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TEIN PAGES

## Monday

October 4, 1982

## Officials report some leads in cyanide case

CHICAGO (AP) — A task force hunting a "random murderer" who killed seven people by placing cyanide in Extra-Strength Tylenol capsules is following up several "very substantial" leads, authorities say.

Illinois Attorney General Tyrone Fahner said at a news conference Sunday night that the task force has at least two dozen suspects, including "malcontents ... and weirdos who don't act right or did something extremely out of the ordinary."

"We're trying to understand what kind of person could do these things," said Fahner, the chief of a state-federal task force with more than 100 investigators looking into the string of deaths. "It is an act of a random murderer who filled the capsules with cyanide and then placed them in the stores," he said.

One of the "very substantial" leads, Fahner said, was the news that two Kane County sheriff's deputies found Tylenol bottles and capsules strewn in a suburban motel parking lot Tuesday, one day before the deaths began.

The attorney general declined to reveal any other leads.

All of the deaths occurred between Wednesday and Friday in Chicago or its suburbs among people who had taken Extra-Strength Tylenol capsules, the nation's best-selling pain reliever. Autopsies revealed the deaths were caused by cyanide poisoning.

The cyanide-spiked capsules probably were placed in the stores Tuesday, Fahner said, apparently on the front of the shelves to ensure they would sell quickly, he said.

Investigators already have interviewed and cleared many suspects and now believe someone acting alone obtained bottles of Extra Strength Tylenol, filled the capsules with cyanide at home and then "falted" store shelves with the deadly poison, Fahner said.

Investigators were beginning to comb personnel files today of people who might have had access to the capsules, Fahner said, refusing to elaborate.

It was disclosed Sunday that Kane County sheriff's deputies found 24 bottles of Tylenol in a motel parking lot about 15 miles west from Winfield, where Mary Reiner, one of the victims, purchased her cyanide-laced medication.

Extra-Strength Tylenol was not linked to the cyanide deaths until

Thursday, two days after the find, so the deputies had no reason to keep the capsules. But "one or two" capsules and some powder were recovered and are being tested, Fahner said.

"It was evident they were tampered with," said Deputy Sheriff Martin Cole. "Some of the capsules were empty. They had no powder in them. They (the officers who found the Tylenol) assumed from that there evidently was something going on with drugs."

Cole said the officers who found the bottles later experienced dizziness, nausea and vomiting. Dr. Barry Rumack, of the Rocky Mountain Poison Control Center in Denver, said the symptoms could have been caused by a "sub-lethal" cyanide dose. But the same symptoms could be produced by other chemicals, including heroin, he said.

Fahner cautioned there was no evidence to tie the parking-lot capsules to the killings, and he noted that the officers had not had blood tests to determine if they had contact with cyanide.

One suspect ruled out by investigators was an unidentified shoplifter arrested in August for stealing Tylenol. "We learned he was in jail during the relevant time period," Fahner said.

He also discounted reports that investigators think more than one person is involved in the crimes.

"The only thing we have suggesting more than one is involved (is that) some of the tablets were put back together with great care and caution," Fahner said. "Others were a messy job."

If authorities find the poisoner, Fahner said, he will face "at least seven counts of homicide," and possibly a count of attempted murder stemming from a bottle of poisoned Tylenol that had been removed from a drug store in Schaumburg, Ill.

No one has tried to claim the \$100,000 reward offered by Johnson & Johnson, the parent company of Tylenol's manufacturer, for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the killer, Fahner said.

Cook County Medical Examiner Dr. Robert Stein said tests indicate the cyanide was placed in capsules at least 1 1/2 days before the first tainted capsules were found Wednesday.

Scientists have been filling empty Tylenol capsules with cyanide to determine how quickly the corrosive poison affects the shell.



