

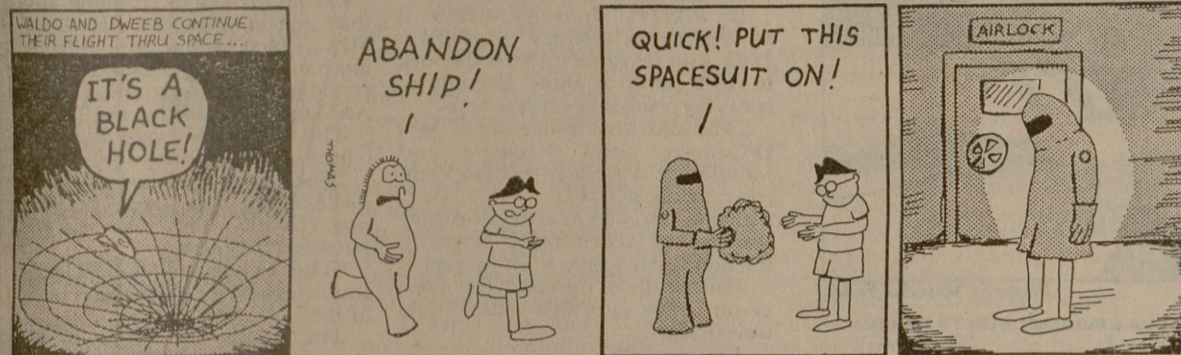
Warped

by Scott McCullar



Waldo

by Kevin Thomas



Commissioner: Minorities will be hurt by restructuring

AUSTIN (AP) — Education Commissioner William Kirby says disadvantaged students will be hit hard by a proposal to redistribute state school aid from property-rich districts to poor districts.

Kirby repeated his opposition Wednesday to a plan by property-poor districts as he completed his testimony in the complex school financing trial.

The non-jury trial recessed until Monday.

Attorneys estimate additional testimony and arguments will take about a week before it goes to State District Judge Harley Clark.

The trial, which began Jan. 20, was filed by 67 property-poor school districts who say division of state school aid is discriminatory.

The state, joined by 48 other school districts, claims the distribution is fair and adequate.

The property-poor districts have proposed redistributing about \$660 million from rich districts to those more in need.

"There are two problems with

that plan," Kirby said. "In these urban districts — including Houston, Dallas and Fort Worth — there are large numbers of disadvantaged particularly minority kids. Dropouts are a big problem. Taking money from these districts to give to other

"Taking money from these districts to give to other districts would just hurt these disadvantaged kids."

— William Kirby, Education Commissioner

going to help us fight for improved state aid," he said.

On cross examination, Kirby admitted to Albert Kaufman, attorney for the Mexican American Legal Education Fund, that the 21 poorest school districts in the state include 150,000 students, of which 95 percent are Mexican Americans.

"I would not only agree to that but I would point out that some of the wealthiest districts in the state, which will have a majority of minority students in a few years, also have a high concentration of Mexican American students," Kirby said.

The state now distributes about \$5 billion to support public schools. Another \$5 billion come from local school taxes.

Kirby said the Texas Education Agency has asked the Legislature to increase school funding by \$433 million in 1988-89 just to keep operations at the present level and take care of growing student publications.

Senate rejects Clements plan for budget

AUSTIN (AP) — Sen. Carl Parker said Wednesday he and 14 senators signed a letter opposing any plan to give the governor power to transfer money among state agencies in emergencies.

A bill to implement the 1985 so-called budget execution amendment to the Texas Constitution was overwhelmingly rejected by the Senate in late February.

Tuesday, however, Gov. Bill Clements threatened lawmakers with a special session unless they approved legislation changing the Texas civil justice system and broadening the governor's authority over state spending.

The letter says the legislators will not give up their responsibility to represent their constituents by approving a "so-called budget execution or other schemes that amount to a surrender of legislative responsibility."

Parker said in addition to those who signed the letter, at least three others in the 31-member Senate would vote against "budget execution" but didn't want to sign the letter right now.

Firemen will rebuild home ruined by fire for 78-year-old man

DALLAS (AP) — Firefighters have offered to build a new home for a 78-year-old man who has been sleeping in a car since his house was gutted by flames.

The Fellowship of Christian Firefighters offered Tuesday to rebuild Louie Watson's home, which was destroyed in a blaze that also killed his 80-year-old brother. City officials said Watson could not live in the house until extensive repairs were made.

Firefighter Mike Irvin said he read an account of the elderly man's plight in the Dallas Morning News Friday.

"When I saw somebody in need, it just hit me that I wasn't doing anything when I was off-duty and I knew I could help," Irvin said. "If it wasn't done this way, it wouldn't have gotten done."

Watson let the insurance lapse on the house, which he bought in 1962 and paid off in 1975.

"If everything goes right, and I'm sure it will, we're going to completely restore his house," Irvin said. "The manpower is taken care of."

Several dozen of the 300

fellowship members will probably work on restoring the house, said Ray Seymore, president of the group.

Seymore said firefighters hope to replace the wiring, cabinets and appliances with donations from merchants once the outer structure is repaired.

Irvin said, "What we are basically trying to do is set it up so he can move back and get on with his life."

Both firefighters said meeting Watson increased their desire to help.

"He's done a little of everything in his life," Irvin said. "He's pretty well-rounded."

He said Watson has been a mechanic, a carpenter and a practical nurse.

"He's very bright," Irvin said. "He's got all his wits about him."

Seymore said, "He had tears in his eyes as he was thanking me for renovating the house."

Watson said he had been sleeping in his car because he did not want to go to a home for the elderly.

Commission starts federal probe of former InterFirst Bank director

DALLAS (AP) — A federal grand jury and the Securities and Exchange Commission are looking into reports of insider loans to former InterFirst Bank Dallas director Edwin L. Cox Jr., officials of InterFirst Corp. said.

The reported loans to Cox, along with those to other former directors including his father, former InterFirst Corp. director Edwin L. Cox Sr., caused \$56 million of InterFirst's total 1986 losses of \$326.5 million, the bank holding company said Tuesday.

InterFirst, in a filing with the SEC, said the federal agency is making an informal inquiry into "matters... relating to certain credit facilities at InterFirst Dallas which were extended to, or guaranteed by, Mr. Edwin L. Cox Jr., including InterFirst's policies and procedures concerning certification and valuation of collateral associated with such credit facilities."

InterFirst officials said SEC personnel declared their intention "to obtain a formal order of private investigation in this matter."

The holding company said "various documents relating to these credit facilities have been subpoenaed from

InterFirst Dallas by a grand jury," and added that the grand jury investigation is continuing.

But InterFirst said "InterFirst Dallas has been advised that it is not a target of the grand jury investigation."

In October the Dallas Times Herald reported InterFirst had turned over certain materials pertaining to Cox Jr.'s troubled loans to the U.S. Attorney's office in Dallas and to the Dallas FBI office.

InterFirst, at that time, said it "recently has learned that... financial statements and the existence of... collateral may not be accurate" as required by law.

A spokesman for Cox Jr. characterized InterFirst's disclosures Tuesday regarding the SEC and federal grand jury investigations as "old news" and said neither he nor Cox Jr. would have a comment.

RepublicBank Corp. spokesman Edward McClelland said the company was "comfortable" that it had been properly informed about the SEC and grand jury investigations.

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Trip Leader: Steve Long

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 Commentator: Reverend Don McCurry (Former Dir. of Zwemer Inst.) and Rabbi Peter Tarlow (Texas A&M Univ.)

Date: Thursday, April 2nd, 1987.
 Time: 7:30 p.m.
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