

# State

## Fort Worth man takes law, airplane into own hands

United Press International  
BROWNSVILLE — A Fort Worth man apparently decided his twin engine airplane had been "borrowed" long enough — he took it back from the people who stole it.

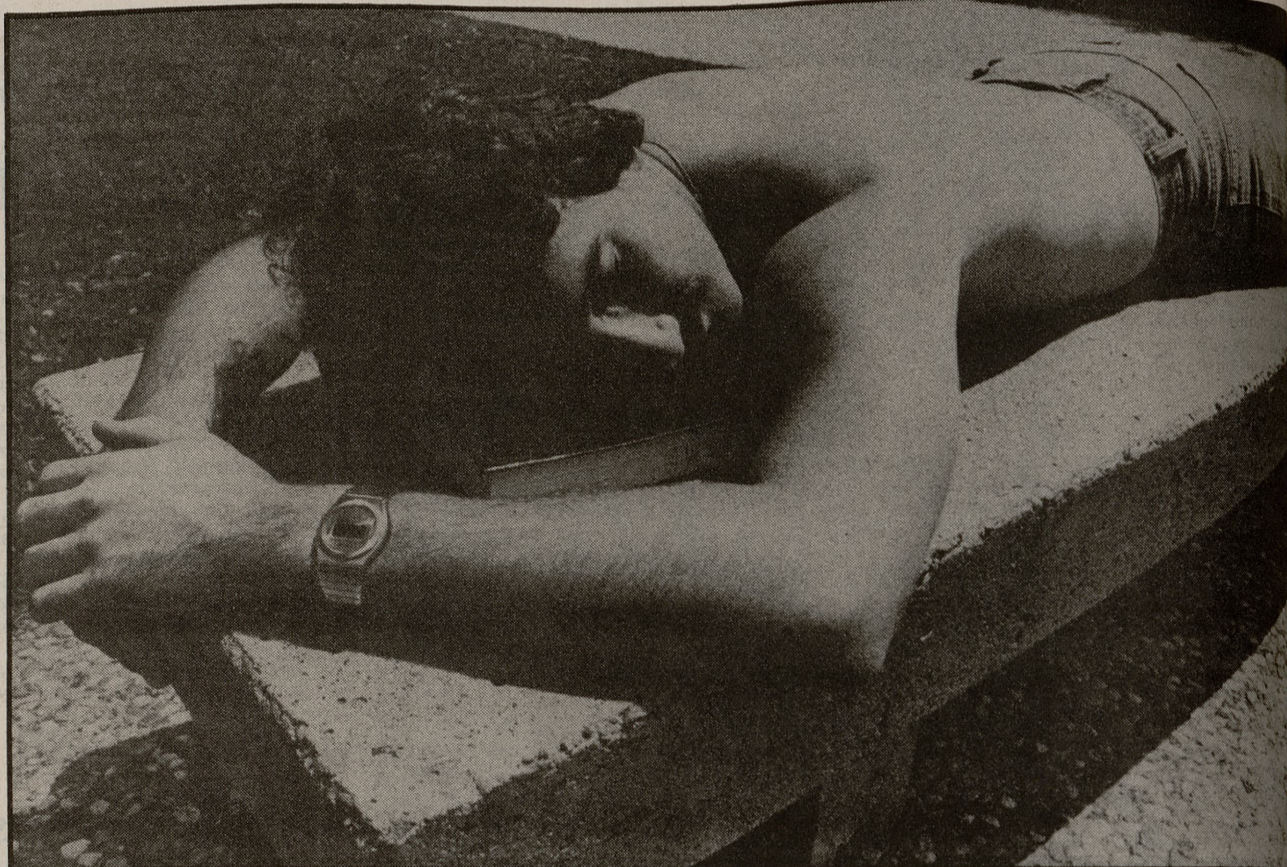
Jim Tullen, a federal Drug Enforcement Agency official in Brownsville, said a Fort Worth man apparently took off early Wednesday from a Matamoras, Mexico, airport in a hail of bullets fired by Mexican police.

The man, identified as C.T. Stapp of Fort Worth, apparently had found his twin engine Beechcraft at the Matamoras airport after it had been stolen by drug smugglers several months ago.

