than 26,000 retirees — have been rehired by state agencies. Of these 370 rehires, less than half were beneficiaries of the early retirement bill.

Third, some of the rehires, but definitely not all, were due to ongoing special projects, investigations and fulfillment of court mandates. Those persons rehired are permitted to work no more than nine months for the state in any one fiscal year, after which their pension benefits are curtailed.

S.B. 81 was part of a package of savings measures that helped the Legislature pass a no-new-taxes budget this biennium. We believe the early retirement incentive is an overall success for both the state and state employees. You can be assured we will be working closely with any agencies where there is an apparent pattern of abuse.

GONZALO BARRIENTOS
State senator

ROBERT JUNELL
State representative

The facts on JFK

I continue to be dismayed by those conspiracy buffs who have no firsthand knowledge of the facts surrounding JFK's assassination but have a fixed opinion based only upon hearsay and their own personal opinion which they state as facts.

For example, the letter of Dec. 3 from Dawn Meredith states, "No one has ever duplicated Oswald's feat of firing his rifle three times in the span of 6.5 seconds." That statement is 100 percent wrong.

I was attorney general of Texas at the time the assassination occurred and actively participated in the 10-month investigation of that murder. On one occasion several members of the Warren Commission traveled to Dallas to view the assassination site. I was their host. We had Oswald's rifle and took turns to see if we could fire that rifle in the time Oswald did. I could not do it, but others, such as commission member John J. McCloy, did it easily. Later, FBI agents and others did the same. A reasonable mind must conclude that if "strangers" to Oswald's rifle could fire the rifle three times as Oswald did at a slow-moving target, Oswald, being familiar with his rifle, having fired it on the firing range and being a Marine marksman, could, and did, do the same.

The other assertions of Meredith are equally without basis in fact. It is because such people as Meredith and

Oliver Stone in his fraudulent JFK movie that so many of our fellow citizens, especially our young people, continue to believe there must have been some deep dark conspiracy to kill our president.

I am not naive enough to think that Meredith's fixed opinions can ever be changed by fact, but I am, at least, attempting to inform others who might wonder what the truth actually is.

WAGGONER CARR
221 W. Sixth St., Suite 1050

Tough on criminals

We are all getting sick of hearing about violent crime repeaters. The "three-time loser" concept no longer works. In some societies, a sentence is carried out immediately with no waiting. There may not be a second or third time. These sentences often involve immediate execution, losing a hand or arm, etc.

I believe there are even better solutions to crimes against society that take the criminal away from society for good:

1. Put them on an island far from the United States, with no hope for return.
2. Take away their citizenship and sell them as slave labor to whomever would pay for them. There may be variations or combinations of these two. If you are bothered by the term slave labor, just remember that prison work gangs are slave laborers. They do not have any choice but to do what they are told. In my suggestion, though, they are no longer citizens having rights, and there is no reprieve.

Please do not discuss the Constitution, Bill of Rights, etc. Violent criminals no longer deserve any such protection. I believe such punishments will deter crime, but if not, we will never see such people a second time.

What crimes? Murder, rape, drug selling, crimes committed with a weapon, mayhem, crimes against children, kidnapping, terrorism, spreading virulent diseases.

HOWARD RICHARDS
7630 Wood Hollow Drive, No. 333

Homeless kids need rules

Homeless children should not be allowed to decide when and if they will comply with the social and legal standards of society. Project PHASE, which distributes sleeping bags and other supplies to homeless teen-agers, only encourages them to remain on the streets where they engage in panhandling, drug dealing and prostitution. Mitch Weynand, executive director of a local transitional living program, noted that the youths reject his program

... (Dec. 8) writes t...
Christians lose rights as gay people fight for civil rights.

What about gay Christians? In my observation, Christians who discover themselves to be gay rarely stop being Christians, as evidenced by the multitude of gay Christian groups and churches. Gay Christians who do drop their faith usually are lukewarm Christians from the beginning and may be reacting to an uncomfortable sense of feeling out of place in their churches.

I do not see why one group must lose as the other gains ground, particularly since many are the same people.

GARY PREUSS
P.O. Box 13032

Bravo for smoking ban

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mayor Bruce Todd and the Austin City Council for considering on Dec. 9 the landmark ordinance to ban smoking in public places. Bravo! The time has come. I would like to rally the citizens of Austin behind them.

