

THE BATTALION

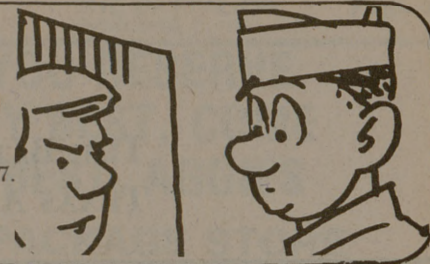
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Horse race betting in Texas to be closely contested issue

United Press International
AUSTIN, Texas — A May 6 vote on legalizing pari-mutuel betting on horse racing in Texas is expected to be a down-to-the-wire contest, but three other referenda presented to a portion of the state's voters may produce lopsided results.

The pari-mutuel referendum is the only issue to be listed on both the Democratic and Republican primary ballots.

Democrats also face a vote on whether the 1979 Legislature should increase the interest rates on small loans, and Republicans will vote on propositions concerning whether Texas should have a presidential primary and whether there should be an overall limit on local and state taxes.

The interest rate issue is considered a certain failure because of general voter opposition to anything that costs more money, and the presidential primary and other issues — both popular GOP causes — probably will carry easily.

Only the horse racing question has generated any active campaigning.

Sen. Bill Patman, D-Canado, is pushing for defeat of the interest rate proposition, which offers voters the choice of voting for or against the 79 Legislature's authorizing other interest rates on loans under \$10,000.

The Texas Consumer Association and

Texas Credit Union League both have urged Texans to vote against the proposition.

"I think if people understand the issue, they'll vote against it pretty convincingly," Patman said. "I think it could have some impact. I think legislators will take heed of the fact that their districts go strongly against it if they do, and I think it also serves to call the attention of the public to the enormously high interest rates that we have now as well as the exorbitant rates the loan companies have been trying to push through the Legislature."

The small loan industry went to court in an unsuccessful attempt to prevent the

proposition from being placed on the ballot, but has not actively campaigned on the issue.

"They're trying to ignore the issue, saying the wording is lopsided and will elicit a negative response anyway," Patman said. "I think what is lopsided is the power of the loan industry when the Legislature meets."

State GOP Chairman Ray Barnhart says he knows of no active campaigning concerning the tax limit and presidential primary issues on the Republican ballot.

"They're there; let the people make of them what they want to," he said. "There is no concerted effort one way or another on those issues."

Barnhart said he supports the proposition asking the Legislature to enact a presidential primary bill, and says the tax limit proposal merits further discussion and could surface in the GOP platform for the general election.

"Certainly the golden goose is going to terminate one of these and the only way to get government under control is to limit taxation," Barnhart said.

He expressed hope a lopsided vote on the presidential primary proposition will encourage the 1979 Legislature to establish such a system to elect delegates to national party nominating conventions.

Victim goes 'through hell'

United Press International
CLEBURNE, Texas — Soundra McCoy's first thought when she felt the explosion rock her bunker Thursday was "Oh my God, not again."

Five years ago the 38-year-old employee of the Gearhart Owens munitions plant was working when the "grenade line" explosion ripped apart a nearby bunker and killed four of her co-workers.

She was carried away from the blast area injured, but alive.

Thursday, another bunker at the North Texas plant was shattered by two quick explosions. Four more people died and she was taken to the hospital, this time in shock.

"I feel like I have gone through hell twice," she said from her darkened hospital room.

McCoy said the first blast rocked her steel and concrete building and bathed her room "in a pink light."

"Parts of the ceiling started coming down and we ran out. We looked across the field and saw its building. We then saw a second explosion. It looked just like a

cloud going up — particles of the building went everywhere.

Brenda was one of the day's fatalities — Elwin Brenda, 62. The others were identified as Bobby Troha, 20; Rosemary Soule, 45; and Billy Clanton, 25, all of Cleburne.

They were all friends, McCoy said. "You work with a lot of good people in this business," she said. "You get very close to the people you work with."

Despite the danger — two explosions in five years — McCoy said she would continue working at the Cleburne facility.

"We just look at it as a job working with explosives," she said. "Somebody has to do it. And I'm just dumb enough to do it."

