

Opinion/Commentary/Letters

An economic point of view

You can't have your home and heat it, too

By MARK RANKIN
It seems that we are on the verge of a "national energy policy." This may or may not seem important to you depending on whether or not you have been on the verge of a national energy policy for some time. Presumably, the national energy policy will be enforced by the national energy police.

The fact is that when the energy policy comes it will be primarily directed toward the "dwindling" supply of, and "increasing" demand for, petroleum. As the most versatile of the fossil fuels, petroleum is also the most crucial in terms of our individual welfare and the welfare of the nation as a whole.

The national energy policy will

consist of various measures intended to affect either the quantity of petroleum supplied to the marketplace, or the quantity demanded by individuals and industry or, the nature of the demand for the substance itself. In all likelihood, the policy will incorporate all three approaches. It is important to note, however, that nothing the government can legislate will increase the actual supply of petroleum as it has not yet managed to gain control over time, chemistry, and physics.

The first option concerns measures to increase the quantity of petroleum supplied to consumers. In general, there is only one way to accomplish this: the flow of oil and gas from producers to retailers must be increased. This could be im-

plemented from a purely production point of view by creating incentives which would encourage increased exploration (with no guarantee as to success) or by reducing the cost of production. The latter measure would take the form of a subsidy covering a portion of the cost of production. We all know who ends up paying the subsidy. Another measure might make existing reservoirs, such as those under the "protection" of federal and state entities, available for new production. Of course there is always the possibility that the government will de-regulate the price of oil and gas allowing producers to gauge their production by the profit they stand to make in subjecting themselves to the harsh reality that price and "quantity demanded" move in opposite directions. Don't hold your breath on the last one.

In the area of suppressing the quantity of petroleum demanded, there are likely to be measures which tax use of energy, in effect — raise its price. Possibly the energy policy will reward those who voluntarily restrict consumption. Another subsidy. Similarly, the government may require that industries pay taxes or collect subsidies based on their energy usage. Or, they could de-regulate the price of oil and gas allowing consumers to gauge their consumption on the basis of the wealth-comfort tradeoff.

Finally, the national energy policy should try to change the nature of the demand for petroleum products. The government will subsidize efforts to develop additional sources of energy. We will be forced to

adopt technology which uses less energy. We will be required to wear three coats in the winter and nothing in the summer. New England could be sold to Saudi Arabia.

Or... the price of oil and gas could be de-regulated. As the price of energy rises, the search for a cheaper technology would expand. Similarly, people would begin to adopt alternatives to energy usage that have been around all the time (riding bicycles and wearing additional clothing in the winter).

There is one energy policy that promises to accomplish every energy goal except for one. It is called the market and the one goal it will not accomplish is simple: it will not allow us to "increase" our demand for a scarce resource at a rate which exceeds that at which the resource is "dwindling." But then, when it comes to scarce resources, there are times when you can't have your home and heat it, too.

Rankin is a graduate student in economics.

Readers' forum

Guest viewpoints, in addition to Letters to the Editor, are welcome. All pieces submitted to Readers' forum should be:

- Typed triple space
- Limited to 60 characters per line
- Limited to 100 lines

Submit articles to Reed McDonald 217, College Station, Texas, 77843. Author's name and phone number must accompany all submissions.

The Battalion

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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.

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Use B-CS as testing grounds

Editor:
Has it ever occurred to anyone that Bryan-College Station is a lot like Dole pineapple in Hawaii? Dole plants, harvests and then cans the pineapple in the islands, however the pineapple is not marketed directly in Hawaii. The pineapple is first sent to the mainland and then shipped back to the island stores for consumer use.

Now you are probably asking how are the twin cities like Dole pineapple? It's not exactly the cities that are like the pineapple factory, it's more like Texas A&M. Now, hold on everyone and calm down. I know a sensitive nerve has been hit (like a dentist drilling on a tooth) however, just consider what I am saying.

Texas A&M is one of the nation's finest, most outstanding institutions of higher learning, excelling in almost every field of academic pursuit offered. Texas A&M is also one of the top universities in the country receiving federal grants for research purposes. And our graduates are leaders in all fields of endeavor. So what's the problem?

With all this wonderful technology which abounds around us why does Bryan-College Station have some of the WORST roads seen anywhere in the country? And we have one of the finest asphalt engineering departments in the country. Why can't traffic flow smoothly along the streets in town? Why can't the university use a paint on the bike lanes that won't be worn off in a few weeks' time or dissolved in the rain? Why can't the Bryan-College Station area be used as a test facility for all these wonderful innovative engineering products developed at this school? Why? Because like the pineapples, the technology developed at this institution is exported first before becoming available for in-house use.

So the next time you're riding your bicycle over one of the wash board streets or your car sinks up to its axles in one of the many chuckholes the Texas Highway Department just loves to fill in with cheap asphalt (that washes away in the first rain) ask yourself the above questions. After all, who is John Galt?

—Allan Stern

Perhaps it would be a good idea to borrow political forum's soapbox for the all night fair and have a soapbox set up the year around for anyone to use to get something off his back.

—Colin Crombie

S(t)imulating politics at A&M

Editor:
From my understanding, apathy has plagued student government elections in recent years.

