

Report: 5 TDC units still using 'building tenders'

Associated Press
 HOUSTON — Five of the state's 27 prisons are unsatisfactory or marginal in complying with a court order barring the use of inmates as prison guards, according to a report filed in federal court.

Meanwhile, Vincent Nathan, a special court master appointed to oversee prison reforms, has asked a federal judge to approve a plan to classify inmates in the Texas Department of Corrections according to how violent they are.

U.S. District Judge William Wayne Justice of Tyler ordered widespread reforms in the state prison system. And in 1982 he ruled that TDC must eliminate the "building tender" system by this year. Under this system, prison guards used favorite prisoners to run errands.

Nathan's quarterly report, filed Tuesday in Justice's court, said three

units' compliance with the order was good, 11 were excellent and eight were outstanding.

But the Coffield Unit in Tennessee Colony was found unsatisfactory.

Fourteen special grievance investigations were being conducted at the Coffield Unit between last December and February, according to the report.

Marginal compliance was found at four units — Beto I, in Tennessee Colony; Darrington, in Rosharon; Eastham, in Lovelady; and Ferguson, in Midway.

The report cited inmates guarding "primary security points," disciplining fellow prisoners and allowing some inmates access to "sensitive records" involving other prisoners.

William Bennett Turner, an attorney for the inmates in the prison reform suit, said the building tender system still exists "where there are too many prisoners and too few guards."

Turner said the Coffield Unit is "unmanageable" and houses about 3,500 inmates in a facility designed for 2,000.

In another development, Nathan filed a report Tuesday approving TDC's plan outlining the classification of inmates and the care of mentally retarded prisoners.

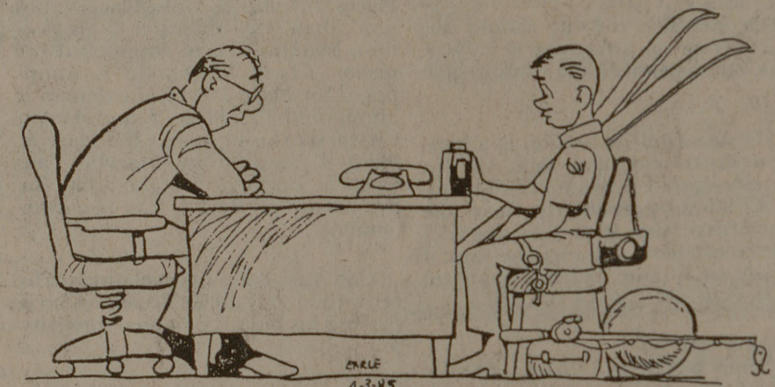
Prison spokesman Charles Brown said Wednesday he had not seen the plans and declined to comment on them.

The plan "will help the Texas Department of Corrections take its important initial steps toward progressive management of inmates through appropriate classification," Nathan wrote.

The plan calls for the segregation of the state's most violent inmates, and Nathan said it may reduce violence among prisoners.

Slouch

By Jim Earle



"Now mind you, this is just an offhand observation, but I think I can point out a few reasons for your low grades."

Rookie cop kills brother in accident

Associated Press
 HOUSTON — A rookie Houston police officer accidentally shot and killed his brother while detaching a holster the evening before he was to start duty, authorities said Tuesday.

But Houston Police Chief Brown denied some officers' allegations that a new police holster was to blame for the accident.

Officer Juan Garza, 19, shot his brother, Rogelio Garza, 27, in the stomach about 11 p.m. Monday, police spokesman J.C. Mosier said.

The officer unloaded his holster and tried to remove the gun, but his brother tried to stop him.

Juan "had heard at the academy that it was easy for a citizen to take a gun out of the holster," Mosier said.

Rogelio was unable to remove the weapon, and Juan reloaded and set it aside.

But later, Rogelio strapped the holster and asked Juan to show him how the gun could be removed.

"The officer, apparently, thought his brother had unloaded it like he had earlier, pulled it out and it accidentally discharged," Mosier said.

Mark Clark, president of the Houston Police Officers Association, said the new holsters make it difficult to remove the gun "with a little effort at all."

But Brown said in a statement that the holster was not to blame.

"In fact, the holsters we are currently changing to were selected because they are the safest and most reliable," he said.

