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Law would limit tax boards to one

his is Part Four of a nine-part series on nine proposed amendments to be state constitution being presented to Texas voters on Nov. 4.

United Press International AUSTIN — Constitutional Amendment No. 3 on the Nov. 4 ballot is attempt by the Legislature to require only one entity in each county appraise property for the taxing purposes of the county and all cities, hool districts and special districts within the county.

he amendment also would require a single board of equalization for county and would disqualify elected officials from serving on the rd of equalization.

urrently, cities, school districts and many special districts are aitted to have their own tax offices to appraise property for taxa-. Under past legislation, local entities are permitted to have one

Election'80

erty appraisal board in the county but that still has not brought

formity in all of the state's 254 counties. Rep. Lloyd Criss, D-LaMarque, sponsored the legislation that ced this consitutional amendment on the ballot. It would eliminate waste and duplication," he said. "In Galveston unty, for example, there are 23 separate tax appraisal boards. The payers of Galveston County could save about \$3 million a year if this endment is approved."

Criss also said elected officials should not have to serve on appraisal equalization boards. Currently, county commissioners and tax sor-collectors - both elective offices - do the property

This amendment) takes the politics out of it (appraising property)," by Bonnik line said. "Are elected officials more interested in getting votes or rather in what actual appraisal of property really is? We shouldn't have a itical system to appraise property for tax purposes.

sm majar Opponents of the single appraisal board system contend that rural as, one d citizens will be hurt by the amendment. They claim that county en's Bar commissioners and tax assessors-collectors have always been sym-Wedney pathetic to the problems of farmers, but the appraisal district boards rst grad will be dominated by cities and school districts and will not understand livestor those problems. Consequently, taxes for rural citizens will increase.

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East Texas producers investigated Old oil claimed sold at new prices

Investigators from four Texas agencies have uncovered evidence of a massive oil price fixing scheme from the vast east Texas oil fields in which "old" oil was sold at

'new" prices, a newspaper reported Thursday. The Dallas Morning News, in a copyrighted story, reported a special grand jury has been hearing testimony since August in the alleged fraud, which involves selling "old" oil, generally defined as crude from wells drilled

before the 1973 oil embargo, at "new" prices.

Under federal price restrictions, much less can be charged for "old" oil than for oil produced after the 1973 embargo.

political purge

defense attorneys.

the Abscam and Brilab trials.

One source described the alleged fraud as being a "multibillion-dollar operation." Another source said authorities have been unable to determine the amount of money involved.

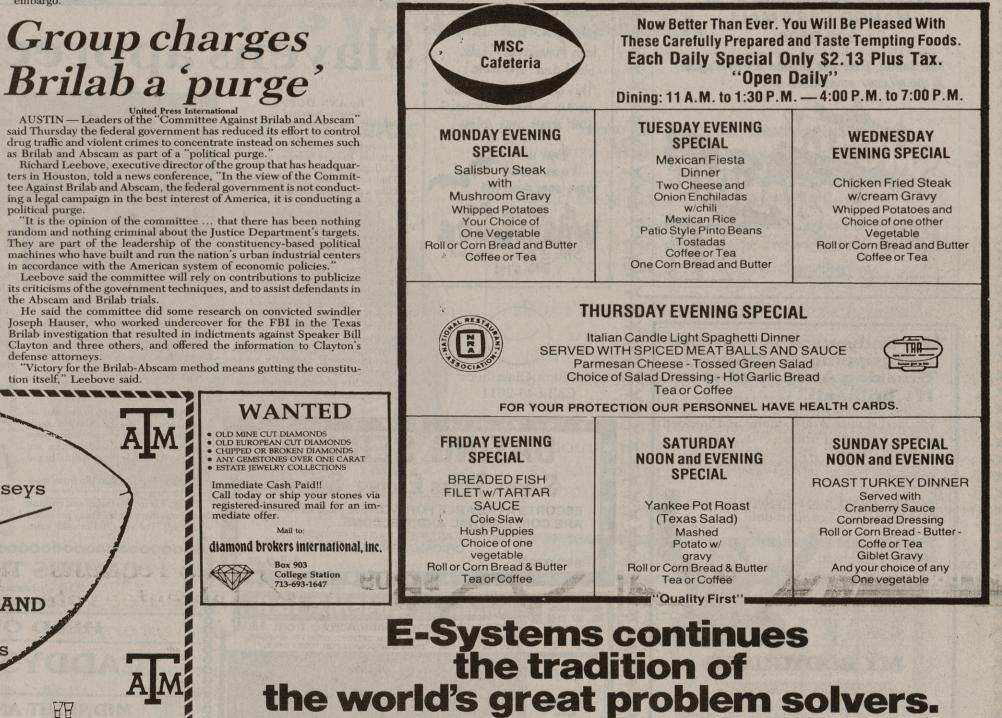
The newspaper reported old oil produced in the east Texas fields, the largest in the world before discoveries in the Middle East, was being trucked to Louisiana refineries and sold at new prices.

The source also said there were indications that "scum" oil taken from old wells was being reclaimed and sold as new oil. "The processing plants for oil field disposal are serving as washing machines," the source said. "In east Texas fields, we

are producing 200,000 barrels of oil a day. But in doing so, we are also producing 800,000 barrels of water and that is disposed of by pipe. About 200,000 barrels of oil is being reclaimed each year from this water." The investigation — conducted by the Gregg County dis-

trict attorney, the state attorney general, the Texas Railroad Commission and the Texas Rangers - is aimed at oil companies and trucking firms that transport the oil, a source told the newspaper.

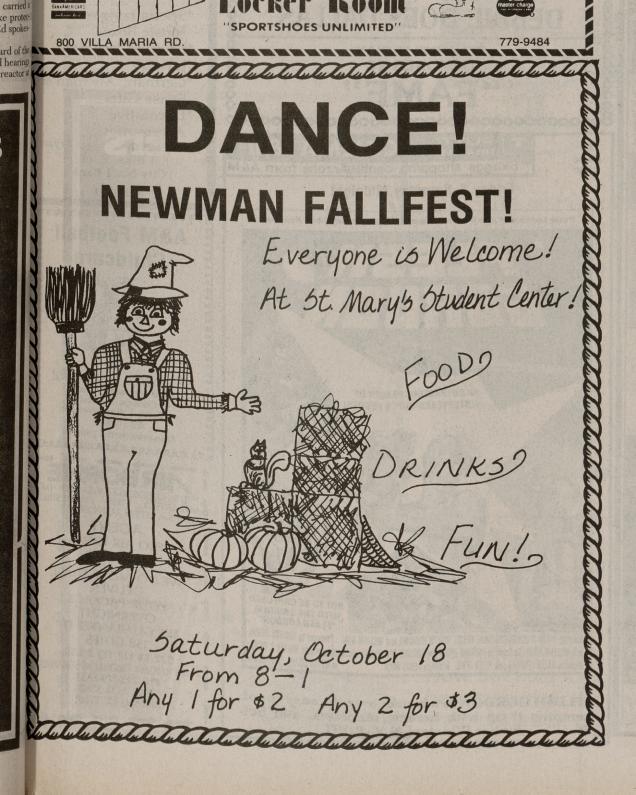
The grand jury originally planned to finish its inquiry in October, but the case turned out bigger than expected and work was expected to continue until mid-November.



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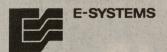


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