



## Jimmy Carter's secret is zero base budgeting

WASHINGTON — Last week, there was a fascinating example of the gap between campaign rhetoric and governmental reality. It involves the somewhat forbidding topic of "zero-base budgeting."

Zero base budgeting is a management technique that was developed eight years ago in private industry, at Texas Instruments. The technique was carried by its inventor, Peter A. Pyhrr, to the state of Georgia and applied by the state government during the four years Jimmy Carter was governor.

As defined by Allen Schnick, a management specialist in the Congressional Research Service, zero-base budgeting or ZBB is "a procedure for examining the entire budget, not just the funds requested above the current level of spending."



David S. Broder

It thus differs from (normal) incremental budgeting in which review is concentrated on proposed increases while the "base" is given little attention. The term "zero-base budgeting" indicates that a government's budget should be rejustified from scratch each year or two, with the same standards applied to old and new programs.

Carter, in his presidential campaign, has promised dozens of audiences that zero-base budgeting will be instituted in Washington "by executive order the day I become President." He has publicized ZBB, along with his promised but undefined "total reorganization" of the executive branch of government, as the principal tools for cutting down "the wasteful, bloated, overlapping inefficient" federal bureaucracy.

Over half the Senate and more than 100 members of the House have cosponsored legislation applying the principle of ZBB to the budget. The Senate Government Operations Committee recently approved a bill sponsored by Sen. Edmund S. Muskie (D-Me.), requiring virtually all existing programs of the federal government to undergo zero-base review prior to a decision on whether they should be continued. The bill sets up a systematic schedule of program reauthorization between 1979 and 1983.

The "sunset legislation," based on laws passed in Colorado and other states, has also been heavily publicized by politicians this year as an answer to the public's rising impatience with ineffective, costly and duplicative government programs.

Given all the political attention to this topic, it was somewhat surprising to walk into a hearing on ZBB at the House Budget Committee one morning last week and find no other reporters present. Nor was this a unique situation. Reading the transcript of the hearing which Muskie conducted on his bill last spring, you find him lamenting the fact that only one reporter, John Averill of the Los Angeles Times, was present during key testimony from Dr. Alice Rivlin, head of the Congressional Budget Office.

What this reflects is the tendency — which all of us in the press have been guilty of — to publicize a slogan or proposal without giving comparable attention to its substance. Particularly is that the case when that slogan is announced in circus-size headlines of a presidential campaign, while its substance is slowly being explored in the fine print of a congressional hearing.

This journalistic habit of leaping first and looking afterward is itself a major contributor to the public disillusionment with political promises.

Too many proposals have been acclaimed in the press and then revealed to be hasty, ill-considered and exaggerated. ZBB may well be one of them, judging from the largely ignored testimony.

Last week, the four principal witnesses before Chairman Brock

## Threshold test ban: cosmetic pact

By SANFORD GOTTLIB

The word "cosmetic" comes from the Greek, meaning skilled in adornment. That's a good description of the threshold test ban treaty between the Soviet Union and the United States. The treaty — or more precisely two treaties, one on underground weapons tests and a second on so-called "peaceful nuclear explosions" (PNE's) — had its genesis in Watergate. In 1974 President Nixon was under fire, and needed a quick and easy treaty with the Soviet Union in order to enhance his image as a peacemaker.

The result was the 1974 threshold test ban treaty, banning underground nuclear tests above 150 kilotons. This ceiling is equivalent to 150,000 tons of TNT, 10 times the size of the Hiroshima explosion. Underground tests are used for weapons development; tests up to 150 kilotons permit development of nuclear weapons of considerable size. Under the guise of "arms con-

tro," the treaty gives the military establishments of both nations diplomatic immunity to seek bigger and better weapons of mass destruction.

