

State

Put 1,500 inmates in tents

Clements offers prison plan

United Press International
AUSTIN — Gov. Bill Clements proposed Thursday an unprecedented plan to place 1,500 inmates from Texas' overcrowded prisons in tent encampments and parole another 1,500 to halfway houses by July 1.

The governor said at his weekly news conference the plan would "get all of our inmates off the floor by July 1." He also said the plan would aid the state in getting a stay on a court injunction mandating action on the overcrowding.

"If they're (the tents) are good enough for the Army personnel, if they're good enough for the Marines, if they're good enough for our National Guard, I see no reason by they're not good enough for the inmates of our prisons," Clements said.

According to Clements, the plan was worked out during the last two days in meetings with Jim Estelle, the director of the Texas Department of Corrections, Speaker Bill Clayton, Attorney General Mark White and Lt. Gov. Bill Hobby.

"There is no doubt that we are in a crisis situation — a situation that was not chosen by the elected officials of this state or its citizens," Clements said in a statement.

Under the proposal, tents obtained from either the Army or the National Guard would be set up inside security perimeters in prison yards.

Six to eight prisoners would be housed in each of the tents from the beginning of summer until about Nov. 1 when additional hous-

ing is expected to be ready. The state is building temporary housing for 2,800 inmates with \$35 million in emergency funds already appropriated by the Legislature.

Clements said he already has a list of volunteer inmates who would like to live in the tents.

Clements, who said he had spent "much of his time in a tent," said cots would be placed in the tents and board floors installed. He said he had been insured the plan would require very little additional security forces.

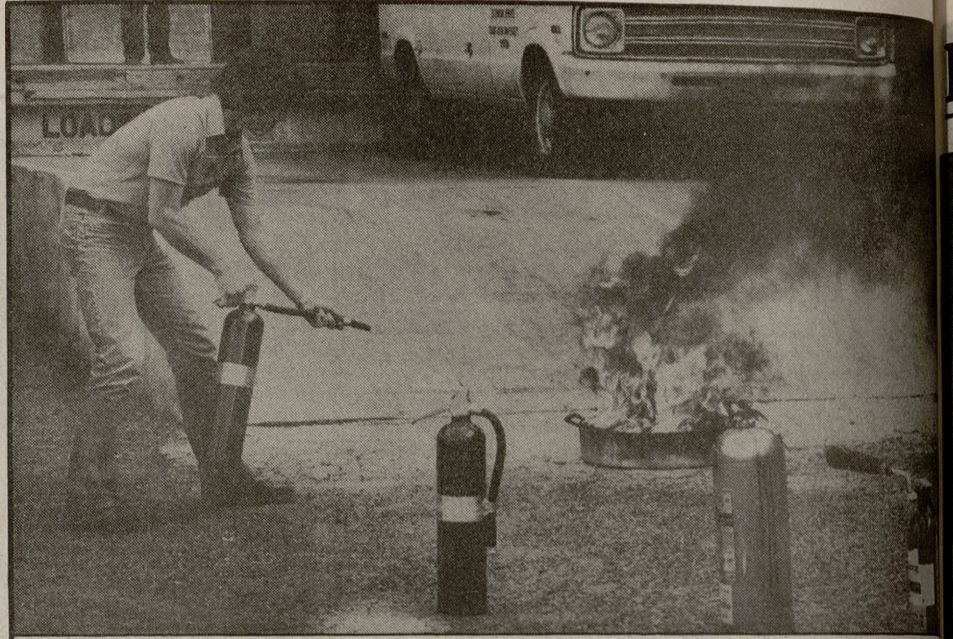
"I think the courts will agree this is a reasonable solution under the circumstances. We are trying to demonstrate our good faith to the courts. I mean that with a full sense of integrity."

On the parole plan, Clements said he hoped 750 inmates would be in the halfway houses by June 1 and another 750 by July 1. The conditional parole plan would be operated by the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles.

Only prisoners considered low security risks would be placed in the houses and would be monitored constantly. The majority of the state's halfway houses are in Dallas, San Antonio, Houston and Fort Worth.

Those inmates placed in the houses would have to contract with the pardons and parole board to make restitution to the victims of their crime; stay a minimum of six months in the halfway house, and reimburse the state for the cost of their stay to what extent possible.