Apartments may have car washes installed

By MICHELLE BURROWES

Students may soon be able to wash their cars in their own apartment complexes, if apartment owners act on a decision made Thursday by the College Station Planning and Zoning Commission.

The commission decided that car-wash facilities could be installed in area complexes, if they were used only by tenants. Commission members suggested that tenants be given a special key to operate the

car washes.

In other actions, a LaQuinta motel, planned for construction in the Texas Avenue and Live Oak area, was denied a permit for landscaping and parking lot plans. The owners received the building permit, but cannot meet the eight-foot easement required by the city around the property. The commission expressed concern about setting a precedent of ignoring the city ordinance.

Moro letter asks for prisoner swap

United Press International
ROME — Ruling Christian Democratic Party officials said today a new handwritten letter had been received from kidnapped ex-Premier Aldo Moro outlining details of a prisoner swap demanded by the Red Brigades in return for his life.

The latest communique added further confusion to the crucial issue of whether the frail 61-year-old president of the Christian Democrats, who earlier was reported to have been "executed" by "suicide" was even alive.

No text of the new communique was released but Christian Democratic sources said it spelled out in greater detail the ultra-leftist terrorist group's demand for the release of jailed comrades in return for Moro's life.

The new message from Moro coincided with the first public appeal by his wife for the Christian Democrats to state what terms they would accept for the release of the five-time premier.

No details were made available on how the latest message from Moro reached Christian Democratic Party Secretary Benigno Zaccagnini. But sources said it spelled out in greater detail the terrorists' demand that all or some of about 160 Red Brigades prisoners now in Italian jails be released.

As the letter was being studied, Premier Giulio Andreotti called a cabinet meeting to discuss what reply the government should send to the Red Brigades' ultimatum that prisoners be released within

48 hours to save Moro's life.

The Red Brigades Thursday issued a snapshot of Moro with a copy of a Wednesday newspaper and vowed to "execute" him unless an unknown number of Communist prisoners were released by 9 a.m. EST Saturday.

An earlier message purportedly from the Red Brigades said Moro had been tried by a "people's court" and "executed." But Thursday a new communique, believed by officials to be authentic, said the earlier message was a hoax and affirmed that Moro still was alive.

Andreotti and his advisers met late into the early morning hours at Christian Democratic Party headquarters across the square from the baroque Church of Jesus where they all prayed for Moro's life late Thursday.

In her first public appeal for the life of her husband, Mrs. Eleonora Moro asked the Christian Democratic Party to find out the exact conditions laid down by the Red Brigades for Moro's release.

"The family and friends renew the firm request that the life of Aldo Moro be saved that was given yesterday by Mrs. Eleonora Moro to the Christian Democrats and the government," the statement said.

"This asked the Christian Democrats, adopting a realistic attitude, to state their readiness to ascertain what the concrete terms are for the release of their president."

Moro was kidnapped March 16 after terrorists killed his five police guards.

10,000 people in space. . .

Space colonies predicted

By GREG PROPPS

Self-supporting space colonies of 10,000 people could be a reality by the turn of the century, said Dr. J. Peter Vajk.

Vajk, a staff scientist for Science Applications Inc., spoke at a Great Issues presentation Thursday night.

Vajk said these colonies could serve as bases for solar energy collecting stations, space factories, or mining operations on the moon.

Vajk said improved communications via satellites is the only practical application of space exploration at present.

"If you want to do things in space with economic gain, then the cost of space exploration has to come way down," he said. In the past, space vehicles were used only once, making each mission expensive. The space shuttle will mean a vehicle could be used over and over again, which would bring the cost of each mission down, said Vajk.

He added that every part of the shuttle could be reused. The empty propellant tanks could be used for living quarters. The

cost of moving material in space would decrease with a proposed schedule of 60 shuttle flights per year by 1985, he said.

Vajk said once the shuttle operation is working smoothly, giant solar-energy collecting panels, staffed with about 100 people could be constructed to beam energy back to earth.

The space operations could then expand into manufacturing and production, lunar mining, agriculture and recreation said Vajk.

He said it is possible to use existing technology to build a space facility that could snare and hold an asteroid and put it into an Earth orbit. Mining operations could then begin on the asteroid.

Living quarters would be needed for several thousand people to keep these operations going, said Vajk. A comfortable environment could be created in a giant rotating wheel with its own gravity and atmosphere.

