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American-Statesman
Austin, Texas

JUN 16 1985

DPS inquiry on prosecutor is questioned

WACO (AP) — The district attorney who headed an investigation into how the Texas Rangers handled the Henry Lee Lucas cases is now the target of an investigation himself, said Attorney General Jim Mattox.

Mattox said he was concerned that the investigation by the Texas Department of Public Safety into McLennan County District Attorney Vic Feazell was sparked by Feazell's grand jury inquiry of the Ranger task force.

"The timing looks somewhat suspect," Mattox told the *Dallas Morning News*.

A McLennan County grand jury has been looking into charges that the special Ranger task force provided Lucas information that he used to make hundreds of murder confessions. Lucas has recanted the confessions.

Mattox said that the grand jury found no evidence of "inappropriate or illegal" conduct on the part of the task force.

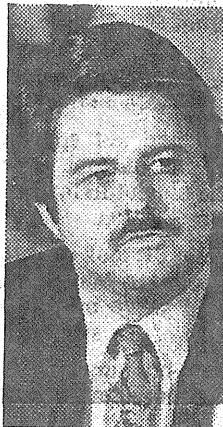
He also said the DPS investigation of Feazell "went into high gear after this Lucas thing started."

Col. Jim Adams, head of the DPS, has refused to either confirm or deny the Feazell investigation.

"I've said in the past that I would be deeply concerned if there was any type of retaliatory investigation taking place," Mattox said.

Mattox said the DPS is investigating Feazell's handling of drunken driving cases in McLennan County. He also said the inquiry "covers quite a bit more," but refused to elaborate.

Feazell said Friday night that he is the victim of a "smear cam-



District Attorney Vic Feazell of McLennan County: 'It's an obvious smear.'

aign" initiated by the DPS and federal authorities.

Television station WFAA in Dallas said that it had learned the FBI was investigating Feazell and a half-dozen defense attorneys in Waco, looking into how they handle DWI cases.

It said the federal investigation centers on reports that suspects charged with drunken driving got cases dropped after paying "about \$3,000 to any one of a handful of Waco defense lawyers." The station said defense lawyers normally charge \$600 to handle first-offense DWI cases.

"The whole thing has upset me," Feazell told the *Waco Tribune-Herald*. "It's an obvious smear campaign. The timing is very suspect."

Feazell said numerous DWI cases have been dismissed because his office failed to prosecute before the Speedy Trial Act deadline expired. But he said he believes his total DWI conviction rate is higher than those in either Tarrant or Dallas counties.