**THE LIONS ARE COMING** — This scene will be reported many times during the next two nights as members of the Paris Founders Lions Club move door-to-door throughout Paris tonight (Monday) and tomorrow night selling light bulbs in their traditional and annual fund raising effort. Proceeds from the sale of the bulbs benefit various Lions Club projects, among which are the purchase of glasses for local children whose parents cannot afford to provide them and the sponsorship of local children at the Lions Crippled Children

Camp at Kerrville. The bulbs are \$4.50 for a package of six and are manufactured by Westinghouse, an industry with a local plant. Pictured, left to right, are Dorothy Wynn, 1175 Johnson Woods Dr., an employee at the Paris Westinghouse plant; Lyndol Brown, captain of the winning 1981 light bulb sales team; Wayne Ward, chairman of the bulb sales this year; and Weldon Slaton, president of the local club. (Staff photo by David Sullens)

## Four are charged in Gulf incident

BAYTOWN, Texas (AP) — Four people are charged in a \$15 million extortion plot against a Gulf Oil Chemicals Co. refinery and a reported deadline for payment expired without the threatened explosion, but the plant remains shut down.

"We wouldn't even consider that (resuming normal operations) until we feel it is safe to," Gulf spokesman Barry Smyth said Sunday, adding that the company was waiting for a go-ahead from the FBI.

The slow process of shutting down the Cedar Bayou plant 30 miles east of Houston was completed Thursday morning. Five bombs found at the plant were neutralized that day, including one that exploded harmlessly while being deactivated, officials said.

Authorities continued searching for more bombs Sunday, five days after receiving an extortion letter threatening to blow up the plant. The Baytown Sun has quoted a source as saying the letter said 10 bombs were hidden in the plant and would be detonated unless the money was turned over by midday Sunday.

All four people charged in the extortion plot are from Durango, Colo.

Bond for John Marvin McBride, 46, and Jill Renee Bird, 36, was set at \$1 million each. The pair was arrested Sunday in Durango on warrants charging them with violating the federal extortion statute, the FBI said.

U.S. Magistrate David West scheduled a preliminary hearing for the two at 3 p.m. Friday in Durango. McBride was free on \$25,000 bond in connection with another extortion case in Riverside, Calif., La Plata County sheriff's officials said.

The other two — Theodore Duane McKinney, 45, and Michael Allen Worth, 34 — were arrested in Arizona Friday night and are being held on \$1 million bond in Phoenix. A preliminary hearing is set for them for 3 p.m. Friday in Phoenix.

The owner of a Durango coin shop, Larry Rasmussen, said Worth has a partner named John McBride in a gun shop and private investigation business operated for the last three years one flight above Rasmussen's coin shop. Rasmussen said Worth is known as an excellent gunsmith. Durango police say McBride is a private investigator.

## Border economy bad Business reported down about 75 percent

SAN ANTONIO, Texas (AP) — A downturn in business along the Texas-Mexico border, estimated at about 75 percent, is reminiscent of the Great Depression, merchants who have relied on the faltering peso say.

"No business has not been affected," said Conrado Cruz, executive vice president of the Laredo Chamber of Commerce. "Retail sales are off from 50 to 100 percent. Housing starts are at a standstill, and housing sales have dropped sharply."

Border businessmen said their revenues have already declined, despite an announcement by the Mexican government late Friday that it would relax currency controls.

Mexico devalued the peso in August for the second time and established currency controls Sept. 1 when it nationalized the banks. But it now wants to allow many border Mexican industries to have dollar accounts, which are forbidden in the rest of the country.

"The dependence on the Mexican economy really knocked the pants off a lot of folks here," said Laredo real estate agent Ed Richter. "A project with 50,000 square feet of planned space halted. A condominium project was going full boom in August with 48 of its 50 units sold on paper. When all this happened, the developer found himself with only four units sold."

"The 1930s depression didn't hit us this bad," Richter told The Dallas Morning News.

U.S. Rep. Kika de la Garza, D-Texas, has estimated that Texas border business is off 75 percent as a result of the troubled Mexican economy.