A bill currently in the House would facilitate the plan, Clements said. However, he said it would be amended to take out a provision that would allow furloughed prisoners to return to take jobs and live with their families.

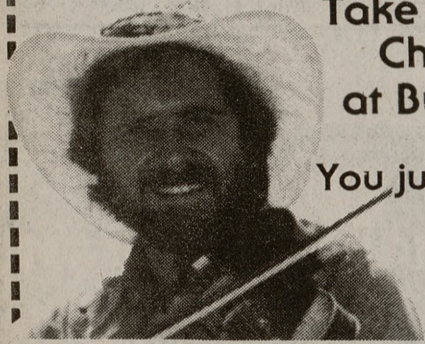


Photos by Dan C. Sullivan

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Michael Matus, a fire protection assistant at the Texas A&M University Safety and Health Office, and Lawrence Washington (background) demonstrate the proper use

of dry chemical fire extinguishers behind the Reed-McDonald building. They put on fire safety demonstrations for building personnel all over campus Wednesday.



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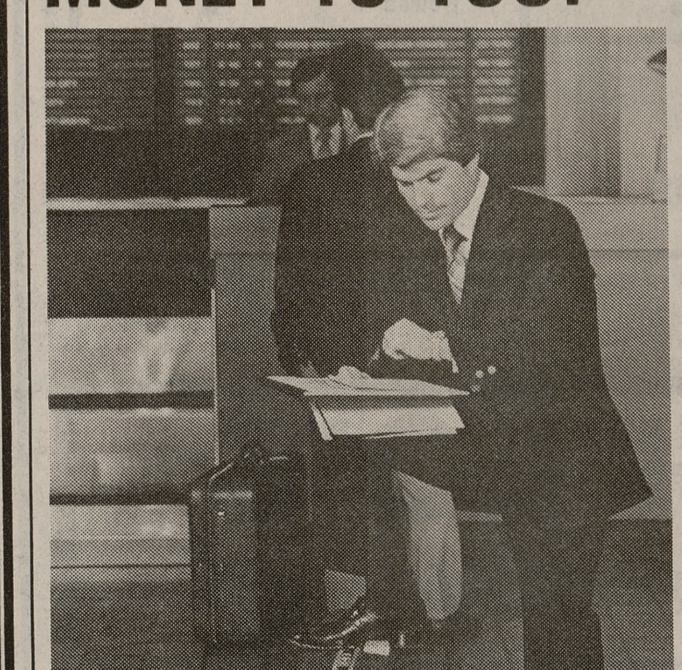
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Law could cut Texas money-market funds

United Press International
HOUSTON — Two large investment companies threatened to withdraw their money-market funds from Texas if a law is passed requiring a percentage of their deposits be put in reserve with the state.

Merrill Lynch & Co. and Dreyfus Corp., which manage one-fourth of all money-market assets in the country, responded harshly Wednesday to proposed legislation by state Sen. Bill Meier, D-Eules, that would put money-market funds in Texas under state banking rules.

Meier said because money-market funds currently earn almost three times the interest that passbook savings account earn and because they are siphoning money out of banking institutions, he was urged to propose legislation to put the funds under state regulation.

State senators said Wednesday they have received an unprecedented flood of calls and letters in opposition to the law since Meier introduced his proposal last week.

"This bill is intended to cause withdrawals. I think that's exactly what Senator Meier has in mind," said Lawrence Greene, legal president for Dreyfus, "couldn't operate one set of rules for Texas shareholders and another set for the rest of the country. That would penalize everyone outside of Texas."

A spokesman for Merrill Lynch said reserve requirements "greatly inhibit the fund's ability to maximize rates of return on short-term investments."

After a hearing Wednesday, Meier pulled back, calling for a public hearing on his amendment. He said the purpose of the proposal is to give investors a "safety net" because money-market funds are "100 percent risk, and investors should have some protection."

Texas money-market shareholders number about 220,000, and have invested \$5.6 billion, or about 5 percent of the \$118 billion assets currently in money-market funds nationwide.

Merrill Lynch manages money-market funds totaling out \$25 billion. Dreyfus' money-market fund totals about \$5.4 billion.

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