Tuesday, May 1, 1990

The Battalion

Page 5

Candidate criticizes Clements' lack of planning **Richards says governor needs plan**

Associated Press

Gov. Bill Clements should present a school finance plan to the Legislature if he keeps his promise to veto the measure they've sent him, Democratic gubernatorial candidate Ann Rich-ards said Monday.

"It would be incumbent upon him not only to have a plan now, but he should have had a plan a ong time ago," Richards said, criticizing the Re-publican governor's handling of school finance ince the Texas Supreme Court last fall found he system unconstitutional.

Clements vowed to veto the \$555 million proosal funded by a half-cent sales tax increase despite the court's order for a new system by Tues-day. State attorneys will appear before a judge Tuesday to explain why no reforms were ap-proved before the deadline.

Asked whether she was worried Texas public chools would close a few weeks before the end of he academic year, Richards said, "Of course, e're worried.

But Richards would not say whether she suported the legislation.

"I have refused in recent days to second-guess what is taking place in the Legislature because I eel sure that they've examined what opportuni-ies are available to them," she said.

"I think the sad part is we have a governor who has no position at all in terms of a positive solu-ion to what can be done," she said.

Richards said Clements should have called legslators into action on the issue immediately after the October ruling, instead of pushing schools to the brink of insolvency.

'We knew there was a lot of political cynicism taking place when the special session was not called until the very last minute in which any solution that was created was going to come about in a crisis situation," Richards said.

The governor calls special legislative sessions

t would be incumbent upon him not only to have a plan now, but he should have had a plan a long time ago,'

--- Ann Richards, **Guberatorial candidate**

and sets the agenda for them. The Legislature is finishing its second 30-day special session to re-form the \$13.5 billion school finance method, a combination of state and federal aid and local property taxes. The court said the system discriminated between property-rich and -poor districts.

Richards was in Washington to accept an award in her duty as the state's treasurer and to meet with Texas Democrats, including Sen. Lloyd Bentsen.

Bentsen said he was confident Richards would beat Republican nominee Clayton Williams, a Midland rancher and businessman, in the November general election.

'She's been an excellent administrator of one of the state's major agencies — treasurer — she's a good campaigner and she'll be a good governor," Bentsen said.

Richards repeated her vow to keep her cam-paign focused on issues after winning the nomination in a primary that drew national attention because of the accusations of drug use and finan-

cial impropriety that were exchanged. She said remarks during the campaign became escalated "in this present atmosphere of interpreting and reinterpreting." She refused to judge Williams' admission he

visited prostitutes as a teen-ager and his ranch-yard comparison of foul weather to rape, re-marks that some analysts say have widened the gender gap in the race.

"I'm going to continue not to comment," she said. "I believe his words speak for themselves." Richards received the 1990 Payment Systems

Excellence Award from the National Automated Clearing House Association, a group of bankers and government officials that advocates electronic funds transfer.

Texas has nine programs using such methods, including tax collection and payment of state aid to school districts. A new program that reduces the time it takes large payments to be added to the Texas treasury is expected to add \$5 million in non-tax revenue, she told the group's convention.

Strong winds destroy balloon designed to stop drug smugglers

MARFA (AP) — A radar-pupped helium balloon designed deter drug traffickers lay limp on West Texas plain Monday where spectors were trying to determine hy it ripped in pieces during high

The balloon was moored when arface winds of 57 mph tore the alloon in three sections at about 30 p.m. Saturday, officials said.

"The site personnel at the aerostat eard a noise and went to investigate nd found the aerostat had broken to three pieces," said Kathy lamor, a U.S. Customs spokeswo-

nan in Washington. Hamor said Customs and balloonnaker General Electric Co. officials ere in Marfa, about 170 miles outh of El Paso, assessing the dam-

operate, but all costs are now beg paid by GE which still owns the alloon and still is testing it. "The balloon just came apart,"

Danny Morris, a GE Marfa aerostat

The Kevlar balloon ripped apart, broke into three pieces and hit the ground, Morris said. The three balloon sections — its nose, hull and tail-fin — all landed within the site yard, a fenced-in area of 1,000 square feet.

The sophisticated "look-down" rathe accident.

"We've been through this before," he said of the high winds. "It appeared the balloon suffered a rip ... Once it started ripping it kept going." It took 10 to 15 seconds for

ge. "Right now we don't know the ause and we are investigating,"Ha-nor said. Each blimp costs \$11.5 million to 12.5 million and \$1.5 million a year operate but all costs are now be Workers deflated the balloon by remote control, allowing it to crashland at Carrizo Springs, about 46 miles southeast of Eagle Pass.

A GE investigation released Feb. systems service engineer, told the Odessa American on Sunday. 21 revealed lightning had struck the moist tether where it had been premoist tether where it had been pre-viously repaired. The company is re-designing a tether for the balloons.

