

World View

National It's Bakker time

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Evangelist Jim Bakker pleaded innocent Tuesday to federal charges that he diverted millions of dollars from his PTL television audience for personal use.

Bakker's lawyer, George T. Davis, asked U.S. Magistrate Paul Taylor during the hearing for a gag order for all parties involved, based largely on comments by the retired federal bankruptcy judge who supervised the sale of PTL assets.

Taylor said he would consider the request, instructing attorneys from both sides to draft a consent order and present it to him by Thursday for approval. The magistrate told Davis he was concerned Bakker would go on television and talk about the case, but he issued no formal request for Bakker to keep quiet.

"I am definitely not guilty of any charges in this indictment," Bakker said. "The judge asked for no conversations about this case, but I'd like to say that Tammy and I are thrilled to be back on TV."

The Bakkers began broadcasting "The Jim and Tammy Show" from their leased home near Charlotte earlier this month. Bakker didn't appear on the telecast Tuesday and his wife, Tammy Faye, handled the program alone.

Bakker quit the PTL ministry in March 1987 after admitting a sexual encounter with former secretary Jessica Hahn and paying her money to keep quiet. The ministry he founded wound up seeking reorganization in bankruptcy court a few months later. Bakker tried to raise money to buy back the ministry, but failed.

Stockton shooting

STOCKTON, Calif. (AP) — A man fired several dozen shots from an automatic weapon at an elementary school Tuesday, wounding at least six children and himself, authorities said. A police official said there were fatalities.

"We have at least one suspect in custody who has a gunshot wound to the head," Deputy Police Chief Ralph Tribble said in a radio interview. He could not confirm the number of injuries but said without elaboration that there were fatalities at the scene.

John Klose, Stockton Unified School District information officer, said the district office had reports that six children were injured at Cleveland Elementary School.

Police Sgt. James Monk said his office learned that a "man went berserk with an automatic weapon and we have several (people) down."

"Several dozen shots were heard from an automatic rifle," said Monk.

Injured children were taken to San Joaquin General Hospital.

Other children at the school were kept in their rooms "under the control of their teachers" as the administration arranged to have parents pick them up, Klose said.

Investigators from the San Joaquin County Coroner's Office were dispatched to the school, said Coroner's Capt. Baxter Dunn.

Urban mayors meet

WASHINGTON (AP) — Urban homelessness and hunger increased significantly in 1988, particularly among families with children, the U.S. Conference of Mayors said Tuesday in reporting results of a survey of 27 major cities.

One of every four homeless persons in the surveyed cities was a child.

"Families — women and children — they make up the most significant increase we have experienced," Boston Mayor Raymond L. Flynn said in releasing the findings.

The conference, which conducts an annual survey of hunger and homelessness, reported that both had risen in nearly all of the cities it surveyed.

The Senate Budget Committee chairman, Jim Sasser, D-Tenn., speaking to the mayors later, called the survey "a devastating indictment of the neglect of the needs of our major

urban centers." He said the mayors had made a compelling case for increased spending on the problems.

Flynn said the rate of increase seemed to have slowed a bit from the previous year, in part because of increased emergency services provided by state and local governments.

Officials in every city surveyed cited a lack of affordable housing as the main cause of homelessness, and Flynn blamed a sharp decline in federal spending on low-income housing during the Reagan administration.

Dan supports raise

WASHINGTON (AP) — Vice President-elect Dan Quayle gave unqualified support Tuesday to the controversial 50 percent pay raise for Congress, federal judges and the Cabinet, acknowledging however, "I know it's a lot."

Quayle made his comments in an interview with The Associated Press as a Washington Post poll showed that eight out of 10 Americans oppose raising the salaries of members of Congress from \$89,500 to \$135,000.

Bush, asked if the nation could afford such a big pay increase at a time of huge deficits, said, "Well, I don't know whether we can afford anything than to get this deficit under control."

Quayle did not qualify his endorsement. "I support President Reagan's decision to send that up to Capitol Hill. I know it's a lot but I think he thought long and hard. I support his decision."

The pay raise plan will take effect next month unless Congress vetoes or modifies it.

Meese did wrong

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department concluded Tuesday that former Attorney General Edwin Meese III violated federal ethics standards five

times in six years and that his relationship with E. Robert Wallach "dictated government action" in major cases.

Meese's assistance to scandal-plagued Wedtech Corp. and his efforts on behalf of a proposed Mideast oil pipeline involved "three instances in which friendship" between him and Wallach caused federal actions, said the report by the department's Office of Professional Responsibility.

Wallach, who collected \$1.3 million from Wedtech from 1982 to 1986, is awaiting trial in New York on racketeering and other charges. He is accused of peddling his Meese connection.

"As a direct result of the preferential, improper efforts of Meese and his staff, the Army"

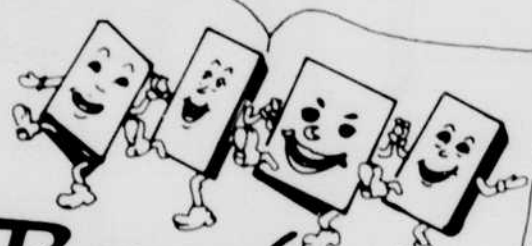
awarded a \$32 million engineering building contract to Wedtech in 1982 while Meese was counselor to President Reagan, said the ethics report on Meese.

Meese also violated ethics requirements, the report said, by failing to report a stock sale on his 1985 federal tax return and by participating in a Justice Department decision favoring the regional Bell telephone companies in which he held \$14,000 in stock at the time.

If Meese were still attorney general, "we would recommend (to the next ranking department official) that the president take disciplinary action," the report concluded.

A department statement said no further action against Meese is warranted because he is no longer a government employee.

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