

An order of fries and two aspirin, please

## Fast service medical clinics

United Press International

DALLAS — Medical Emergency Clinics, borrowing a bit from the fast-food restaurant philosophy, are hoping to provide prompt, inexpensive treatment of minor medical problems and at the same time reduce the patient load at hospitals.

"People complain of waiting three to four hours in an emergency room at a hospital," said Layne L. Stinnett, MEC administrative assistant. "Most of our patients have seen a registered nurse within 15 minutes and a physician within the next 15 minutes (of arriving)."

"It's hard to compare hamburgers to medicine, but we (MEC) have a universal logo, concept and consistent hours — like ordering fries, you know what you're going to get."

The doctors opened a clinic in Dallas one year ago, another one in Houston in January and a third in Beaumont on Aug. 6. Two more sites are under construction in Houston.

The clinics are located in shopping centers or buildings on main thoroughfares and are geared to bridge the gap between the private physician's office and the hospital, Stinnett said.

Dr. David Wyatt, a full-time physician at the Dallas clinic, said there is a need for the group's service and it has been recognized.

"It's good-old-fashioned free enterprise," he said. "It's the only way we can decrease the cost of medical services to the consumer. We're physicians first. Anyone who comes to our clinic with something wrong, we take care of their problem first — before we discuss money."

Stinnett said the cost at the Medical Emergency Clinics is about one-half to two-thirds of the cost for treatment at traditional hospital

emergency rooms because the clinics don't have to contend with the high overhead costs of a hospital.

The clinics are aimed at a type of treatment rather than a particular socio-economic group. In Houston hospitals, 80 percent of the people who go to emergency rooms could be treated at another center for the same problem, Stinnett said.

"What we don't want is longtime follow-up care," Stinnett said. He said if someone falls off a ladder and hurts his back and needs several months of treatment the responsibility should go to a family physician.

The doctors treat minor emergencies, like minor fractured arms or sore throats or a high temperature on a Saturday. But the doctors will also take care of a major emergency until paramedics arrive or the patient can be transferred to a hospital.

At least one full-time physician, a registered nurse and a lab technician are on duty 14 hours a day, seven days a week and the clinics are open on holidays. Patients do not need an appointment, Stinnett said.

"The FTC (Federal Trade Commission) has ruled that it's legal for medicine to advertise, but it's hard for us to let the public know," Stinnett said. "We have not embarked on an advertising campaign because the medical society says it's unethical — but it's OK to advertise without soliciting patients."

The clinics distribute brochures to their patients, but nursing specialists, who do community service work, provide their main source of promotion, Stinnett said.

## Texas and Mexico discuss illegal alien problem

United Press International

SALTILLO, Mexico — Gov. Bill Clements, in his third meeting this month with a Mexican border state governor, has agreed to embark on face-to-face discussions about the problem of undocumented Mexican workers, who he claims number in the millions in Texas alone.

Clements said his talks with Chihuahua Gov. Oscar Flores Tapia were the most intense and thorough he has had with a Mexican governor.

Flores Tapia and Clements met privately for more than an hour and agreed to appoint binational committees to study and share information on agriculture, education, crime prevention and culture.

Flores Tapia immediately announced his appointees to four of the committees and said he and Clements would work as a "committee of two" on the undocumented alien problem.

"I had the most in-depth and understanding discussion of the undocumented alien problem with him I have had with any of the Mexican governors," Clements said. "He sees it as a problem that relates to his people."

"He's perfectly willing for them to come (to the United States) and work, and wants them to get paid a wage and have advantage of local services. But he wants them documented. He realizes it's axiomatic that the other things are not going to be done as long as they are illegal."

The Texas governor toured a children's hospital and a public works projects and exchanged gifts with his Mexican counterpart during the trip to Saltillo, the first for a Texas chief executive in 15 years.

"I think our relationship with Mexico has moved to a new plateau. We have a sense of relationship that has not existed before," he said.

Clements said his office has been in communication with the U.S. State Department concerning his meetings with the Mexican governors and said, "In the final analysis, the undocumented worker or documented worker ultimately has to be a function of the federal government, the State Department."

His visits with the Mexican governors, Clements contends, could influence federal decisions concerning illegal aliens.

"I don't see how anyone can say Texas, with three million illegal aliens, should not have a voice in this problem," he said.

Clements praised the abilities of Flores Tapia and the other two Mexican governors with whom he has met, telling reporters, "We are not dealing with a bunch of ribbon clerks."

The governor is scheduled to go to Chihuahua later in the fall, and two of the Mexican governors plan to visit the Texas capital in October. A third will visit when the Legislature is in regular session — sometime in 1981.

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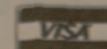
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