Three balloons with a 260-mile radar range each are supposed to monitor the Texas-Mexico border for low-flying drug-smuggling air-craft that avoid conventional radar package, which was affixed to the belly of the balloon, also suffered a lot of damage, he said. Morris was unsure if the winds were at fault in

> The government plans to launch 16 aerostats, tethered 10,000 to 15,000 feet in the air from the Pacific Coast to the Grand Bahamas. Currently five are in operation in Deming, N.M., Yuma and Fort Hua-chuca, Ariz., Grand Bahama Island and Cudjoe Key, Fla.

The whole aerostat line of defense is a big part of the entire war on drugs in the Southwest, and once it's fully operational we expect it to pay big dividends," Dick Wert, a U.S. Customs spokesman, said.

DALLAS (AP) --- Dallas police say they are going to great lengths to warn "cruisers" to stay away from the West End district of downtown.

Dallas police

warn drivers

of new law

Although enforcement of a ban against cruising — driving around with no apparent destina-tion — in the shopping and din-ing district won't begin until May 11, the city already has signs up, and Dallas police are running newspaper ads telling about the ban.

"It's the first time we've used ads," Dallas police Sgt. Jim Chan-dler said Monday. "The reason, of course, is we expect the (new) ordinance to be challenged." Chandler said a city attorney

recommended that police buy the advertising so no one can claim they did not get fair warning. A violation of the new ordinance will result in a fine of up to

Police said they will stop motor vehicles that pass through traffic-control points more than three times between the hours of 8 p.m.

Jury convicts police officer Attendance skyrockets Record crowd sees air show in Fort Worth

and 4 a.m.



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* Meet in small groups by geographical location

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\$100 ble sleeping due to short term stress to participate in a 1 \$100 \$100 week insomnia research study. \$100 incentive for those \$100

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or voluntary manslaughter

DALLAS (AP) — A former Houston police officer as sentenced Monday to seven years in prison for the reeway shooting of Houston newspaper janitor Ida lee Delaney

Alex Gonzales, 25, was convicted in Dallas Friday of poluntary manslaughter in the Oct. 31 shooting death of Delaney. Gonzales had testified that Delaney shot at im and two other off-duty officers before they chased her on a Houston freeway for 12 miles.

During the early morning chase, Delaney pulled her truck over to the side of the road, near a highway de-partment vehicle, apparently seeking help. Delaney fired at Gonzales after he ran to her truck, gun in hand, and punched her in the face, witnesses testified. Crit-ically wounded, he returned gunfire, killing the 50-mer old women. ear-old woman.

Gonzales is a very coldhearted, uthless person. He has no feelings."

Janice Myles, victim's sister

An eight-woman, four-man jury spent most the day Monday determining Gonzales' sentence. He could ave been sentenced to up to 20 years in prison. The punishment phase in Gonzales' trial began Mon-

day in Dallas County district court before Harris County District Judge Ted Poe. Poe moved the trial to Dallas because of extensive publicity in Houston.

Charlotte Ragsdale, a member of the Ida Delaney Justice Committee, said the sentence "is at least a step in Dallas.

"Obviously, there was enough information and evidence to bring some form of justice and that was critical in my opinion," said Ragsdale, the sister of Dallas City Councilwoman Diane Ragsdale.

"The family was looking for hope in the system in they were able to find it.'

Charlotte Ragsdale said she believes that most people watching the case would feel that the sentence is fair.

Defense attorneys had argued that sending a police officer or former officer to prison is like imposing a potential death sentence because inmates often carry grudges against them.

But prosecutors contended that police officers should be judged by a tougher standard than average citizens because officers are expected to enforce the law.

Janice Myles, Delaney's sister, said she was pleased with the sentence. Myles said she was not concerned about Gonzales' fears that his life might be threatened in prison.

Gonzales is a very coldhearted, ruthless person," Myles said. "He has no feelings." Myles said although Gonzales has been sentenced to

prison, he is still better off than her sister. "You know she's gone," Myles said. "The only thing I

can do is go talk to her at her grave. But they can go visit him.'

Gonzales and the two off-duty police officers were fired by former Houston Police Chief Lee Brown. All three have appealed their firings.

FORT WORTH (AP) — Spiritare soaring at Carswell Air For base after record crowds turned o for a two-day air show over th weekend.

Officials estimate that more that 1 million people attended the even easily eclipsing the 1987 attendance record when an about 750,000 peo-ple watched the show.

"We were ready for a larg crowd," said Capt. Barbara Car chief of public affairs at Carswel "But we had no idea how large would be."

The combination of the F-117 Stealth fighter's first air show a pearance and the Thunderbirds, the Air Force aerobatic demonstration team, were probably the main reasons for the free event's success Carr said. The Thunderbirds pilo flew F-16s built in Fort Worth.

The base is normally closed to th public

About 500,000 people jamme through the gates Saturday, and about 600,000 people attended the show Sunday, Carr said.

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People will be available to answer questions.