Vajk mentioned the possibility of providing "mood rooms" complete with soft lights and music, trampolines on the walls, floors



Battalion photo by Tim Drinkwater

Licking the problem

These two twins, Sally and Jacob Elliot, seem to have found the perfect way to cool off on a hot day. Both are enjoying an ice cream cone from the Texas A&M Creamery.

Heavyweight boxer booked for drug use

United Press International

ST. LOUIS — Heavyweight boxer Leon Spinks, victor over champion Muhammad Ali, was arrested early today and booked, suspected of possession of cocaine and marijuana.

marijuana.

Spinks, who shares the heavyweight crown with Ken Norton, was stopped about 4 a.m. in St. Louis, his hometown, for driving without headlights. Sgt. Francis Corona, who said he did not recognize Spinks, approached him and asked him for his driver's license.

But Spinks, who had been arrested two months ago for driving without a license and traveling the wrong way on a one-way street, again had no license.

"I asked him for his license," Corona said, "and he said something to the effect of, 'Come on, man. I'm Leon. You know I still don't have one.'"

Spinks threw his hat onto the top of the car as he got out, Corona said, and a search of the hat uncovered in the hatband a foil packet containing a substance believed to be cocaine.

Spinks, 24, was handcuffed along with a companion, Charlean Gunn, 26, who was booked, suspected of interfering with the arrest and possession of marijuana. A search of Spinks in a police holdover cell turned up what police thought to be marijuana and a hand-rolled cigarette.

Corona, who was assisted by policemen Ronald Strothman and Stanley Mierzejewski, said Ms. Gunn became abusive when he tried to arrest Spinks.

"She started cursing us," he said. "You know, the usual routine — if he was white, you wouldn't be arresting him."

The last time Spinks was arrested the NAACP protested the manner in which he was handled, including his being handcuffed. But Corona said the handcuffs were necessary again because he was being arrested on a suspected felony.

Thieves take

Rubens painting

United Press International

FLORENCE, Italy — Art thieves who entered through a skylight stole a major work by painter Peter Paul Rubens and nine other Flemish-school works from the famed Pitti Palace, gallery officials said today.

The theft occurred last night in the Palace's Palatine Gallery and was discovered this morning, officials said.

The most important work of Rubens stolen was his "Three Graces," bought in Antwerp.



Race horse drugging investigation begins

United Press International

NEW ORLEANS — Federal officials expect more indictments in an extensive investigation into drugging of Louisiana race horses with cocaine and other painkilling chemicals.

Two special grand juries Thursday indicted seven persons on charges of possessing or selling cocaine and painkillers for use on race horses. No race tracks or track officials were named in the indictments.

Cornelius Heusel, chief of the Justice Department Organized Crime Strike Force, said some people still under investigation have Mafia connections.

"This is just the beginning of an extensive investigation," said U.S. Attorney John Volz at a news conference announcing the indictments.

Five persons were indicted by a federal grand jury in New Orleans, including James Joseph Duet, Edwin Henry Rivere, Tony J. Cuccia, Lonnie B. Abshire Sr., and Edmund J. Fabacher. The men were taken before the federal magistrate Thursday for arraignment.

Dr. John W. Lambert and Stephen Lee Lalande were indicted by a special grand jury in Alexandria, La.

Lalande, a former jockey and horse trainer at Evangeline Downs, was taken to Lafayette Parish Jail. Lambert, director of the Evangeline Veterinarian Clinic, was booked on one count of illegal distribution of cocaine and three counts of distributing a drug called Fentanyl. Lalande is accused of one count of distributing cocaine.

The suspects could receive up to 15 years in prison and \$25,000 in fines for each violation.

Volz said an FBI agent worked undercover as a trainer for nearly a year to develop the case.

"Cocaine was used in effect to make the horses run faster," Volz said. He said the drugs Sublimaze and Dilaudid soothed injuries to allow the horses to run without pain.

Albert Stall, head of the Louisiana Racing Commission, said he was concerned with the use of illegal drugs on thoroughbreds and quarterhorses running at Louisiana tracks.

"Sublimaze is an effective painkiller, much stronger than morphine," Stall said. "We are also concerned over the excessive amounts of drugs such as Dilaudid coming onto our race tracks."