

the state

Texas prisons trial over, but judge delays decision

United Press International
HOUSTON — The year-long trial of a 7-year-old inmate lawsuit demanding court-ordered reforms in the Texas prison system ended early Thursday with little fanfare, final arguments and no inmate ruling.

U.S. District Judge William Tyler will rule after reviewing lawyers' written arguments and evidence: 161 days of testimony from 349 witnesses and 1,530 exhibits from the state, the Justice Department and 25,000 inmates.

Appeal as far as the Supreme Court was considered likely no matter what Justice decided about the future of the nation's largest state prison system, blasted by plaintiffs as abusive of inmates and defended by the state as one of the best.

With that, the visiting judge from Tyler strode from the courtroom, lawyers whooped and marshals ushered the inmate plaintiffs back to the Harris County detention center.

Justice issued a "protective" order, drafted jointly by both sides, that will allow the 91 inmates who

testified against the prison system and the five who testified for it to move to federal prison if they fear retaliation.

Inmates David Ruiz and O.D. Johnson, on behalf of all Texas prison inmates, contend allegedly substandard food, housing, medical care, supervision, safety and education systematically violate inmates' constitutional rights.

The Texas Department of Corrections argues conditions are not substandard and that, rather than systematically violating inmate rights,

officials make the best use of limited resources to run one of the nation's best prison systems.

After six years of skirmishing, the trial began Oct. 2, 1978. Except for holidays and a Christmas recess lengthened to three months by a dispute about moving the trial back to Justice's court in Tyler, testimony was continuous.

Chief TDC lawyer Ed Idar noted the state had admitted and deplored overcrowding and had admitted problems with medical care but had moved to confront both.

NASA builds him space suit

Boy in the bubble' is 8 today

United Press International
HOUSTON — David, the world's best survivor of a genetic disorder prevents his body from fighting germs, celebrates his eighth birthday today at home in a plastic bubble while doctors continue to seek a cure for his disease.

At a news conference Thursday, Texas Children's Hospital doctors said David continues to grow and thrive and the 4-foot-1, 50-pound boy does not know what it is to be

While Dr. William Shearer examined David's medical status basical-ly had not changed in the last year — no spontaneous cures are known and the outlook for a bone marrow transplant "does not look promising" — Dr. Murdina Desmond boasted of the child's development.

"David appears to be very much like other boys his age, except for a larger vocabulary and more mature sounding conversation that is a result of his close contact with adults," she said. "But he shares the same passion for space and 'Star Wars' now that his contemporaries do and hopes to get some of the 'Star Wars'

toys for his birthday. "Although he hasn't seen the movie, he has caught on from friends, television and books."

David, whose last name has not been disclosed in order to protect his family's privacy, suffers from severe combined immune deficiency — an absence of both kinds of lymphocytes crucial for providing the body with immunity to germs and infections.

He spends four weeks at home for every two at the hospital as those are the only places he is permitted to go, surrounded by his plastic

bubble. NASA expects to complete a new space suit for him after the first of the year that will enable him to take two-hour trips outside the bubble.

Shearer said monthly tests showed David's lymphocyte count remains "as sparse as ever, 15-20 percent of normal."

Desmond said David's social skills have blossomed. He and four second-grade classmates recently staged a play at his home with David in the lead role of "Chicken Little." Monday through Thursday he is tutored for two hours.

White takes aim at SEDCO

Texas will sue over oil spills

United Press International
AUSTIN — Attorney General Mark White says he will sue SEDCO — the drilling company headed by Gov. Bill Clements — Pemex — Mexico's nationally owned oil company — for causing an oil spill that stained Texas beaches.

The attorney general said the suit would try to assess responsibility for "mismanagement, negligent operation and negligently maintained equipment."

White said because SEDCO has sought to limit its liability in the June 3 blowout of the Ixtoc I oil well in the Bay of Campeche, the company will be named in any action filed by the state. Permargo,

Pemex's private contractor, also will be a prime target of any litigation, the attorney general said.

White said the SEDCO-owned rig in operation during the blowout was not maintained properly.

"It wasn't an act of God," he said. "This thing occurred apparently because of mismanagement, negligent operation, negligently maintained equipment, whatever."

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Student says she had sex with teacher

United Press International
DALLAS — A 14-year-old student told police remedial lessons at a teacher's apartment became sexual encounters and he was given new clothes by his 26-year-old instructor in return for sexual favors. Police reported Penny Jane Price posted a \$5,000 bond Tuesday night and was released from the Dallas County Jail. Investigators said Price denied the student's allegations.

The teen-ager revealed the alleged sexual relationship to a school guidance counselor Tuesday and Price was arrested after investigators questioned the 14-year-old. Price, who taught at Spence Junior High School until last year, was a reading tutor for the youth during the summer, police said. A spokesman for the Dallas Independent School District said records showed Price had voluntarily resigned her teaching position.

