

THE BATTALION

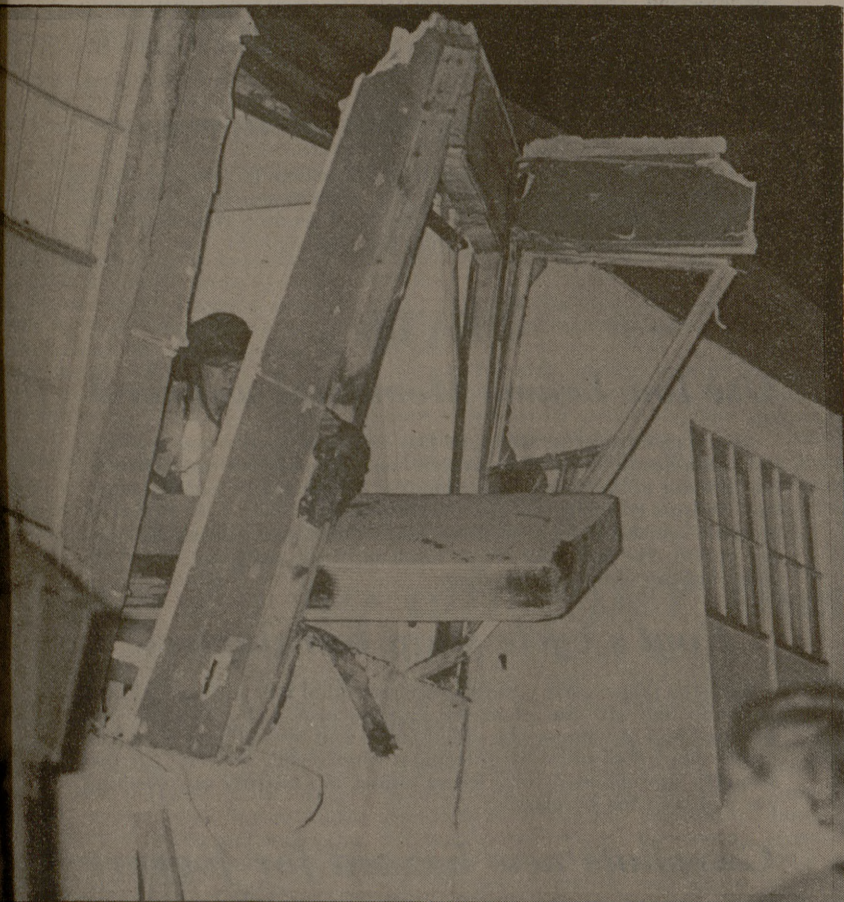
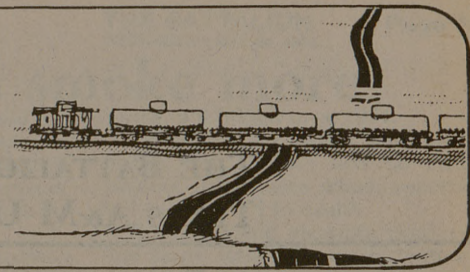
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Battalion photo by Lee Roy Leschper Jr.

A College Station fireman shoves a smoldering mattress out the hole an explosion had blown in the back wall of this second-story apartment at Barcelona Apartments. The explosion, which firemen theorized was caused by a natural gas leak, heavily damaged several unoccupied apartments in the Barcelona complex. No one was injured by the blast. College Station firemen returned to the scene early this morning to extinguish a small fire which started after the firemen left the first time.

Leaking gas causes explosion that damages Barcelona complex

By DEBBY KRENEK
Battalion Editor

A natural gas leak has been blamed for the explosion that damaged an eight-apartment complex at Barcelona last night. No one was injured.

College Station Fire Marshal Harry Davis said the stoves in these apartments had been disconnected yesterday afternoon. Although the main gas line was disconnected, Davis said, a valve was left partially on in the upstairs apartment where the explosion originated.

"We think the source of ignition was an air conditioner on the roof of the complex," Davis said. "When the air con-

ditioner kicked on it sparked the explosion."

Some window frames were blown into the parking lot more than 50 feet away from the complex and the back part of an upstairs apartment was almost totally blown out. Little fire damage occurred with the explosion, however firemen doused several smoldering mattresses that they removed from the complex.

"The explosion pulled most of the heat and fire up to the top of the building," Davis said. "It really blew itself out." Ceilings in the upstairs apartments were charred. Little fire damage was visible from

the outside of the complex.

Firemen were called back to the complex after midnight when the cedar siding that lines the apartments began smoldering. No fire broke out.

Apartment manager Susan Schnatterly said that since the apartments were closed for the summer, the stoves were being disconnected to avoid gas leaks from pilots blowing out. Ms. Schnatterly told a maintenance man at Barcelona to disconnect the stoves in all the apartments that were vacant. He disconnected the stoves in that particular complex at 3 p.m. yesterday afternoon.

No one was in the eight-apartment

complex at the time of the explosion, however one of the bottom apartments was still occupied by a male student who was in the process of moving home for the summer.

