

# Preston Smith: oiling his political machinery

LUBBOCK, Tex. — For those wondering what ever happened to Preston Smith, the former governor is sitting atop a political machine and ready to move at a moment's notice.

Smith, now in banking and investments, spends a lot of his time in his plush Lubbock office with the

nameplate GOVERNOR PRESTON SMITH on the desk and the flags of Texas and the United States behind it. In the outer office is the desk of Larry Teaver, his executive aide while governor.

The 63-year-old former governor is noncommittal on the possibility of running for office again, but at the

same time leaves open the door to the ring.

The possibilities include the governor's chair, which he lost while running a poor fourth in 1972 in the aftermath of the Sharpstown stock scandals.

Also bantered about are the positions of railroad commissioner and

president of Texas Tech University. Smith gave the Lubbock Avalanche-Journal these comments on the various options:

Governor — "Right now, I've never been in better health and if, in two years my health is real good and the political situation is what I think is favorable, I wouldn't mind con-

ducting a race."

Railroad Commissioner — "I've always regarded the Railroad Commission as one of the top state officers of responsibility."

Tech president — "I've given hardly any consideration whatsoever to serving as president of Texas Tech. I have not been approached

about the position."

"A good many people might wonder why I'd be considering another campaign or possibility of another campaign," Smith said. "You have to realize that the most enjoyable, probably the hardest work I've ever done has been campaigning."

"And I love to campaign because

you have the opportunity to meet people and make friends. I wouldn't say this bragging at all. . . . I really believe today that I know more people in Texas than any man living."

Smith says his friends call him daily to ask when and where he will run again so they won't commit themselves to someone else.

Many political observers feel his re-entry into politics will be via the Railroad Commission — or any other post that's real important.

That "real important" post could be that of governor. Smith says that's the job most of his supporters discuss when they call him. However, that post is not available for three more years.

Smith shows no bitterness when reflecting on the scandal which led to his terrible beating while seeking a third term.

Today, he thinks it is a little more than ironic that Watergate later demolished the high cadre of the Republican party.

"I believe the people now realize that Sharpstown was nothing except a political operation to destroy the people's confidence in the Democratic leadership in Texas," he said.

"Where the Sharpstown thing really hurt was that the Republicans broke it on the day of my second inauguration. And then they kept something in the press for almost 15 months daily."

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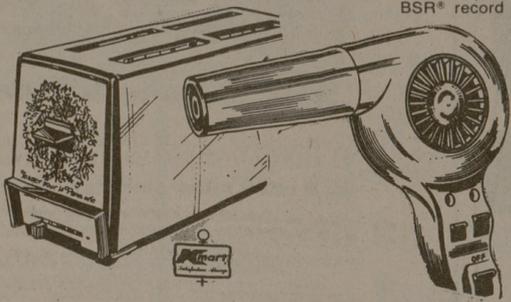
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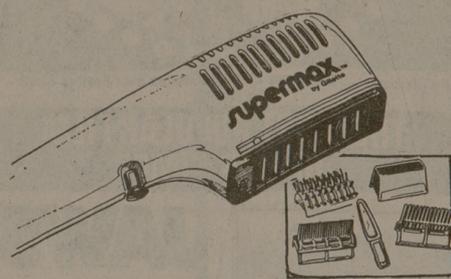
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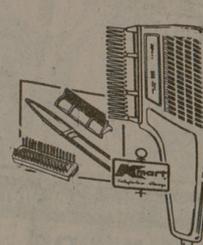
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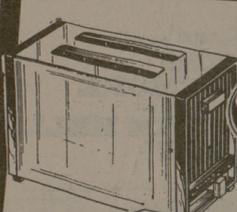


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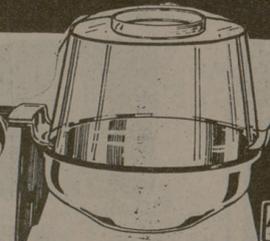


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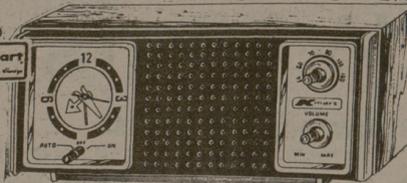
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## Goose hunt interrupted by whooping crane

BOSQUE DEL APACHE, N.M. — A goose hunt was interrupted by a blast of sirens when a rare whooping crane flew into the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge.

The crane, a member of an endangered species, was accompanied by foster parent sandhill cranes. They flew into the refuge last weekend after cold weather forced them out of the Monte Vista, Colo., area.

An elaborate siren system has been set up to warn hunters if a crane enters the area, refuge officials said. The hunt is stopped until the bird moves on.

Officials said two whooping crane young have landed on the Bosque, and two more flew into the Middle Rio Grande Valley on their way south.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Officials said eggs from the main crane flock were taken to Idaho and hatched last summer.

Six of the young whoopers left the Grays Lake Wildlife Refuge in Idaho, and four have made it to New Mexico. Officials said two are missing.

## Paris gunmen hold hostages for ransom, car

PARIS — Gunmen took a group of people hostage inside a bank near the Eiffel tower after an attempted holdup today and demanded \$2 million ransom and a getaway car, police said.

A passer-by was wounded in the foot in a burst of gunfire as the bandits entered the Credit Lyonnais Bank on Avenue Bosquet. A number of gunshots also were heard from inside the bank. The intruders also fired on a police car.

The exact number of gunmen and their hostages was not known. The police spokesman said the holdup men had demanded that the getaway car be brought to them after dark and that the ransom money be in U.S. currency. He said no direct threats had been made against the hostages.

After first contact between Commissioner Robert Broussard, assistant chief of France's antigang squad, and the gunmen, police tow trucks moved in to clear parked cars away from the street near the bank.

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