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Tickets not purchased at
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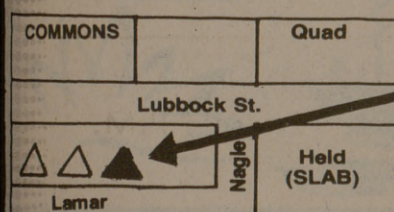
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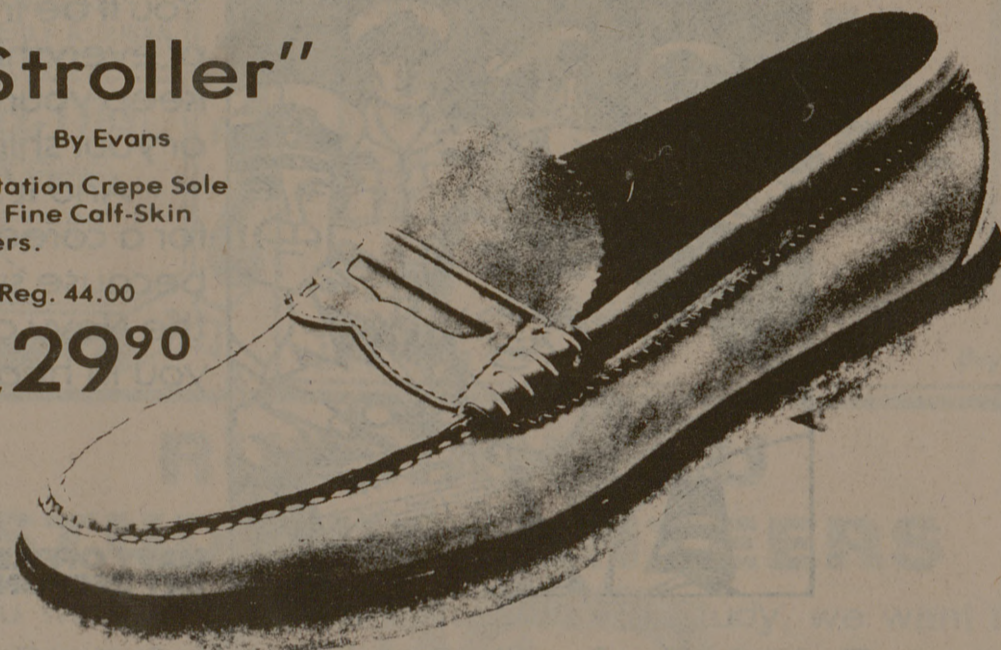
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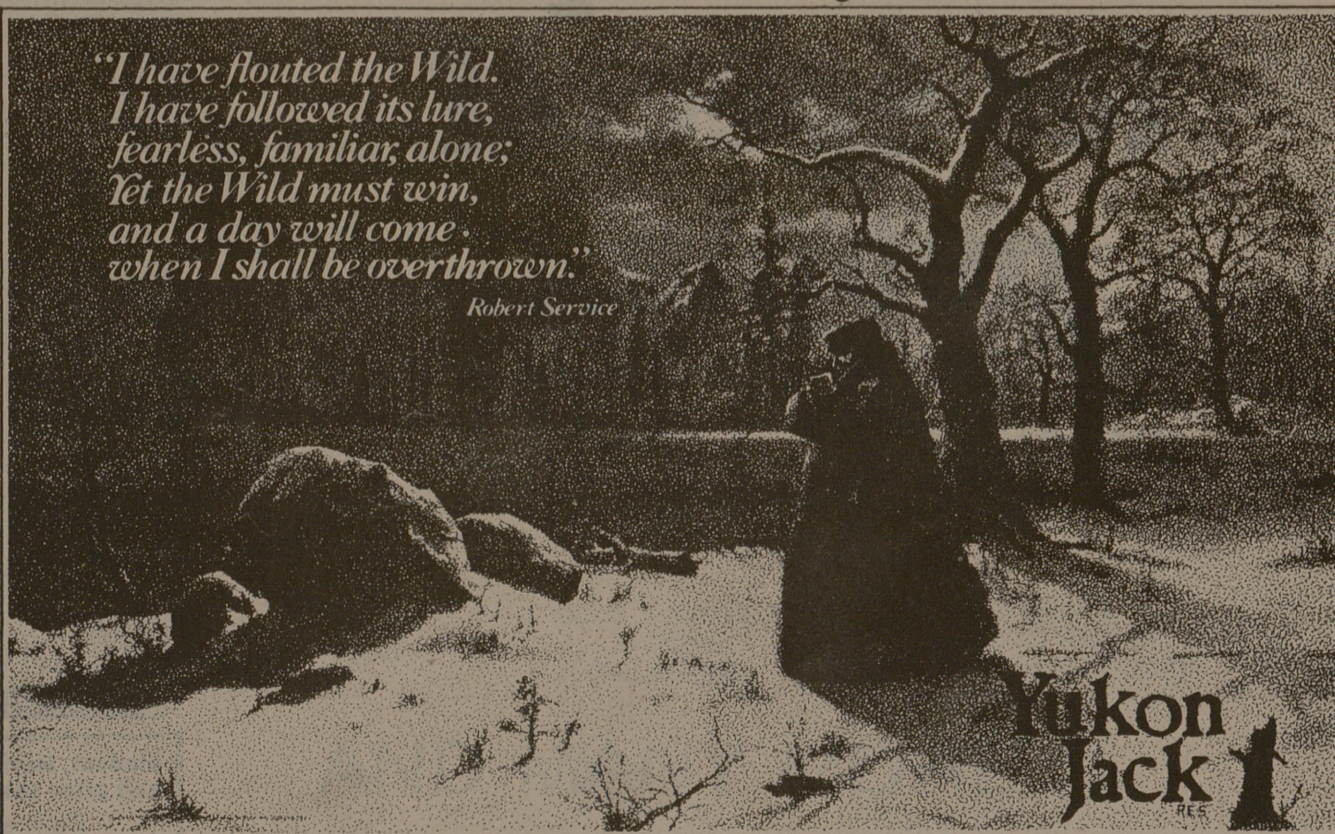
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