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**Hance: OPEC could boost Texas economy**

AUSTIN (AP) — The new production agreement by OPEC oil ministers will be a "big plus" in helping to turn around the Texas economy, state Railroad Commissioner Kent Hance said Monday.

Hance said if the agreement not been reached, the 1989 Legislature would have had to consider raising state taxes.

"This is certainly good news, not only for the governor's office but other state officials in... Texas, including the representatives and senators. It takes a lot of the heat off of them in the next legislative session," he said.

Another commissioner, John Sharp, said, "The recent see-saw deliberations of OPEC only show how powerless this country is to control its own energy future."

"The American economy as well as the Texas energy economy are held hostage to a handful of foreign oil ministers unless and until we take control of our own destiny either through an oil import fee, a floor price for imported oil, or we displace foreign oil with America's fuel, natural gas," Sharp said in a statement.

Hance spent a week recently at the meeting of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries in Vienna, Austria, and predicted Monday the accord to sharply cut OPEC production "will have a positive effect on the economy of Texas."

He told a news conference his third OPEC meeting included visits with oil ministers from eight of the 13 countries.

At Vienna, all 13 members of the cartel signed the accord, which sets a target price of \$18 a barrel, although crude has been selling at \$14 a barrel and less.

Analysts have said the agreement, which runs for six months from Jan. 1, could send crude prices climbing by \$1 or \$2 a barrel. Each \$1 rise in the price of crude oil theoretically means an increase of 2.5 cents a gallon in retail gasoline prices, although oil companies do not always pass along the full increase.

Hance said he did not believe gas prices would go up.

**Hispanics win damages from FBI**

EL PASO (AP) — Attorneys for Hispanic FBI agents who successfully sued the agency in a class-action racial discrimination case said Monday they want to devise a formula to determine damage payments, but the bureau wants damages to be decided case by case.

The 311 Hispanic agents argued successfully this summer that the FBI discriminated against them in job conditions, assignments and promotions.

Now U.S. District Judge Lucius Bunton has the task of deciding what should be done to remedy the situation.

In documents filed Monday before Bunton, the FBI proposed having each plaintiff fill out a long form to help determine whether they should get back pay and how much.

But the plaintiffs, represented by attorneys Hugo Rodriguez and Antonio Silva, said they want a formula to determine how much front and back pay each plaintiff should get.

The formula would take into account tenure, grade and salary.

Bunton ruled in September that the FBI had discriminated against Hispanic agents.

The decision came a month after the end of a two-week, non-jury trial.

The class-action suit was filed in January 1987 by Bernardo Matias "Mat" Perez, the second-in-command in the El Paso office and at the

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**Misconduct trial nears for state health agency**

AUSTIN (AP) — A trial is scheduled to begin next week over the alleged demotion of a former employee who charged wrongdoing in the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation.

Irene Little, 44, is seeking at least \$200,000 in damages after alleging that she was demoted for blowing the whistle on top officials.

The Dec. 5 trial in Travis County District Court is expected to raise questions about department actions that are the target of several government investigations.

The state denies that Little was

demoted in 1986 when the agency eliminated her \$37,440 post as liaison to the Legislature and transferred her to a lower-paying job in the standards and quality assurance division.

Little's lawsuit alleges the job switch was retaliation for her discussions with several state legislators, including Sen. Gonzalo Barriontos, D-Austin, about agency activities that she believed were unlawful or questionable.

Among them:

- Transferring more mentally retarded people from institutions to

community homes than required by a federal court.

- Allowing private, for-profit community homes for the retarded to receive both state money and Medicaid money when federal law prohibits using two sources of funds for the same purpose.
- Awarding agency contracts to community homes to a number of former agency employees, and in at least one case to a man still working for the agency.

The suit alleges that Little's job change abridged her right to truthfully and accurately communicate information to elected officials regarding the department's program and operations, as guaranteed by the Texas Whistle Blowers Act and the U.S. Constitution's guarantees of free speech.

Austin lawyer Mark Perlmutter, who represents Little, said she had received excellent performance evaluations in her previous job. He said the department sought to fill the liaison job within 2.5 months of her transfer.

**Crime documentary causes convict to ask for new trial**

DALLAS (AP) — An attorney for Randall Dale Adams will be in court Wednesday to argue that the protagonist of the documentary "The Thin Blue Line" should be given a new — and fair — trial.

Convicted nine years ago of the 1976 murder of Dallas police officer Robert Wood, Adams was sentenced to death for the slaying. His sentence later was commuted to life in prison.

But doubts about Adams' guilt have never disappeared, and they were fueled recently by the Errol Morris movie "The Thin Blue Line," which was based on the case.

"The Thin Blue Line" suggests that police and prosecutors virtually framed Adams by suppressing evidence of his innocence and using

five questionable witnesses.

In the Wednesday hearing, Adams' attorney, Randy Schaffer, will be focusing on matters of law more so than matters of fact. He contends that Adams did not receive a fair trial, largely because prosecutors did not turn over documents favorable to the defense, as required by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Schaffer said he plans to use evidence generated in the making of the film in his client's hearing Wednesday before state District Judge Larry Baraka in Dallas.

Schaffer said he will question the credibility of five witnesses who testified against Adams, including key witness David Ray Harris. Harris originally testified that Adams shot

Wood as Harris and Adams were riding together in a stolen car.

But Harris now claims that Adams was not even in the car when the fatal shots were fired.

"David Harris has essentially admitted in the past month that he committed the capital murder of Dallas police officer Robert Wood," Schaffer wrote in his application for a writ of habeas corpus, which would bring the case to court again. "Adams has been incarcerated for almost 12 years for an offense which he did not commit."

Schaffer is asking Baraka to recommend a new trial and Adams' release pending the trial.

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