

the state

Ch Carter told of beating

United Press International
CORPUS CHRISTI — Jail guards beat a Mexican-American inmate to death, a group of Texas Hispanic leaders has told President Carter in demanding that civil rights charges be filed and those responsible prosecuted.

The group of Hispanic leaders contend Larry Lozano died of 92 injuries while being held prisoner at Odessa, Texas and Tuesday told Carter he should overrule the Justice Department's decision not to prosecute.

"It's your responsibility as president and our responsibility as citizens to expect no less," the Hispanics told Carter in a letter.

The letter said the death of Lozano while he was being held prisoner was "a gross injustice," and said the Hispanics "take strong exception to this unwarranted decision of the Justice Department on June 22 not to intervene in the case."

Ruben Bonilla, national president of the League of United Latin American Citizens, said 57 pages of evidence, including pictures of Lozano the day he entered the jail and after he died at an Odessa Hospital on Jan. 22, 1978, were attached to the letter to Carter.

"We do not believe that the fourth of July in this particular year is a cause for renewed celebration due to the non-prosecution and apparent insensitivity of the Department of Justice in wholesale police abuse cases that remain unprosecuted in the Southwest," Bonilla said at a news conference.

Joining Bonilla in signing the letter were Ruben Sandoval, special advisor to LULAC who represents Lozano's family; Rep. Matt Garcia, D-San Antonio, chairman of Mexican-American Democrats; Pete Torres, recently elected state chairman of the State Bar's Section on the Spanish Speaking; George Rebel, voting rights specialist of LAC; Rep. Paul Moreno, D-El Paso, state chairman of the Mexican-American Legislative Caucus; and Joaquin Avila, associate counsel for the Mexican-American Defense and Education Fund.

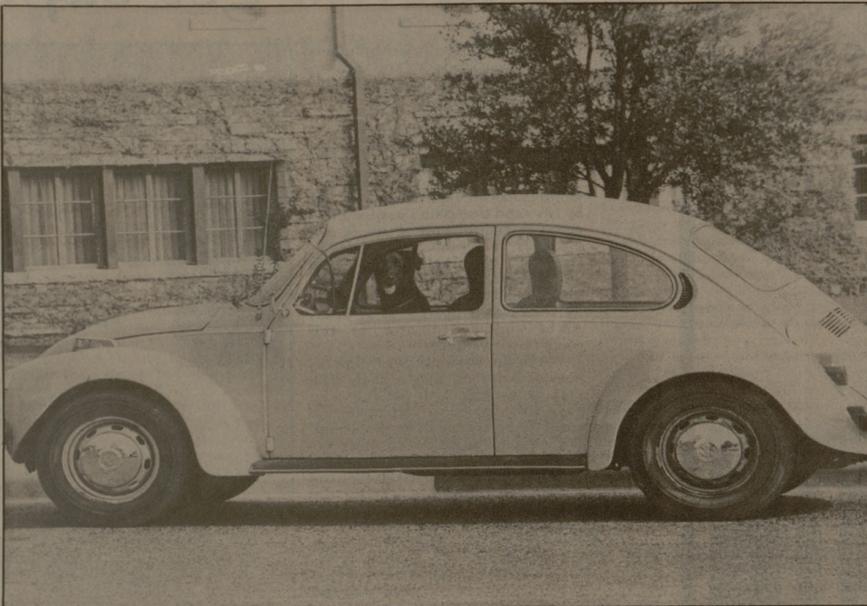
Sandoval said Lozano died of 92 injuries to the head, arms, and upper torso and that neither the state nor federal grand juries at Odessa ever took any action.

Law enforcement authorities in El Paso County contended Lozano committed suicide by butting his head against the steel wall of his jail cell but Hispanic groups maintained that he was beaten to death by guards.

Bonilla said the Hispanics particularly objected to contentions by Jim Civiletti, head of the Justice Department's civil rights section and his associate, Drew Days, that unreasonable force was used against Lozano and therefore the state should not warrant federal intervention.

"The letter contended that U.S. Attorney Jamie Boyd conducted a grand jury investigation involving more than 60 witnesses, but that Boyd and Civiletti ignored recommendations by Boyd and former Attorney General John Hill that the grand jury should not be allowed to vote on indictments. In a unusual move, the grand jury was disbanded several weeks in advance of the conclusion of their proceedings," the letter told Carter.

"I am very upset," Sandoval said. "I had been rejected on the grounds that we could live with it, but not with the truth."



What, me worry?

This dog seems to have found his own solution to the energy crisis by picking up an economy car that was parked in front of the Memorial

Student Center. It looks like a lot of his two-footed friends are getting the same idea.

Battalion photo by Bobby McMahon

Firemen extinguish gas blaze

United Press International
CLEVELAND, Texas — Firefighters Wednesday extinguished a blaze at a Houston Natural Gas Corp. facility that earlier threatened to spread from gasoline and fuel storage tanks to highly explosive propane tanks.

No injuries were reported. A Cleveland police department dispatcher said the blaze was extinguished at about 12:35 a.m. and the firemen have gone home to get some sleep.

She said it had not yet been determined how the blaze began but investigators would make an eventual determination.

"It's all under control," she said. Officials said while the fire was burning, safety valves on several propane tanks blew as pressure inside grew, but none of the 30,000 gallon tanks exploded.

Pressure from the heat, however, several times forced firemen to retreat a safe distance from the main blaze while water was poured on the other tanks.

"Right now I don't think there are any serious injuries or deaths," said Department of Public Safety Trooper Earl Morgan. He said Highway 59 north of Cleveland was closed at the plant and traffic was being rerouted from a safe distance.

Tax evasion trial ends; Estes talks wearing a \$2 suit

United Press International
DALLAS — Testimony in the \$10 million tax evasion trial of wheeler-dealer Billie Sol Estes ended Tuesday with Estes, wearing a brown \$2 suit from the Salvation Army, claiming he was broke.

Estes testified about four hours on the final day of his 13-day trial, telling jurors he had no real assets and has had none since his 1971 parole from federal prison where he was serving sentences from his 1960s fertilizer tank swindle.

Estes currently is charged with evasion of \$10 million worth of taxes, mail fraud and interstate transportation of fraudulently obtained securities. The allegations stem from a business involving oil equipment cleaners which the government contends do not exist.

Estes, 51, testified he had no ability to pay the amount the government maintains he owes. He said the conservative dark brown suit he was wearing was purchased from the Salvation Army for \$2.36 and the shoes he wore had been resoled.

His wife, Patsy, and daughters also testified to the family's poverty, saying neighbors had helped keep them alive by providing vegetables from gardens.

Estes and his present employer, Ray Horton of Abilene, were accused of collaborating to defraud three industrial leasing companies of about \$600,000 through an arrangement to market 36 heavy duty steam cleaners used in oil field work.

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