Richter predicts Mexicans account for 70 percent of the property sales in Laredo and South Padre Island developer Richard Franke estimated 50 percent of the condominium sales there over the last few years have been to Mexicans.

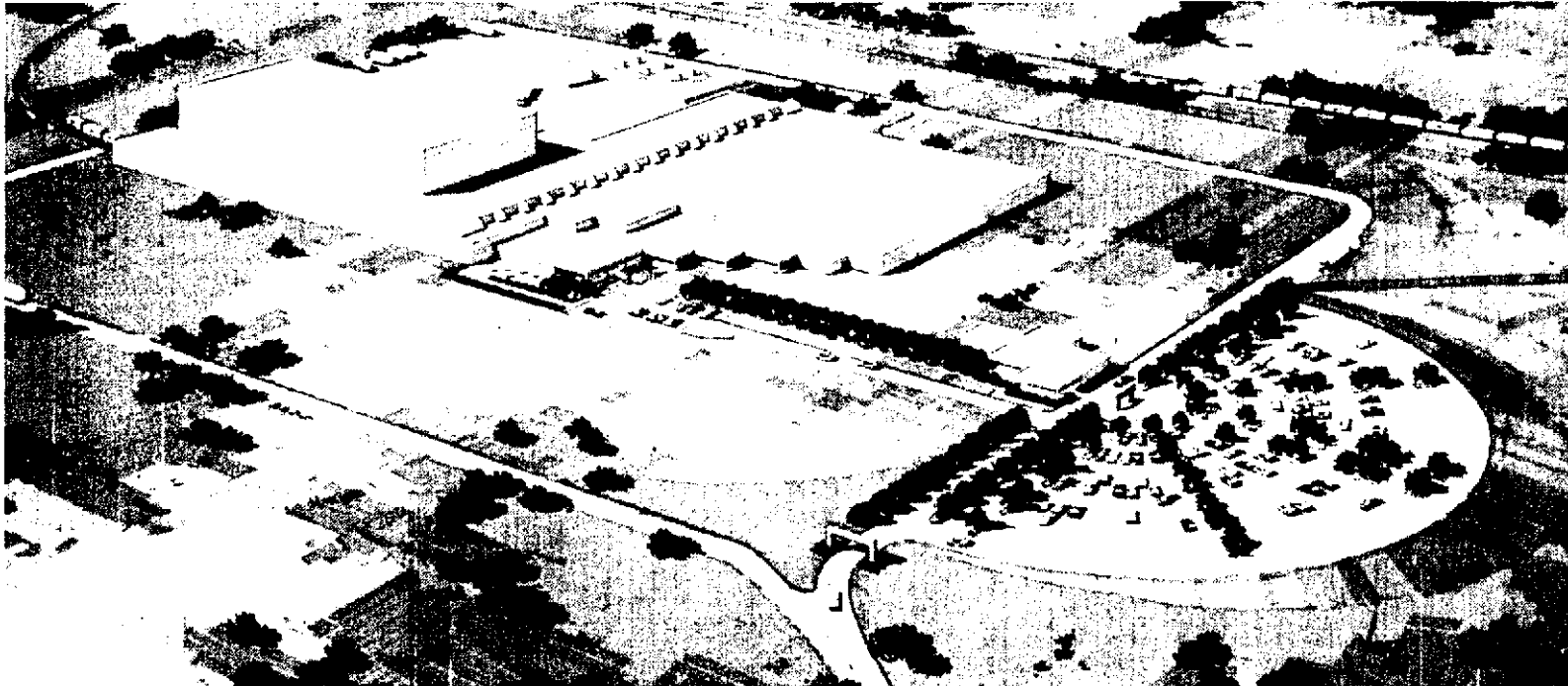
"With the peso devaluation in August, condo sales began hurting,"

said Maria Gonzalez, executive director of the South Padre Island Chamber of Commerce. "With the currency controls in September, Mexican nationals without U.S. bank accounts couldn't get their money out to make mortgage payments."