Ms. Schnatterly had no estimate of the damage. However, she said the complex suffered severe structural damage. She was scheduled to talk with the owners of Barcelona this morning to find out what to do next.

The complex is considered unsafe, Davis said, and has been roped off to keep people away from the debris. Cleanup began this morning.

HEW representatives interviewing officials on possible discrimination

By FLAVIA KRONE
Battalion Campus Editor

Department of Health, Education and Welfare representatives of the Office for Civil Rights are on the Texas A&M University campus this week to review university compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act says schools that receive federal financial assistance should not discriminate on the basis of race, color or national origin in their programs and activities.

MVILES Schulze, branch chief of the office for Civil Rights in Dallas, says a 1973 federal court order required HEW to begin compliance reviews in eight southern and eastern states which formerly maintained dual "separate but equal" systems of higher education. South Carolina, Arkansas, Louisiana, Alabama and Texas are among the states targeted for review.

Schulze says the Dallas Office for Civil Rights will conduct compliance reviews at 18 Texas universities and junior colleges including Texas A&M, Prairie View A&M University, the University of Texas at Austin and the University of Houston.

The 18 schools represent a combination of junior, senior and professional educa-

tional institutions of various sizes located in both urban and rural areas throughout the state.

"We're trying for a cross-section," Schulze says. "It's physically impossible to go to all 150 schools in Texas." Schulze adds, "Our sample contains 65 percent of the student population in the state."

Associate Vice president for Academic Affairs Haskell Monroe says two representatives of the Dallas Civil Rights Office will interview about 100 Texas A&M administrators, department heads, counselors and athletic directors this week.

Monroe says the Civil Rights Office representatives are seeking information about the recruitment, admissions, student financial aid, counseling, athletics and employment programs at Texas A&M.

"They are trying to find out if we are discriminating in any of these areas," Monroe said.

Civil Rights office chief Schulze says his staff will be looking for evidence of both "de jure" and "de facto" discrimination.

"De jure" discrimination is that which remains encoded in the law. "De facto" discrimination is that which is in fact, although unintentionally, discriminatory.

"Determining de facto discrimination is a tough question," Schulze said.

"What if a school like Texas A&M has a large agricultural department and does most of its recruiting in agricultural areas," Schulze asked. "But what if most of the minorities are in urban areas?"

Schulze says that this type of recruitment policy could constitute a case of de facto discrimination.

Schulze would not say whether a small minority enrollment necessarily constitutes de facto discrimination.

Monroe said minority enrollment figures at Texas A&M will be released after they are presented to the Civil Rights Office representatives now on campus.

Schulze said, "The bottom line is how much discrimination remains." He added, "The bottom line is the same whether it is intentional or just ends up that way."

Monroe says the two Civil Rights Office representatives will be joined later this week by two more interviewing teams. These teams will review four academic programs and several campus facilities including the Memorial Student Center, health center and physical plant.

The Academic program review will focus on the agriculture, business adminis-

tration, education and engineering departments.

"These are four specialty areas common to both Texas A&M and Prairie View," Monroe said. "They are comparing us to see if there is duplication in our programs."

Schulze said, "We're interested in how schools which have a high proportion of minority students are doing compared to schools with a high proportion of white students in terms of dollars, facilities, recruitment and accreditation."

Schulze said that duplication of academic programs may have a discriminatory impact.

"Suppose you give a school a business department and suppose a school 20 miles away has the same program," Schulze said. "You haven't helped either school become competitive."

However, Monroe said that "Texas A&M and Prairie View have different missions" within each of their similar programs.

The Office for Civil Rights will summarize its findings of this week and make its recommendation to HEW by September of this year, Schulze said.

Hill wants changes in LoVaca settlement

United Press International

AUSTIN — Attorney General John L. Hill Tuesday recommended the Texas Railroad Commission approve the proposed LoVaca settlement plan, but with changes to prevent immediate increases in natural gas prices for millions of Texans and safeguards to prevent utility companies from profiting unduly from the arrangement.

The changes Hill urged could jeopardize the settlement plan worked out by Coastal States Gas Producing Co., LoVaca Gathering Co., and major customers of the troubled pipeline system.

Hill said the Railroad Commission should require Coastal to pay more under the settlement and force utility companies to pass financial benefits on to consumers.

Lone Star Gas Co. has threatened to cuttle the settlement if it is not allowed to keep more than \$41 million it expects to receive from the deal.

Terms of the settlement agreement stipulate it must be approved by customers representing at least 90 percent of LoVaca's 1975 gas sales.

Lone Star's purchases that year amounted to 16.8 percent of LoVaca's volume.

"Lone Star's only justification for keeping the money is the contention that its innocent stockholders have been injured, which the record does not show," Hill said. "We believe the commission must condition approval of the settlement on 100 percent of the settlement trust benefits being flowed through by LoVaca's utility customers to consumers."