The reasons are various, the most common probably being lack of knowledge on the voter's part concerning the candidate's political point of view. If one does indeed vote during an election, one usually votes for his friends and any name that "looks good." I feel that since the elections are democratic, the winner should represent the majority of the student body, not his friends.

Everyone sees the candidates' names literally plastered all over College Station, but never are any policies or proposals seen. Nobody has any idea what the candidates stand for or what they plan to do if elected. True, many campaign promises are broken or simply "forgotten," but isn't it better to have some basis to fall back on when it comes time to vote?

Perhaps next year we may be able to see a few speeches and hand shaking.

—Geoff Mantooth, '80

Serkin coverage was missing
Editor:
I was very dismayed to see that the Battalion did not comment or report on the excellent performance given by Rudolph Serkin two weeks ago in the Rudder Auditorium. Mr. Serkin, who is 74, has performed in numerous countries around the world and has won various distinguished awards, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom. He is regarded by many as one of the

finest living pianists today.

True, Texas A&M is not nationally as a school of musical enrichment, but surely, one of the voices of plastic is blown A&M, could squeeze in a fully inflated Mr. Serkin between the get wide, 30 ft film sidewalks and the Pine Village Police department.

Though many people at A&M do not appreciate classical music, it is not because they are turned off rather they have never been exposed to it.

—Robert Rose

ARKROOM this man who can play two beautiful music to a packed room? Southern and is forced to come back every two encores.

The head of the department has done the same thing. A set of plastic is blown wide, 30 ft film sidewalks and the Pine Village Police department.

The darkness of the room is not because they are turned off rather they have never been exposed to it.

—Robert Rose

What happened to Peace Corps
Editor:
Are you wondering where Peace Corps is today?

Peace Corps is alive in the developing nations and 6,300 teens strong.

If you haven't heard from lately, it's because Peace Corps matured. An average volunteer is years old now.

We're still idealistic, but we know us say we're more practical.

Yes, we still need volunteer Young and old. In agriculture, development, business and management, education, health, urban development.

Peace Corps pays all travel medical expenses, as well as a modest living allowance. Winner that aside \$125 for each month. He is payable on volunteer's terminal science home.

If your readers want to know more about Peace Corps, write Peace Corps, Suite 101, 212 North St. Paul, Dallas, TX 75201.

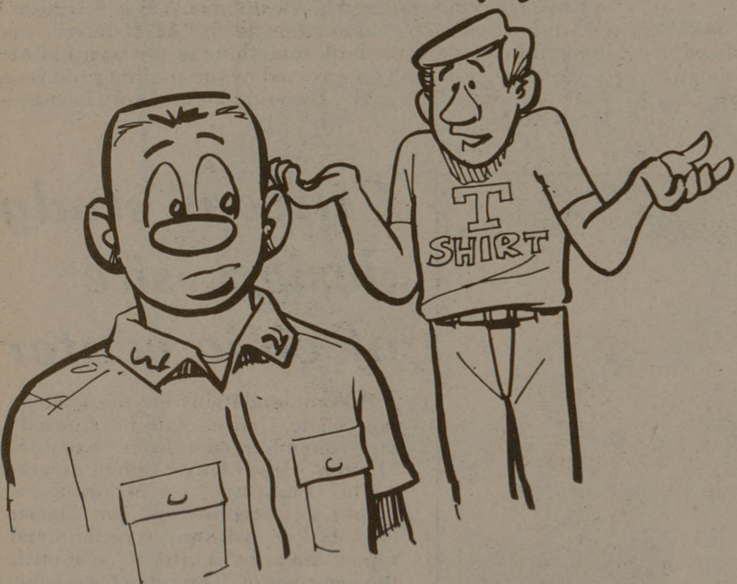
Thank you.

—Richard Creek to nurse Service Center Dallas

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Slouch

by Jim Earle



"WHY ISN'T IT DISCRIMINATORY? IF I MAKE A D JUST BECAUSE I'M NOT A HARD WORKER, IT'S DISCRIMINATORY!"

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Fr. James Moore, Chaplain

Fabric Care News
Helpful Hints From Your Dry-Cleaner

- Use only cold water when laundering 100% acrylics or polyesters. Hot water will make them stretch permanently.
- Do not attempt to remove stains from corduroy, velvet or flocked garments by rubbing or scrubbing. Doing so will remove the nap.
- Be careful in storing garments in plastic bags for any length of time, especially during the summer. Heat may adhere the plastic to the fabric.
- Before buying leather or suede garments, check for imperfections in the leather caused by injuries to the animal from barbed wire, kicks from other animals, ticks and other insect bites. These scars become apparent as soon as some of the leather dye fades.

We hope the above suggestions will help you to save money when buying and in the care of your clothing. Future columns will deal with specific subjects and problems encountered with the current fads and fashions. If we do not cover your particular problem, please feel free to drop-in or call us. We will be glad to help you.

This column brought to you through the cooperative efforts of these College Station dry-cleaners:

University Cleaners Northgate
University Cleaners II Hwy. 2818
Aggie Cleaners Northgate

Invite the bunch...
Mix a great, big bucket full of
Open House Punch!
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One 6-oz. can frozen orange juice
One 6-oz. can frozen lemonade

Chill ingredients. Mix in bucket, adding 7UP last. Add a few drops red food coloring (optional); stir lightly. Add ice, orange, lemon slices. Looks and tastes great!

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