THE BATTALION

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State

Indictments returned, nursing home officials chided

United Press International GALVESTON — A grand jury returning murder indictments against a Texas City nursing home in the deaths of eight patients Wednesday issued a report blasting some authorities regulating the home and investigating the "horror story." The panel worked off and on for

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two years to return 23 indictments at midnight Tuesday against the Autumn Hills Convalescent Center. Four of the center's administrators also were indicted, a district attorney said.

not severe enough against those who neglect the elderly. Also in that report, Galveston

County District Attorney James Hury was accused of "throwing up obstacles" to the investigation, and the Texas Health Department was cited as needing a "complete investigation from the administrator in Austin to the low man on the totem pole.

The nursing facility is one of 17 Autumn Hills Convalescent Center Inc. homes within 100 miles of ict attorney said. Houston. The company and the indicted employees were charged

grand jury said Texas' laws were with abuse and neglect leading to Robert E. Gay of Houston said he ing home chain in the state. murder by omission of seven women and one man during 1978 and 1979.

> Assistant District Attorney David Marks said 21 more indictments were expected to be returned after a new grand jury is impaneled Monday. The grand jury indicated it be-lieved doctors were aware of the neglect, and that those doctors should be "investigated and se-

verely penalized for their actions (or lack of actions) in this horror story Autumn Hills chain owner

did not understand the indictments.

I was just talking with one of the ladies who was indicted and she said she has talked to no one in the case for two years," he said. 'The grand jury built this case as they went along. We absolutely don't know what to think about it. We're puzzled."

The names of the individual defendants were withheld pending notification.

Gay said Autumn Hills had been operating for 18 years and had the highest rating of any nurs-

addresses are vacant lots.

registration.

birthdates.

-Mexican nationals

Reynosa, Mexico, with valid voter

with one-letter changes in spelling

of names or one-day changes on

from

'Out of the 17 centers, 80 per-

cent of them are rated superior, the highest rating. No one else gets close to that," he said.

The grand jury questioned some 200 witnesses and checked the records of every patient in the Texas City nursing home from September 1977 through August 1979.

Autumn Hills lawyer Carol Vance said the investigation was triggered by a "disgruntled former employee," Betty Korndorffer, who went to work for the state Health Department as a nursing

department awarded in brutality

lawsuits and economic issues have

stirred the McAllen mayoral con-

Opposing Brand for the top ex-

test this year.

of neglect were: Edna Mae Witt, Oct. 16, 1978; Betty Cappony, March 7, 1978; Elnora B. Breed, home inspector after leaving a position as nursing supervisor at Autumn Hills' Friendswood center.

Mrs. Korndorffer is the wife of Galveston County Medical Ex-aminer William Korndorffer. The eight Autumn Hills pa-

Nov. 20, 1978; Freddie Mae Larsen, July 14, 1978; Francisco Coss, Nov. 16, 1978; Alberta Welcome, April 5, 1979; Fannue Burns, May 9, 1978, and Laura tients who prosecutors allege died Bell Johnson, April 23, 1978.

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unday Schoo	1	9:45 A.M.
unday Worsh		11:00 A.M.
unday Evenin	ng	7:00 P.M.
Vednesday Bi		7:00 P.M.

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McAllen vote fraud inquiry underway en poto \$1.

computers to cross-check names

and addresses of registered voters

in McAllen and found enough questionable voters to "change the election results in two

Brand was unavailable for im-

United Press International McALLEN — A Hidalgo County grand jury Wednesday investi- fraud. gated allegations of voter fraud in McAllen involving Mexican nationals, duplicate registrations and votes cast by deceased voters, city officials said.

McAllen City Attorney Ted Calisi said more than 450 voters are being checked by the grand

jury after Mayor Othal Brand complained of possible voter

"I spoke with the grand jury yesterday (Tuesday) and I believe the panel is still convening today (Wednesday)," Calisi said. "I re-viewed the allegations, and irregularities appeared, if not outright fraud. Calisi said Brand employed

mediate comment. Among irregularities cited by Calisi were

seconds

-Registered voters whose

-Deceased individuals registered to vote in the Saturday elec-

Registered voters casting more than one ballot in absentee

"It's possible that these are all different people but not likely," Calisi said, adding that 450 questioned registrations were turned over to the grand jury in Edinburg, Texas, and as many as 1,000

More than \$400,000 in civil claims against the McAllen police

ecutive post in the Saturday elec-tion are Dr. Ramiro Casso, a local physician, and city commissioner Michael Frost.

Funds issued for prison

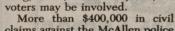
United Press International AUSTIN — Comptroller Bob Bullock said Tuesday he was issuing \$6.7 million in checks to allow the Texas Department of Corrections to complete its purch-ase of about 5,900 acres of Grimes County land for a new prison near

to release the funds for the prison prison is part of the plan to relieve land acquisition after legal advice that overcrowding. from the attorney general's office and a request from prison director W.J. Estelle Jr.

Texas is under federal court order to relieve overcrowding conditions that currently force about

last week dissolved an injunction preventing the state from proceed-

ing with the purchase, although Grimes County residents who ini-tially filed the suit indicated at that 2,400 inmates to sleep on cell time they would appeal the deci-The comptroller said he decided floors, and the new Grimes County sion to the Texas Supreme Court. time they would appeal the deci-



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8 a.m.-1 p.m.

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