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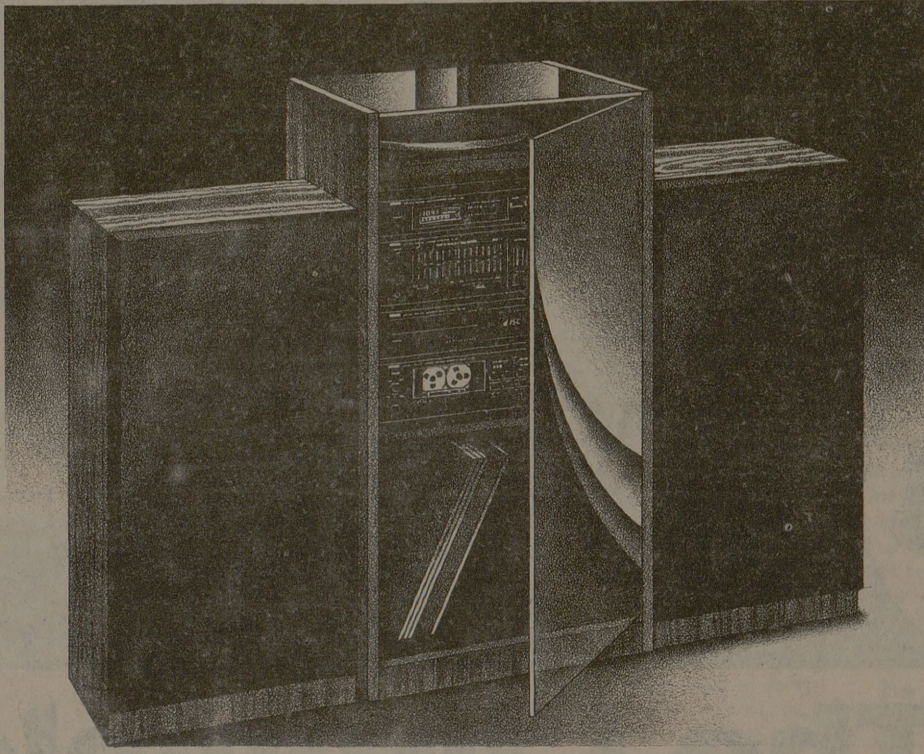
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Legislature sends two measures to governor

Bills to cut paperwork, license plate prices

AUSTIN (AP) — The Legislature Wednesday approved and sent to the governor bills to reduce public school paperwork and the cost of personalized license plates.

The Senate by a 28-0 vote passed a House-approved measure to limit paperwork by teachers and school administrators.

The House on voice vote accepted Senate amendments to a bill that would reduce the cost of personalized license plates from \$75 to \$40.

Both measures go to the governor.

On the paperwork proposal, Sen. Carl Parker, D-Port Arthur, said, "Most paperwork that has been generated has been generated mainly from people trying to adequately document that if something goes wrong, it's not their fault."

"We had hoped that common sense would prevail. In many districts, districts through cooperation between administrators and teachers have reduced paperwork — got it to a minimum. . . There are others, however, who doggedly cling to trying to inundate teachers with needless paperwork."

Parker said the bill "would clearly once and for all put into law what paperwork is authorized and what isn't."

In other action Wednesday, the Senate:

- Approved, 28-0, and sent to the House with amendments to impose tougher regulations on companies that sell money orders.
- Accepted a House amendment and sent to the governor, a bill that would make it easier to collect support payments.
- Approved, 28-0, and sent to the House a measure that would allow the state highway department to issue overweight truck permits over the telephone from its office. Sen. John Traeger, D-San Antonio, said the bill would save the state \$1 million over two years.

Perot sought video showing American hostages in Laos

WASHINGTON (AP) — Texas billionaire H. Ross Perot, after conferring with Vice President George Bush, pledged \$4.2 million in a futile effort to obtain a videotape purporting to show American prisoners of war alive in Laos.

"I was asked by our government to pursue this thing, to get the tape if it existed," Perot said in a recent telephone interview. "I said fine, it's a long shot, but I'll be glad to do it."

The tape was never produced and the money was never paid.

Perot refused to identify who in the government asked him to pursue the matter.

Marlin Fitzwater, spokesman for Bush, said Wednesday that the vice president discussed the tape with Perot and asked him to "take a look at the issues there and see if he thought they were legitimate."

But Fitzwater added that "I'm sure he (Bush) didn't ask him to make payments."

Also involved in the effort was Rep. Bill Hendon, R-N.C., who said Wednesday that he discussed the videotape matter with Bush and that later, "The vice president called me and, based on our discussion, I tried to assist Mr. Perot in any way I could."

According to a former Army major who first told the story of the tape, the money was on deposit in the Bank of America in Singapore last April when he attempted to obtain photographic evidence that Americans were still being held prisoner.

Retired Maj. Mark Smith told the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee last June that he and Hendon went to Singapore with instructions from the Defense Intelligence Agency to offer \$4.2 million to Robin Gregson, a British citizen who claimed to have possession of the videotape.

Smith told the committee that Gregson, who also uses the name John Obsassy, rejected the offer.

Smith testified that Gregson told

him, "I didn't ask you for \$4.2 million in cash. I asked you for support for these people in Laos. I have never asked for money."

The people in Laos were rebel forces fighting the communist government.

The major also told the committee he had seen the tape and that it showed Caucasians being held prisoner and forced to work in timber and mining operations in northern Laos.

The Defense Department lists 2,441 Americans who did not return from the conflict in Southeast Asia.

Perot first became involved in the POW issue in 1969 when he attempted to fly to Hanoi to deliver medical supplies and Christmas gifts to American POWs.

In its monthly tally of reports pertaining to possible POWs, the Defense Intelligence Agency lists cases of alleged sightings of Americans being held prisoner since the fall of Saigon in 1975.

The latest DIA tally lists 1,341 that total as currently unaccounted for. The agency said the remainder is disproven.

Perot invested \$8.3 million in a hotel in 1983. Last year, when the project was refinanced, Perot agreed to become a guarantor of a \$30 million mortgage for the Bank of America, attorney for Perot and Criswell said.

Thomas Luce III, Perot's lawyer, said the suit claims that Criswell breached his obligation as a general partner and his obligation to finance the hotel.

The hotel will remain open under the management of the Hyatt Regency Corp., Sharon Criswell, president of Criswell Development said.

Perot filed suit in state district court in Dallas against developer William T. Criswell and Manufacturers Hanover Trust Co. shortly after the Hyatt Regency West in Houston filed for bankruptcy protection on Tuesday.

Perot, the founder of Electronic Data Systems Corp., claims the bank, which financed construction of the hotel, and Criswell misled him, concealing financial information and diverting money from the hotel to a Dallas office building.

Perot said he guaranteed a \$30 million loan to keep the 400-room hotel out of trouble.

But after Perot's loan was made, Criswell diverted the money to a downtown Dallas building, the Allied Bank Tower, allowing the Houston hotel to go into bankruptcy, Perot alleges.

He claims he was misled in investing his money and was told the hotel was on the brink of bankruptcy.

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