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Harwell vindicated

The special McLennan County grand jury acted with appropriate dispatch in looking into allegations of misconduct against Sheriff Jack Harwell that came out during the heat of his recent campaign. Grand jurors, assisted by a special prosecutor from another county, found nothing in the charges to pursue.

The voters of McLennan County obviously feel the same way about the charges. They gave Harwell an overwhelming majority over his single opponent in the Democratic Primary.

Leon Hughes, president of an organization called the Texas Taxpayers Association, readily accepted the grand jury report. Hughes even apologized for making the allegations and said he probably will resign as head of his organization.

As an elected official, Harwell should expect challenges of his conduct of office from time to time. It goes along with the job.

If other public officials are to learn a lesson from Harwell's experience it should be that those entrusted with public office occupy a special place in society. It's not enough for them to simply do right. They also must avoid even the slightest appearance of abusing their office.