

Wednesday, December 28, 1983

Court appoints Waco attorney to represent Deeb

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Waco attorney Richard McCall was appointed Tuesday to represent Mu-neer Mohammad Deeb, a 24-year-old Jordanian national indicted for capital murder in the 1982 stabbing deaths of three teen-agers whose bodies were found near Lake Waco.

Meanwhile, two attorneys have filed motions to withdraw from representing Gilbert Melendez, another of the four defendants in the Lake Waco killings. No ruling has been made on the

motions.

Deeb signed a pauper's oath last week, stating that he cannot afford to hire his own attorney. 54th State District Judge George Allen, who has appointed two attorneys for each defendant except Deeb, is expected to appoint a second attorney for Deeb later this week or next week.

Deeb's parents, who live in Saudi Arabia, contacted McCall earlier this month about representing their son. McCall represented Deeb when he was arrested last September in connection

with the Lake Waco case, then released after taking a polygraph test.

Melendez, 28, his brother, Anthony Melendez, 24, David Wayne Spence, 25, and Deeb each have been indicted on three counts of capital murder in the deaths of Kenneth Franks, 18, of Waco and Raylene Rice and Jill Montgomery, both 17 and of Waxahachie. The victims' bodies were found July 14, 1982, in Speegleville Park.

In another development, Waco attorneys David Cherry and Dick Kettler, who were among five attorneys ap-

pointed Dec. 7 to represent three of the defendants, have filed motions to withdraw from Gilbert Melendez's case.

Cherry said he is not qualified to represent a capital murder defendant because he has never tried a felony case in his 15 years of practicing law.

Kettler cited a conflict of interest in his motion, saying that he prosecuted Melendez on a felony charge in 1974 as a McLennan County assistant district attorney.

Melendez pleaded guilty to assault

with intent to murder and was sentenced to three years in prison.

Kettler also said he has represented two witnesses expected to testify in the case — Joe Bridgewater, who in December 1982 received a 12-month probated sentence for criminal mischief over \$20, and David Puryear, whom he represented in a civil matter in 1977.

Allen will hold a hearing Wednesday afternoon to decide whether to grant the attorney's motions.