The threshold treaty was signed by both sides, but the Nixon and Ford Administrations did not submit it to the Senate for ratification. Meanwhile, the two governments slowly negotiated a pact linking "peaceful nuclear explosions" to the 150-kiloton threshold. Now the Senate must decide whether to ratify a double treaty which permits both kinds of nuclear tests to continue below a level of 10 Hiroshimas. Moreover, the PNE accord would allow a series of linked nuclear detonations totaling 1,500,000 tons of TNT equivalent.

The private groups and individuals which constitute the arms control and disarmament community are opposed to the threshold treaty. They see it as a setback to their efforts to bring the suicidal arms race

under control. They present a solid front, urging the Administration to reopen negotiations with the USSR in order to achieve a total ban on underground nuclear tests.

The Administration makes much of the fact that the PNE treaty provides for on-site inspection for the first time. But the complex procedure for inviting "designated personnel" to a specific place at a chosen time resembles in no way the kind of mobile inspection that experts talked about 15 years ago. This carefully stage-managed version of inspection would not be a good precedent for serious disarmament treaties. Nor would it even be

necessary to monitor a ban on underground tests. Instruments are capable of detecting most seismic events as earthquakes or explosions.

In the Limited Test Ban Treaty of 1963, the super-powers themselves to seek an end to clear tests. In the 1965 Proliferation Treaty, they themselves to seek nuclear armament. With the threshold they are doing neither. So are needed to make it smell like something that

Gottlieb is a correspondent for the Interest, a press service of the Peace.

**Sun Theaters**  
333 University 846-4111  
**The only movies in town.**  
Special Midnight Shows Friday & Saturday \$2.00 per person  
No one under 17.  
Escorted Ladies Free  
ALL SEATS \$3.  
\$1 off with this ad.

**There IS a difference!!!**

- MCAT • LSAT • DAT
- GMAT • CPAT • VAT • GRE • OCAT • SAT
- NATIONAL MED. & DENT. BOARDS
- ECFMG • FLEX

Flexible Programs and Hours

Over 38 years of experience and success. Voluminous home study materials. Programs that are constantly updated. Centers open days and weekends all year. Complete tape facilities for review and use of supplementary materials.

11300 N. CENTRAL EXPWY.  
SUITE 407  
DALLAS, TEXAS 75231  
(214) 750-0317

In Bryan/College Station, Call 846-1322  
Affiliated Centers in Major U. S. Cities

Professional Designers For Tailored Hair Cutting

**McLaughlin's**  
of corpus christi  
1403 University Dr. 846-5764

**ZACHARIAS greenhouse**  
COLLEGE STATION'S NEWEST AND MOST UNIQUE CLUB AND GAME PARLOR

HAPPY HOUR  
2 • 7  
7 DAYS A WEEK

JOIN YOUR FRIENDS OVERLOOKING THE POOL AND TENNIS COURTS AT THE BRIARWOOD APARTMENTS WHERE YOU CAN ENJOY YOUR FAVORITE DRINK SURROUNDED BY A GARDEN OF GREEN PLANTS. WE SPECIALIZE IN SERVING CLASSIC AND EXOTIC DRINKS. OUR PLUSH GAME PARLOR OFFERS THE FINEST IN POOL TABLES, FOOSBALL, PINBALL AND ELECTRONIC GAMES.

1201 HIGHWAY 30, BRIARWOOD APTS. (FORMERLY "THE PENTHOUSE CLUB")

Adams' (D-Wash.) House Budget Committee hearings were highly regarded professionals in the area of government program evaluation. All of them have spent most of their working lives in pursuit of greater productivity and effectiveness in government. And all expressed strong cautions about a precipitous plunge into the world of ZBB and "sunset laws," even while reaffirming the need for more effective evaluation of government spending.

Schnick, the Library of Congress expert, noted, for example, that "the few studies of ZBB in operation have suggested that it does not significantly affect the efficient allocation of a government's financial resources, that the content of the budget is not necessarily different after ZBB than before."

Paul H. O'Neill, the deputy director of the Office of Management and Budget, said ZBB and the "sunset legislation" establishing it "may lead to a paperwork process that is mind-boggling even by Washington standards."

