

Oil, Gas Leaders Ask Depletion Allowance Raise

ABILENE (AP)—Oil and gas executives asked Tuesday for higher prices, a tax break and less emphasis on environmental safeguards to allow them to cope with energy problems which, they said, will be an American way of life for 20 years.

Several mentioned that Congress must restore the old oil depletion allowance, which was cut from 27.5 per cent to 22 per cent.

Oil is so important, said John McLean of Continental Oil Co., that the United States position as a "major world power" will depend during the next 10-15 years on two or three oil-rich countries in the Middle East.

The executives of the nation's biggest and richest oil and gas companies forecast the demand for petroleum products in this country will rise by between five per cent and "slightly over" seven per cent this year.

They said, like it or not, part of that growing demand must be met by imports from overseas because domestic production is losing ground.

The executives testified for three hours at the Texas Railroad Commission's statewide oil allowable hearing, which was scheduled here—for the first time—to get views on the state of the industry.

Texas' oil allowable was maintained at 100 per cent for the 13th consecutive month.

The usual exceptions were made to the 100 per cent factor—the mammoth East Texas Field was restricted to 86 per cent production, Kelly-Snyder to 76 per cent and Tom O'Connor to 70 per cent.

Several smaller fields were limited to 80 per cent production. McLean said the United States

has enough oil, gas, coal, uranium and shale oil to meet energy requirements for 200 years. But, he said, those sources must be developed fast enough to meet requirements for the next 10 or 15 years.

He recommended the establishment of a Cabinet level agency to coordinate national efforts on energy matters, and he said if it takes an "energy czar," so be it.

B. E. Milner, vice president of Atlantic Richfield Co., protested that the cost of delay in producing oil from Alaska because of environmental concerns had been "an unacceptably high cost."

At some point, said T. M. Powell, vice president of Standard Oil Co. of California, "good sense ceases and fanaticism takes over. The demagogues of this country are crucifying the citizens on the cross of consumerism."

John Olsen, vice president of Sun Oil Co., said he hopes the oil industry will be allowed more access to "high potential areas such as Alaska, and the offshore areas of California, the Gulf Coast and the Atlantic Seaboard."

J. K. Warno, executive vice president of Gulf Oil Co., said price controls over primary fuels should be eliminated to aid the industry in developing natural resources.

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A&M To Study Big City Life, Human Goals

Dallas will be the pilot city for a Texas A&M study to determine the relationship between human goals and the quality of life in metropolitan environments.

The study will be headed by Dr. Charles A. Nickerson under a \$10,000 grant from TAMU's Environmental Quality Program.

Dr. Nickerson said the first phase of the project involves development of a numerical index of environmental quality in the Dallas standard metropolitan statistical area.

Input will be obtained from a large, scientifically selected sample of Dallas-area residents, the associate professor of accounting noted, marking the first such effort has been made to measure environmental quality against standards established by a cross-section of citizens.

"An index of environmental quality has potential value to government planners as a guide for the allocation of public resources and as a tool to assist in the evaluation of individual governmental programs," Dr. Nickerson explained.

He said the interpretations of environmental quality will be made by the persons interviewed.

"We will be asking the people themselves what is important," Dr. Nickerson added. "We want to know what they are thinking. We would expect their responses to include such aspects as health, personal safety and education."

Dallas was chosen for the initial study because of its seemingly typical mix of ethnic groups, he noted.