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 AGENCIES AND RADIO OUT
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 Oil Field Terror—An AP Special Report 450 2 take
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By JOHN S. LANG
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LAFAYETTE, La. AP — A hidden enemy is carrying on a strange guerrilla warfare against the \$1-billion oil industry of southwest Louisiana, dynamiting pipelines, oil wells, service stations and communication lines.

Twenty-two times in the last two years dynamite bombs have exploded in the secrecy of night, causing damage roughly estimated at \$1 million.

Resulting tensions have cost two lives.

One of the most recent blasts, a bombing of a 22-inch gas pipeline near Gueydan, La., on Oct. 5, prompted the Texaco Oil Co. to post a \$50,000 reward. No one has offered information to claim it.

The foe is unnamed, his motives unclear. Only meager clues have been found at bombed sites. And countermeasures taken by state police and the sheriffs of 10 parishes have not achieved a single arrest.

Disturbed citizens have insisted the governor take action. They have formed committees, pooled their money and hired private detectives.

One drilling contractor has armed his 22 employes with shotguns, vowing the bombers "are not going to run these men off."

The big oil and gas corporations have tightened security and joined civic leaders in offering rewards totaling \$80,000. But they admit, privately, they are virtually defenseless.

"There must be 3,000 wells in southwest Louisiana," notes one industry spokesman. "We can't have a man at each well 24 hours a day.

"What can we do? Nothing!"

State and local investigators point out that because dynamite can be planted hours before it is detonated, a bomber has ample time to escape. And the only clues discovered so far have been a pocket knife, a piece of clothing, packing from fuses and items similarly difficult to trace.

Privately officials of oil and gas companies theorize labor is trying to organize the largely nonunion producing companies—firms involved in exploring and drilling for gas and oil—and is harassing the big refining and distributing corporations which continue to use the small, local contractors.

"A maverick union out of California" may be responsible for the trouble, says a high source on the state Labor-Management Commission of Inquiry.

The commission, formed during the summer by a special session of the Louisiana Legislature to solve frequent and expansive tieups between unions and business in the state, has a team of investigators in southwest Louisiana.

Labor leaders deny the charges vehemently.

"We have not nor will we ever be a part of or condone the recent and past dynamiting tactics," says the Lafayette Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO. The council says it issued the statement

"due to rumors, false allegations and accusations in certain quarters that organized labor is responsible for these activities."

The Oilfield Workers Union disclaims any involvement with violence and bombings in southwest Louisiana.

"They would have already caught somebody with the union if it had been them," says Eli Prudhomme, business agent of the local.

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The shock waves of blasts and deaths can be felt by the owner of a small business as well as executives of big gas companies.

"Investors are afraid to come into the area," says Wilfred Begnaud, head of the Association of Industrial Improvement and president of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce.

"I would say the economy of the area is already damaged, in what degree is hard to say."

The mineral-rich area, heavily dependent on the oil and gas industry, is the land of the Cajun—a hot and swampy flatland inhabited by people who speak a French patois as readily as English. It stretches through the parishes of Acadia, Calcasieu, Cameron, Iberia, Jefferson Davis, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary and Vermilion.

Begnaud says several thousand people from throughout the 10 parishes are supporting his improvement association.

"We have told the governor very emphatically that this thing has to be stopped, and we are happy to get the help of his group of trained people. But we are continuing in an independent way, making our own investigation. We have hired a private detective agency.

Texaco, too, is making its own fight. In addition to its \$50,000 reward, the giant corporation has sent investigators into the oil fields. Pan American Petroleum Corp. has security officers working on its properties and has installed alarm systems in its plants and automatic shutoff equipment on its pipelines.

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Chevron has a security force, but company spokesman say they have tried to work primarily through state police.

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