Houston car winner rejects 'piece of trash'

Associated Press

HOUSTON — When Sandra Torres went to pick up the "late model car" she won in a department store drawing, she found the prize was a 1979 Ford station wagon with 89,000 miles on the odometer, the dashboard cracked, and the back seat and all the hubcaps missing.

When shown the "prize," Torres said she turned it down, telling officials of Leonard's Department Store: "That car is a piece of trash. I'll just keep the one I've got, thank you."

Torres said that a door of the car wouldn't open and the headlights

couldn't be turned on because a knob was missing.

"When somebody calls you and says you won our car, you expect it to have all the parts," she told the Houston Post.

Larry McShaffry, vice president of finance for the Leonard's Department Store chain, said that the company did not specify the precise age of the cars being offered. He said they are all company vehicles that have been replaced by newer cars.

"We did not claim that they (the prizes) would be new or spectacular models," he said.

Beaumont residents raise \$6,000 city kitty

Associated Press

BEAUMONT — A group of Beaumont residents has raised almost \$6,000 in an effort to reduce the \$20 million loss the city suffered when an investment fund went broke.

Former Mayor Maury Meyers says the group established a "Kitty for the City" to show the country Beaumont is not a "hick town."

The city invested the \$20 million in January and February with the Florida-based ESM Government Securities. The federal government shut ESM down on March 4 after learning the company was \$300 million in debt.

On Tuesday, smiling residents and businessmen filed into the City Council chamber, where a month ago citizens outraged over the lost

money called for resignation investigations.

Meyers said national news reports have portrayed Beaumont as a town stuck out in the middle of nowhere, and "a poor little town."

He said the idea began with a few phone calls, and quickly turned into a community effort to show the country how Beaumont responds to trouble.

Songs of railroads, hobos

Folk singer recognized

Associated Press

TEMPLE — In 1896, 14-year-old Harry Kirby McClintock ran away from home, and the path he then followed changed folk-country music for several decades, a Temple author says.

Henry Young, says McClintock, was profoundly influenced by the hobos and out-of-work railroad men he traveled with. McClintock incorporated fairy tales they told him into a song he composed the following year.

Young's admiration for the man and his music prompted him to write McClintock's biography. "Haywire Mac and the Big Rock Candy Mountains" is Young's account of McClintock's road to folk-music stardom.

That song, "The Big Rock Candy Mountains," became popular over the next couple of decades, even though he did not actually record it until 1928. It was because of that delay in recording and in copyrighting his song that he didn't become as

well known as his music, Young says.

Young says McClintock entered country music on a dare from a friend. He auditioned for a radio show, which launched his singing and story-telling career.

McClintock, or "Haywire Mac" as his fans knew him, eventually went to work for the railroad after a couple of trips around the world. Many of his songs are based on his experience with railroads as either a worker or a bum.

In 1928, Young, then living in Alabama, heard Haywire Mac for the first time on the radio and became fascinated with his style of music. Even though Young never met the musician, he spent 45 years, beginning in 1939, collecting and sorting McClintock's life story.

Young says he wrote the book because he thought Haywire Mac had not received the recognition he deserved.

Several letters of McClintock's to friends are in the book, including

one of his last, in which Haywire Mac wrote:

"I am glad I was a wandering shack (brakeman) and switchman, glad for the old days I used to know. Glad for the bag of tricks that made the world exciting — the phony service letters, the sight of shining rails from a caboose door, and the brass rings I grabbed at and missed but sometimes caught."

Young says Haywire Mac's songs stirred his imagination, and Young eventually headed into railroads himself, retiring as an engineer in California in 1974 after 40 years in the business.

Young now has a short radio program on a Cameron station. He plays country music from the 1920s to the 1950s. It was in the 1950s, he says, that country music began to drift away from songs that told stories to a melody, to songs centered on rhythm.

Two-bedroom roommate plan now \$495.



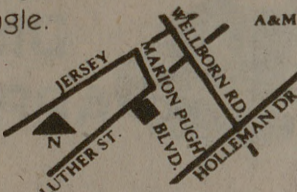
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only dream of. Some two-bedroom plans also feature fireplaces and washer/dryer connections, and handicap units are available, too. Residents also enjoy use of Treehouse Village's two pools and hot tubs, jogging trail and tennis, basketball and volleyball courts. Find out how great apartment living was meant to be. Discover Treehouse Village. Your haven in the apartment jungle.



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