"He (Stapp) decided to come and get it himself," Tullen said. Tullen said Stapp started the aircraft and flew it back to U.S. airspace early Wednesday, but apparently forgot to tell Mexican officials it was his plane. They began firing at him on take-off. Stapp made it out of Mexico, but his daring raid ended late Wednesday when one of the plane's engines died, causing a forced landing near Los Fresnos.

Stapp was not injured but the plane suffered damage to the left wing and landing gear. Stapp was unavailable for comment Thursday.

Texas Department of Public Safety officers, Federal Aviation Administration officials and DEA agents met Stapp at the crash site. Tullen said authorities were satisfied with the pilot's explanation.



Staff photo by Greg Gamm

### Study by absorption

Junior finance major Jim Zettel uses the old standby method to study for finals. He's really using his head for this one.



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## Doctor takes on incumbent in McAllen mayoral election

United Press International  
MCALLEN — Political newcomer Dr. Ramiro Casso says he wants to raise the image of the city of McAllen from a dirty border town plagued by an overzealous police force to that of a prospering tourist mecca.

For Casso to win Saturday's runoff election and become the first Hispanic mayor of McAllen in more than 70 years, the physician must face popular three-term incumbent Mayor Othel Brand, a self-made millionaire and owner of a massive fruit and vegetable shipping business.

But the campaign is an uphill battle for Brand, who came in second in a three candidate field on April 4.

"I have the capability of keeping the city together and doing the best for the city," Brand said. "The people with him (Casso) are from San Juan, California and other places."

Casso has spent less than half of Brand's \$108,000 campaign budget, but the physician-politician won the first election with about 45 percent of the vote.

The family physician, who has practiced for 25 years in McAllen, apparently has gone to his strengths in the campaign, urging the 71 percent Hispanic population of McAllen to turn out in force for the Saturday runoff ballot.

Casso has advertised heavily on Spanish-speaking radio along the border, but Brand claims Casso is using the Spanish broadcasts to muddy the race.

"He doesn't dare to do that in English," said Brand, explaining that Casso appeals to racism through his Spanish advertisements.

Casso also has made McAllen police brutality, the subject of 11 federal lawsuits and payments of more than \$400,000 by the city for civil damages, a major issue in the race.

"(Brand) is the problem. He is the issue," Casso said. "He's run a government by the iron fist — government by intimidation. Brutality has not completely stopped. Othel Brand has the power to stop it, but he hasn't."

"This has given the city a bad name as the police brutality capital of the world," Casso said.

Brand, who also is a major employer in the city of 76,000 people,

has denied he had authority to stop the police brutality. He said he ordered investigations of police misconduct as soon as he learned of them.

"We did stop the brutality," Brand said. "We've been sued 1979, but nobody can stop us from filing lawsuits," Brand said.

Harrington, an American Civil Liberties Union attorney, has represented most plaintiffs who filed civil rights lawsuits against the city and police department.

Armando Garcia, Casso's campaign treasurer, said he was encouraged by the victory of Henry Cisneros in San Antonio, the Mexican-American elected mayor in a major U.S. city.

"Cisneros' campaign inspired us and it's in the back of our minds," said Garcia.

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## Texas International offers job protection in merger

United Press International  
HOUSTON — Texas International Airlines, its Continental Airlines takeover drive apparently

fluctuating, has sweetened its merger offer with a promise of job protection for Continental employees who fear TIA and have been work-

ing to stop its bid.

The latest bid, featuring a 1-a-share offer for the rest of Continental stock, came after Continental's Denver stockholders meeting ended Wednesday. Continental stock closed at \$10 Thursday.

The Civil Aeronautics Board would have to approve the merger.

TIA made an unsuccessful effort at the stockholders meeting to block a Continental management plan to defeat TIA's takeover bid by issuing new shares and selling them to employees, diluting TIA ownership to about one-fourth.

Continental spokesman Brent Plowman said the new TIA offer was conditioned upon the Houston-based airline's obtaining financing. TIA already has pumped \$93 million into the effort to gain control of the nation's 10th largest airline.

Plowman said the newest TIA merger plan would be considered by the same special committee of outside financial and legal experts which is considering a stock offer from Continental's own employees.

"TIA also offered to enter into the standard labor protection provisions which are customary in airline mergers," Plowman said. TIA refused to accept such provisions in previous merger proposals.



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