P&Z commission suggests new park near Consol

Battalion Campus Editor

The College Station Planning and Zoning Commission has recommended that the city buy 30 acres of land next to A&M Consolidated High School west of Welsh Avenue for recreational development.

College Station Parks and Recreation Director Andy Czimskey said at the commission's meeting last Thursday that the

Policy dispute causes Eagle editor to quit

Paul LaRocque has resigned as editor of the Eagle for what he termed a policy dispute.

LaRocque, who has been editor of The Eagle since July 1976, left the newspaper Friday. Eagle Publisher W. S. "Dub" Pearson announced the resignation to the staff Monday.

City Editor Bob Lutgen has taken over as acting editor until a new editor is chosen.

"There's not much to say other than we just had a disagreement over policy," LaRocque said Tuesday. He refused to comment further.

Pearson also refused to comment on LaRocque's resignation, saying it was a personal decision.

30-acre purchase combined with the 30 acres already owned by the high school would provide the city with a 60-acre recreational complex.

The 30-acre tract will cost about \$350,000, Czimskey said. The land is currently divided into three 10-acre parcels, each privately owned. Czimskey said two of the parcels will cost about \$125,000 each and the third parcel about \$100,000.

"As yet it is undecided where the funds will come from," Czimskey said. "Possibly they could come through a general fund or perhaps through the bond issue that was passed in April, but I'm not really sure," Czimskey said.

The College Station City Council must approve the Planning and Zoning Commission recommendation before the city can buy the land.

If College Station does buy the land, it may become the location of a community center, Czimskey said.

City Manager North Bardell said the city currently has plans for a 16,000 square foot community center designed to serve as a convention hall. He said the center will contain meeting rooms, office space and food service facilities.

Czimskey said the proposed 30-acre purchase would reduce the need for a recreational facility that had been planned for the Southwood Valley area.

"That doesn't mean those plans will be abandoned," he said.

Czimskey said the proposed site is more accessible to College Station than that in the Southwood Valley area.

"We can also share parking with the high school," Czimskey said.

Surplus grain may help save livestock

United Press International

AUSTIN — Agriculture Commissioner Reagan Brown, saying he had found starving cattle and barren pastures in a tour of 28 South Texas counties, Tuesday asked U.S. Department of Agriculture to permit use of surplus grain as feed to help save livestock from drought conditions.

Brown said he toured the drought-stricken counties Monday with members of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service state committee and prepared the request for emergency use of

the surplus grain immediately after the tour.

"We have asked that the U.S. Department of Agriculture allow grain sorghum which would be destroyed under provisions of this year's set-aside program to be either grazed or made into hay in the counties hardest hit by drought," Brown said.

"This is an emergency request. It seems foolish to destroy grain fodder on set-aside acreage when cattle are starving."

Brown said he expects a quick reply from the agriculture department on his

request. Brown said if the emergency use of the set-aside grain is approved, details of the program will be available through county ASCS offices.

He said the request seeks permission for emergency grazing and hay baling on the set-aside grain until Aug. 1.

Provisions of the 1977 farm bill require a farmer to destroy up to 20 percent of his normal planted acreage of grain sorghum so the rest of the crop may qualify for price supports and land diversion payments, Brown said.

"With pastures barren and even poor quality hay bringing premium prices, this readily available fodder could save cattle now faced with death because they are too poor to be sold but too costly to feed," he said.

Brown said he found cattle dead and dying because of the drought conditions in Hidalgo, Starr, Brooks and Kenedy Counties.

He said rains which fell in the South Texas area during the weekend were too late to do any good.

Work crew cleans up wreckage

Work crews have completed cleanup of the nine-car freight train derailment that occurred early Monday morning along Wellborn Road near the Texas A&M University campus.

Total cost of removing the cars was about \$6,000, R. E. Dipprey, assistant superintendent for Southern Pacific railroad, said.

The train was northbound from Houston to Ennis when it left the track about 2:30 a.m. between F&B Road and Old Main Road.

The train was carrying no hazardous materials. One car contained crude oil, but there were no leaks or fires. No one was injured in the derailment.

A Southern Pacific spokesman said a faulty wheel bearing on the crude oil tank car probably caused the mishap. The train had met a southbound Southern Pacific train, and as the two trains were passing the conductor of the southbound train spotted a fire in the other train's wheels.

He radioed the conductor of the other train, and when the engineer applied the brakes the train left the track.

Dipprey said applying the brakes may have broken the tank car's axle and caused the accident.

Besides the tank car, one of the cars was carrying lumber and the other seven were empty. Damage to the cars was estimated at about \$35,000.

Dipprey said there was little track damage. He said it would cost about \$300 to repair the track.



Southern Pacific Railroad workmen load a mangled railroad tank car onto a flat-bed car, to move it from the site north of the Texas A&M campus where nine Southern Pacific cars derailed Monday. Southern Pacific officials

said a bearing failure in one of the tank car's wheels caused the accident. Workmen had finished removing the derailed cars late Monday afternoon.

Battalion photo by Lee Roy Leschper Jr.