Michael Portman, a broker with A.G. Edwards and Sons in Laredo, said the currency restrictions are crippling the border area.

"We're seeing a lot of Mexican nationals simply walking away from their commitments," he said. "These are mainly promises on unbuilt properties and all kinds of creative financing on other property. The Mexicans simply can't get their funds out of Mexico to make payments."

Mexico has announced a plan to help Mexicans make payments on property outside Mexico, provided the owners agree to sell the property and return the earnings to Mexico.



**NEW PLANT** — Officials of the Kimberly-Clarke Corporation have released this architect's drawing of the K-C facility now under construction just outside Paris. This view of the facility is, according to a K-C press release, from FM 137 looking northwest. Located near the

intersection of Loop 286 and FM 137, the 430,000 square foot plant will employ 275 people with an annual payroll in excess of \$5 million, officials say. Produced there will be Kleenex Huggies disposable diapers.

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### Weather

Sunday's High: 89 Forecast: Warm  
Overnight Low: 65 Details, Pg. 2

## Kimberly-Clark opens up temporary offices

Officials of the Kimberly-Clarke Corporation have announced the opening of a temporary office at 1220 Clarksville Street in Paris for operations management personnel associated with the now-under-construction Paris K-C plant.

The office, according to company officials, will be open next week and "will be occupied by Leo C. Moersen, Paris plant manager; Mark D. McKeon, personnel and public relations manager; and Patrick T. Killmet, operations manager.

Officials stressed, however that individuals interested in applying for jobs at the new plant should contact

the Paris office of the Texas Employment Commission rather than contacting K-C personnel at the Clarksville Street office.

K-C officials also have released an architect's drawing of the 430,000 square foot Paris facility.

Construction, according to a K-C press release, is on schedule with initial operations expected to begin at the plant next summer. The facility will be located near the intersection of Loop 286 and FM 137. Produced at it will be Kleenex Huggies disposable diapers. The plant will employ 275 people with an annual payroll of more than \$5 million, officials say.

## Area Roundup

### The beavers are back

By Ed Bryson

I'm up in the Tuggle Springs community this time. This old place is on the farm road between Negley and Manchester in Red River County. I've been poking around on Lick Creek near the large Tuggle Springs Cemetery. It's a bit gloomy in there but I tried for pictures of a beaver house and a beaver dam.

Yes, the beavers are back in this area, and have been for the past few years.

Folks are not crying "timber," but they could be, for the beavers are felling more than their share of trees along and near such streams as Lick Creek. The downed trees are used to build dams and some of the smaller saplings are dragged to the damsites.

The dams slow the natural flow of the streams, often stopping it completely, and the impounded water backs out onto pastureland, killing grass and other vegetation.

Most stockmen have strong words for the beavers, but that's not enough. The gnawing animals do most of the damage at night and also outnumber their natural enemies.

I know there are a few friends of the beavers around, but I somehow miss seeing many. I haven't met one this trip.

Up the road from Lick Creek, I saw a woman on a riding lawn mower, or garden tractor, making the dust fly in her large front yard. So I stopped and met Mrs. Sims Taylor, who knows something about beavers, even though she grew up around Lubbock in West Texas. The mower was shredding the big leaves from giant cottonwood trees. Mrs. Taylor said it was easier to shred them than to rake them. More permanent, too.

Later, at the Manchester Mall, I had a little talk with Mr. and Mrs. Joe Upchurch, who own and operate the store and cafe. Edith was riding shoegun that day, so naturally we had to eat. We were both sorry to learn that Mrs. Fannie Covington had suffered a stroke, but were glad she is back from her lengthy stay in the hospital and is improving. She's 80 years old and a person of character and influence. She is the mother of Mrs. Upchurch.

Joe, remarking on the recent hot summer, says he plans to spend next summer in Alaska where he worked for many years. Joe is a pilot and expects to do some flying while otherwise enjoying the cool summer there.

I also talked with the John Nelsons who have a wood shop near the store. A

See BRYSON, Pg. 2