This is an important health issue, and it should soon become evident that it is better for restaurants and even bars and clubs to have healthier — wealthier — customers.

If you are tired of not being able to have a good time in restaurants with ill-planned nonsmoking sections, have been unable to go to any of Austin's excellent live music events because of smoke, or are just plain sick of smoking, act now. Rally behind the council. Show your support for the ban and call your favorite restaurants and clubs you have had difficulty attending and tell them how good this will be for business.

GREGG GEIST
3902 B Ridgelea

KUDOS

The Lanier High School faculty and staff would like to express our sincere thanks to the *American-Statesman* for its support and sponsorship of Homework Helpline.

This is another avenue for both students and parents to obtain information on what is happening in and around our school. Keeping the lines of communication open between the teacher and home is a very vital tool in keeping all our students actively involved in school.

Once again, thank you for your sponsorship of this very important and worthwhile program.

RUTH A. KANE
Principal
Lanier High School
1201 Peyton Gin Road

AUSTIN AMERICAN-STATESMAN, 12-19-93

Richard Bartholomew
P.O. Box 13381
Austin, Texas 78711
(512) 251-8294

December 19, 1993

Letters to the Editor
Austin American-Statesman
P.O. Box 670
Austin, Texas 78767
FAX: (512) 445-3679

Dear Editors,

If former Texas Attorney General Waggoner Carr is one of those who denies there is a conspiracy in the JFK assassination, and seeks to inform the public, he missed a golden opportunity in his letter of Dec. 19.

Mr. Carr said he is dismayed by those "who have no firsthand knowledge of the facts surrounding the JFK assassination but have a fixed opinion based only upon hearsay and their own personal opinion which they state as facts." He must therefore be quite upset about the recent books, periodicals, news broadcasts, and cartoons (Doonesbury Nov. 23 — Dec. 11) by conspiracy deniers.

He forgot to inform us that four of the seven Warren Commissioners — the majority — expressed grave doubts about the Commission's findings within a decade of their report. He also forgot to tell us that Lyndon Johnson never believed the report he commissioned; and that the official policy of the FBI is that the case is not closed, a policy begun by J. Edgar Hoover himself. That's strange behavior for a group who had supposedly found the truth.

By any standard of historiography, the lone assassin scenario must be considered a minority opinion which is contrary to the known evidence.

Because he forgot to tell us this, he avoided the embarrassing fact that this lone assassin minority included Nazi sympathizers Allen Dulles, the CIA director fired by Kennedy over the Bay of Pigs disaster, and John J. McCloy, the former chairman of the board of Chase Manhattan Bank which had controlled Cuba's credit for half a century.

Dulles — we now know — exploited his post in the OSS to quash war crimes prosecutions of senior Nazi officials and German business leaders who cooperated with him in a series of clandestine schemes to secure U.S. advantage in Central Europe. And as U.S. high commissioner for Germany,

McCloy — we now know — granted clemency to every single industrialist who had been convicted at Nuremberg.

Completing this loud minority was future president Gerald R. Ford, who betrayed the Commission by spying on them for the FBI, and who later pardoned Richard Nixon before he could be tried for high crimes and misdemeanors. At best, their judgement was poor.

Mr. Carr's own "Texas Court of Inquiry" into the Kennedy assassination consisted of only three men: Carr, Robert Gerald Storey, and Leon Jaworski. If Mr. Carr is sincerely "attempting to inform others who might wonder what the truth actually is," perhaps he could address a few other issues about which he has firsthand knowledge.

The first concerns Mr. Carr's apparent CIA connections through his board membership at the M.D. Anderson Foundation. The second regards Mr. Storey's apparent CIA connections as a board member of the International Education Exchange, a part of the CIA's Institute of International Education.

Storey was reportedly an Army intelligence colonel and a member in 1946 of the U.S. legal team at Nuremberg along with Leon Jaworski. Jaworski also sat on the board of the M.D. Anderson Foundation, which was reportedly "a CIA conduit."

In an apparently major conflict of interest, Dallas D.A. Henry Wade, Carr, Storey and Jaworski met with the Warren Commission in January 1964 to discuss allegations that Oswald had been an informant for either the FBI or CIA. Through the recent, partial release of CIA files we now know that the CIA had a high level interest in Oswald since at least 1960. The problem is not with the psychology of the American people. The problem is with the evidence. The case is open. The files are closed.

Sincerely,



Richard Bartholomew