

the state

## Credit card swindle could cost \$1 million

United Press International  
ALPINE, Texas — An assistant district attorney said Tuesday losses from a credit card swindling scheme planned by Southern Pacific railroad employees and West Texas power station operators may total \$1 million.

But DeHart, who said the quiet investigation began in January, indicated those arrested may represent only a small portion of the participants in the 2-year-old enterprise.

Local authorities and Southern Pacific Transportation Co. detectives discovered the credit card scheme in January and received cooperation from seven suspects arrested, DeHart said.

The arrested pleaded guilty to

theft in conspiring to defraud oil companies of money by submitting credit card slips for goods that actually were never bought.

SP employees and service station operators apparently worked out their own arrangements, often dealing in cash, merchandise or credit, DeHart said.

"It was a complex scheme. It took us about two months to figure out what those guys were doing," he said.

DeHart said it was unclear whether violations had occurred outside Texas, but added, "I'd be surprised if it's not rampant all up and down the (Southern Pacific) line."

He said losses in Brewster County alone amounted to \$380,000 so far, but added that Southern Pacific "detectives tell me they expect the loss to be over a million dollars before they get through."

DeHart said seven defendants indicted in June pleaded guilty and had each received probated terms of 10 years or less and made restitution in exchange for future testimony.

Southern Pacific Transportation Co. spokesman Jim Loveland, contacted Tuesday in San Francisco, said the firm is continuing its own investigation.

Asked whether the abuse was confined to Texas, Loveland said, "I don't know if that's a fair assumption to make. I don't want to rule out the possibility of it being elsewhere."

The spokesman declined to discuss specifics of the case, but said Southern Pacific had taken steps to plug holes within its purchasing system.

"We just don't want to say much about it at this point," he added. "Whenever we find any wrongdoing, we'll certainly prosecute those people and take the necessary actions."

DeHart said although investigators are still seeking the scheme's "kingpins," Southern Pacific has felt an impact from earlier arrests.

"The railroad's charges have already dropped off since we made this investigation," he said.

Unconfirmed reports by some sources placed losses at \$2.5 million to \$3 million.

## Clients sought for deepwater port

United Press International  
HOUSTON — The Texas Deepwater Port Authority board Tuesday voted to seek approval of a department of Transportation lease agreement and to begin finding clients of a proposed \$1.2 billion terminal 26 miles off Freeport.

"We have made a giant step in recognizing the reality of a deepwater port for Texas," Port Authority Chairman Bob Casey said at the meeting of commissioners.

Formal acceptance of the federal lease to operate such a terminal

cannot be made until the project has lined up users and received the approval of Gov. William P. Clements. But Casey was authorized by the board to send a letter to the federal government accepting the license terms.

The authority planned to finance the \$1.2 billion in bonds for the terminal construction from user agreements made with oil and chemical companies. Those companies signing agreements would pay approximately 25 percent less per barrel of oil than other companies using the terminal.

## FBI agent at Davis trial testifies on bugging McCrory

United Press International  
FORT WORTH, Texas — An FBI agent testifying in the retrial of T. Allen Davis described Tuesday the state's star witness was rigged with wires and electronic devices so agents could listen to his meetings with the Fort Worth millionaire.

Agent Jerry Hubble said prosecution witness David McCrory had wires and microphones taped to his back with wires running down his arms and out to his arms.

Much of the testimony involved what brand the receivers were, how they functioned and what quality of

sound they would reproduce. The state appeared to be using the testimony as a prelude to playing tapes of McCrory-Davis meetings in which Davis allegedly claimed he wanted 15 people killed, including his divorce judge.

Davis, whose first trial in Houston ended with a hung jury, is alleged to have forced McCrory, a friend and employee, to hire a professional killer to slay District Judge Joe Eidson.

McCrory turned state's evidence in the plot and was used by the FBI to trap Davis. No one was injured in the alleged scheme.

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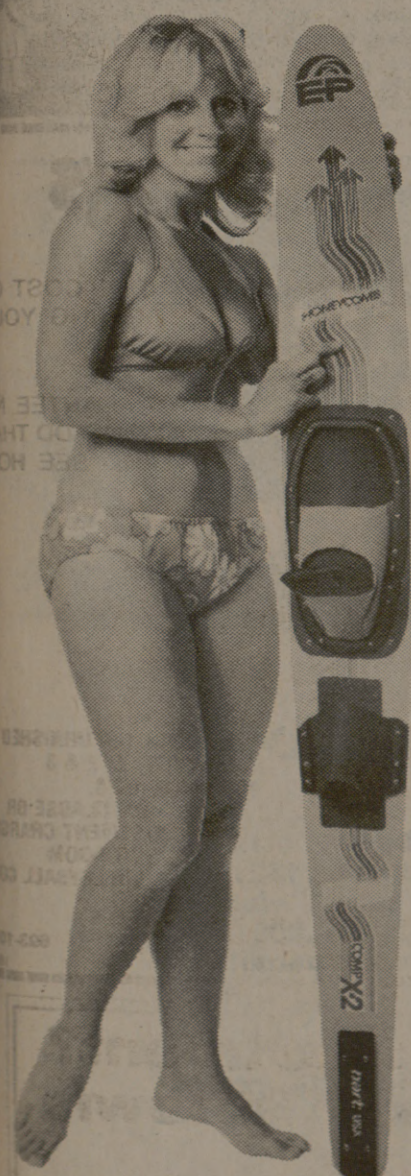
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