Phillip S. Hughes, assistant comptroller general in the General Accounting Office, the congressional watchdog agency, cautioned that experience with "sunset laws" and ZBB is "very limited" and warned of the "danger... that it be regarded as some magical black box."

"A good many more people are writing books telling you how to do it than are actually doing it effectively," he said.

William Gorham, the president of

the Urban Institute, a Washington think tank and evaluator of government programs, said that the review program envisioned by the Muskie bill would vastly overstrain "the capacities or potential capacities" of the executive branch and Congress and inevitably "undermine the credibility of the act."

Similar warnings came during Senate hearings from Roy Ash, the Nixon administration budget chief; James T. Lynn, the current budget director; Alice Rivlin of the Congressional Budget Office and a dozen others who would not be considered soft on wasteful government spending by anyone.

As Peter Pyhrr, the inventor of ZBB, said, "Some of Sen. Muskie's words at the time of the introduction of this legislation are most appropriate to such a massive change as I think zero-base budgeting would produce."

What Muskie said was: "In too many cases, we in Congress have satisfied ourselves with the rhetoric of legislation, leaving the hard work of implementation... to the executive branch."

To which one could add: In too many cases, the press has satisfied itself with publicizing a program instead of examining both the pitfalls and potential of a program. Let's hope that's not going to be case again.

(c) 1976, The Washington Post Company

For Battalion Classified  
Call 845-2611

**NEED EXTRA CASH?**  
Become a Plasma Donor at  
**PLASMA PRODUCT INC.**  
313 College Main, College Station  
Cash given with each Donation.

**GABE & WALKER'S • 846-4121**  
One Mile West of West Bypass on FM 60  
DINE-IN, ORDERS TO GO,  
OR EAT OUT ON "THE SLU"

Featuring: BEEF PORK  
RIBS LINKS ~~POSSUM~~

Tuesday-Saturday 11:00-9:00  
Sunday 11:00-8:00  
Closed Monday

**CATERING SERVICE**  
• Plates • Sandwiches  
• Beer • Cold Drinks  
• Butcher Paper Spreads  
to your Order

**The Battalion**

Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the editor or of the writer of the article and are not necessarily those of the university administration or the Board of Regents. The Battalion is a non-profit, self supporting enterprise operated by students as a university and community newspaper. Editorial policy is determined by the editor.

Acting for the Director of Student Publications ..... Scott Sherman

**LETTERS POLICY**

Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words and are subject to being cut to that length or less if longer. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit such letters and does not guarantee to publish any letter. Each letter must be signed, show the address of the writer and list a telephone number for verification.

Address correspondence to Listen Up, The Battalion, Room 217, Services Building, College Station, Texas 77843.

Represented nationally by National Educational Advertising Services, Inc., New York City, Chicago and Los Angeles.

Mail subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester; \$33.25 per school year; \$35.00 per full year. All subscriptions subject to 5% sales tax. Advertising rates furnished on request. Address: The Battalion, Room 217, Services Building, College Station, Texas 77843.

Rights of reproduction of all matter herein are reserved. Second-Class postage paid at College Station, Texas.

Editor ..... Jerry Needham  
Managing Editor ..... Richard Chamberlain  
Sports Editor ..... Paul McGrath  
Campus Editor ..... Lisa Junod  
Photographers ..... Steve Goble, Kevin Venner  
Production ..... LeAnn Roby, Susan Brown

**Attention — Off Campus Students**

**"Do You Need Telephone Service??"**

Applications Will Be Taken At The  
**"GTE FALL SIGN-UP CENTER"**  
(Located N.E. Corner Culpepper Plaza, Texas Ave. & Hwy. 30)

AUG. 16 — SEPT. 3, 1976  
9 a.m. - 6 p.m.

MONDAY — SATURDAY

**"Let our Sales Representatives Show You The Latest Styles in Pashionable Phones"**

**"Come Early & Beat the Rush"**