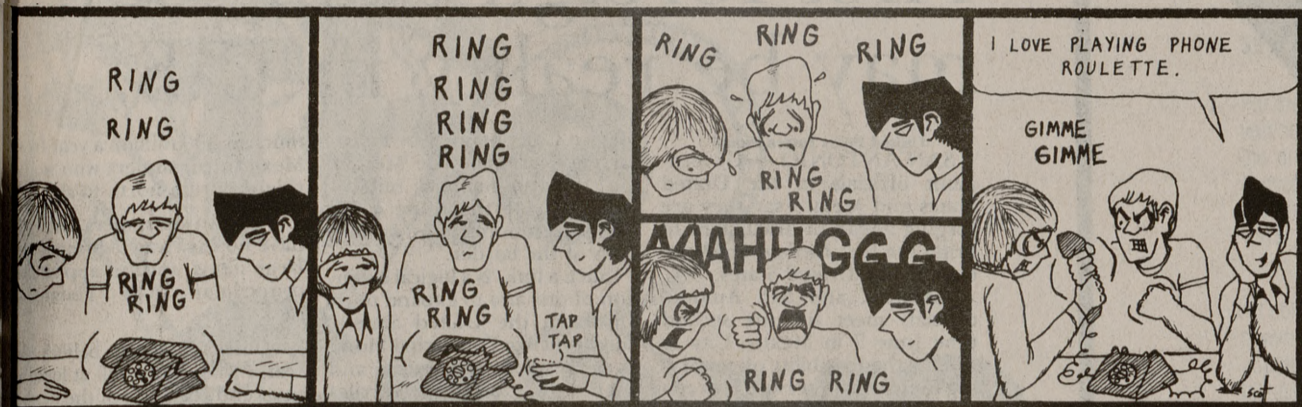


Warped

By Scott McCullar



Texaco to contest order to pay benefits to strikers

United Press International
PORT ARTHUR — Texaco Inc. says it will go to court to fight an order that it pay unemployment benefits to about 4,000 striking Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union members.

Judge Jack Brookshire in Beaumont Friday extended an earlier restraining order forcing the Texas Employment Com-

mission, and thus Texaco, to make the payments. The strike started in January.

"I can assure you that Texaco will continue to resist payment of unemployment benefits to strikers through whatever appeals procedures are available to the company," the spokesman said.

Unless an appeals court overrules it, the order will stand until

a lawsuit filed by OCAW Local 423 comes to trial.

Brookshire's order overturned a May 7 ruling by the TEC. The order said the workers did not cause the strike, since Texaco turned down a union offer to extend the old labor contract 48 hours beyond its Jan. 7 expiration date.

Brookshire said the TEC was correct in favoring the workers

in earlier decisions.

About 2,300 of the workers on strike have filed for unemployment benefits. The remainder were either put off by TEC resistance or found other work, officials said.

A union official estimated 1,500 had received at least one weekly check, ranging from \$24 to \$147, before TEC finally ruled them ineligible.

Clements accused of delaying prison issue until election time

United Press International
AUSTIN — A senior member of the Texas Republican party charges Gov. Bill Clements delayed action on overcrowding in the state prison system until he was up for re-election.

Rep. Bill Blythe, R-Houston, said last week's special legislative session showed Clements had waited until an election to do something about prison overcrowding, then had not dealt with the issue as an emergency.

Blythe said the governor has known about prison problems for at least three years.

"As long as three years ago I was encouraging the governor's office to make a detailed analysis of the prison system, and it is just now being done," Blythe said.

Blythe added it will be difficult for Attorney General Mark White to use the prison issue against Clements in the general election campaign.

"I don't think Clements or Mark White can say they've done a great job in reference to the Texas Department of Corrections," Blythe said. "I think both of them have fallen down on the job in that regard."

The head of the House Democratic Caucus, Rep. Bob Bush, D-Sherman, said Clements brought the prison prob-

lem upon himself.

Bush said Clements has vetoed record numbers of paroles, pushed laws requiring stronger prison sentences and vetoed a 1979 appropriation for prison construction.

"The governor has to face the fact he created the crisis. It costs money to solve the problem of putting people in prison, and we

are now substantially behind in building prisons," Bush said.

"The real crisis was the prisons, which could not wait. He really had to have something done about that or risk more dire consequences such as rioting."

Rep. Lynn Nabers, D-Brownwood, agreed, saying Clements has not contributed anything to solving the overcrowding problem other than a call for more money. He said the issue could prove a political liability for many incumbents.

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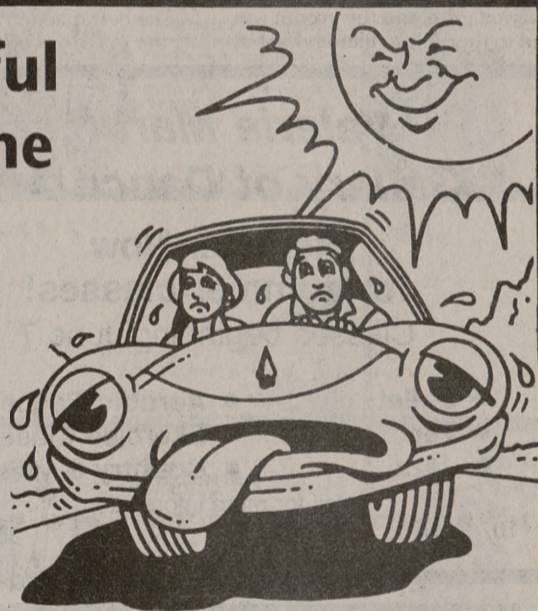
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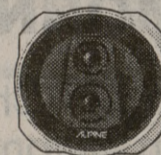
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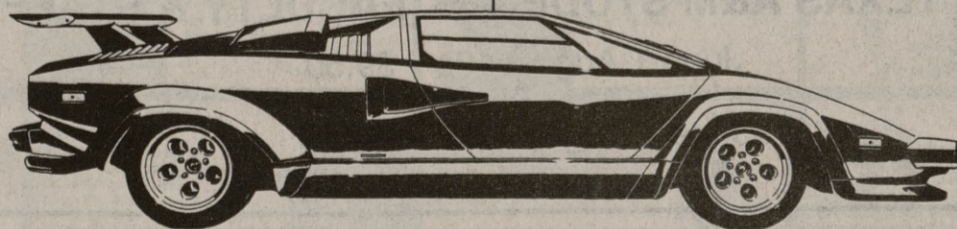
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