

# New Fires Drive Rescuers From Belle Isle Salt Mine

MORGAN CITY, La. —(UPI) — New fires drove rescuers Thursday from the huge Belle Isle salt mine where 21 miners were trapped by smoke and flames nearly two days ago. No trace of the men was found.

Amid deepening gloom among waiting relatives of the trapped men, Gov. John McKeithen flew to the scene from the state capital at Baton Rouge.

"They tell me we have good reason to be hopeful," he said.

Rescue teams riding a makeshift elevator made two trips into the mine on the marshy Louisiana coast of the Gulf of Mexico.

On the second trip, a trio of rescuers found a small fire and began fighting it with buckets and pumps, Clayton Tonnemaker, vice president of Cargill, Inc., operator of the mine, said.

A second fire broke out over their heads apparently in the timbers.

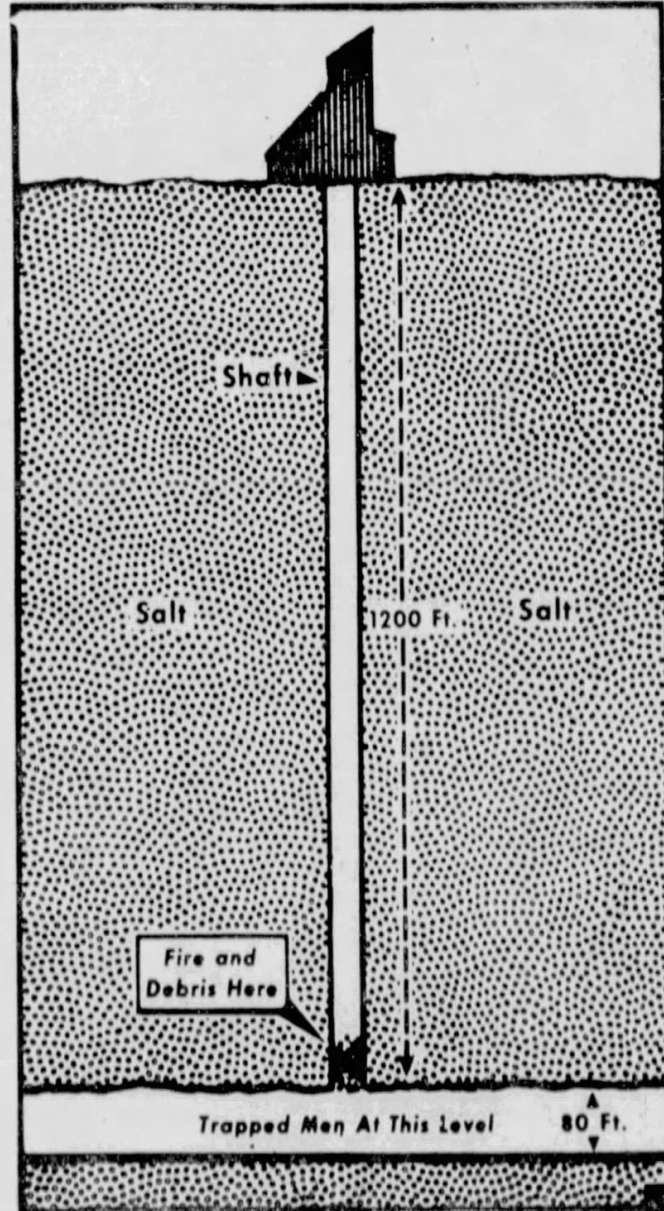
"It got very hot and they couldn't fight the fires any longer and they got in the cage and came back," Tonnemaker said.

Waiting relatives were reported "near the breaking point" on a small dock a few miles away from the mine, which is accessible only by boat or plane.

Tonnemaker said the report of continuing fires did not drastically change his hopeful outlook, but "it certainly isn't good news."

The three rescuers, looking

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## Two Gunmen Rob Brink's

# New Fires Halt Mine Rescuers

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like spacemen in fire-resistant coveralls and oxygen masks, were rushed to the rescue headquarters after emerging from the mine. One took off his mask and pressed a bandage to a burn on his forehead.

The raging fire destroyed the mine entrance and its elevators just before midnight Tuesday. There has been no word from the miners since one of them shouted over a telephone line: "Fire in the shaft!"