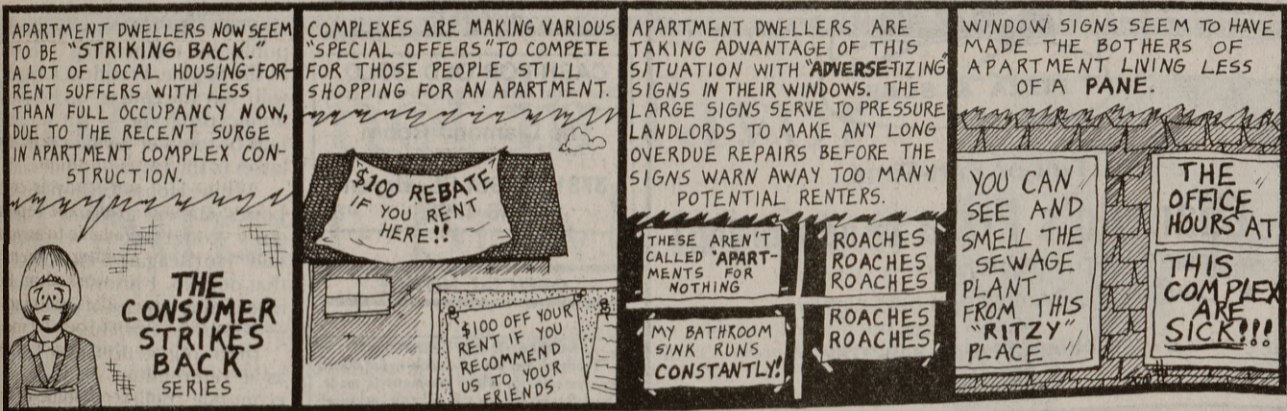


Warped

by Scott McCullar



# Tornado damages S. Padre, 28 hurt

**United Press International**  
**PORT ISABEL** — At least 28 people were injured and several campers were missing in a tornado that struck a popular beach on the southern tip of Texas Wednesday.

Johnny Castillo, spokesman for the Cameron County sheriff's office, said 90 mph winds and a

tornado hit a mobile home park, causing "a lot of damage" on South Padre Island.

Officials fear several campers were swept away by the rising tide, he said. Twenty-eight people were treated at Valley Baptist Hospital in Harlingen and Dolly Vincent Hospital in San Benito.

"The tide really came up and the Coast Guard and the Parks and Wildlife officers are looking for them," he said.

"We knew that there was a norther coming in and a 20 to 30 percent chance of showers, but we didn't expect anything like this. It just hit us and that's it," he said.

## Six amendments added

# Texans increase welfare

**United Press International**  
 Texans added six amendments to the state's 106 year-old constitution, voting overwhelmingly in favor of propositions to increase welfare payments, repeal a \$1 billion state property tax and exempt farm equipment from sales taxes.

Other amendments would raise the interest ceiling on state bonds, abolish two county treasurer offices and set terms of office for certain commissions.

The approval of the six proposals Tuesday brought the number of voter-endorsed changes to the 1876 constitution to 253. None of the six amendments had generated organized opposition.

Voters adopted the welfare amendment, which was endorsed by at least 60 organizations, with 65.83 percent of the vote.

The amendment will raise the ceiling on welfare expenditures from a flat \$80 million to 1 percent of the state budget — a move supporters said was crucial to help needy residents keep up with inflation in Texas, which ranks 49th among the states in welfare payments.

The property tax proposal was approved with 71.92 percent of the vote. It will repeal the state property tax that was established in 1947 as a means of financing construction at state colleges that did not receive shares of the Permanent Uni-

versity Fund, which benefits the University of Texas and Texas A&M University.

The tax has not been collected since 1979, when the Legislature voted to reduce it to such a negligible level that it was unfeasible to collect. But Midwestern University, one of the 17 colleges that benefited from the tax, filed suit claiming the legislative action was unconstitutional, and lawmakers met in special session last May to approve the proposed amendment.

Tentative plans call for the 1983 Legislature to devise an alternate formula to provide

construction funds for the 17 universities.

Voters approved the amendment exempting farm implements from state sales taxes with 66.49 percent of the vote.

Other tallies included 59.64 percent in favor of the amendment increasing the maximum interest rate on state bonds; 80.75 percent in favor of the amendment that sets terms of office for water, conservation and reclamation districts; and 73.09 percent in favor of abolishing the county treasurer offices in Bee and Tarrant counties.

# Chagra testifies against hitman

**United Press International**  
**SAN ANTONIO** — El Paso attorney Joe Chagra testified Tuesday that convicted hitman Charles Harrelson vowed to kill his wife and stepdaughter to keep them from implicating him in the assassination of Federal Judge John Wood.

The stepdaughter, Teresa Starr, spent six months in jail before she testified to the grand jury investigating Wood's death, but her testimony apparently cinched indictments against Harrelson, who is believed to have pulled the trigger, and Jimmy Chagra, who allegedly hired him.

She said she picked up \$250,000 for Harrelson in Las Vegas a month after Wood's death. Prosecutors believe it was Harrelson's payoff from Chagra.

In other action, jurors wore stereo headphones and followed along in a transcript as they listened to Jimmy Chagra's visits and telephone calls with his wife Elizabeth and with Joe Chagra, who had been unaware they were being recorded by the FBI.

The long-awaited tapes disappointed courtroom spectators who could understand only snippets of conversation. The prison visiting room tapes were garbled by the noise of other visitors and their children nearby.

Joe Chagra, 36, was on the stand for the second day to elaborate on the tapes and to testify against Harrelson. His testimony against Harrelson is part of a plea bargain in which he entered a guilty plea on conspiracy to murder charges in return for a light sentence.

Harrelson, 44, is on trial for murder, and Jimmy Chagra will be tried for murder later. Jimmy Chagra, 39, is accused of paying Harrelson \$250,000 to kill Wood, who was shot in the back as he left his San Antonio apartment May 29, 1979.

Joe Chagra, who also acted as Jimmy's lawyer, testified Monday he had encouraged Jimmy to kill Wood rather than take his chances on getting a life sentence from Wood — nicknamed "Maximum John" — in an upcoming drug smuggling trial. Wood was killed the day Jimmy Chagra was originally to have been tried.

The high-rolling Las Vegas gambler was tried later for drug smuggling, sentenced to 30 years without parole and sent to Leavenworth, Kan.

During the fall of 1980, as the FBI made its tapes, Joe and Elizabeth Chagra gave Jimmy almost daily updates on the government's investigation into Wood's death, the tapes showed. Chagra and Harrelson had been suspects from the start.

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