

OCSA needs a start

Today is the deadline for filing for Off-Campus Student Association representative positions. The problem is that only six students have even filed for the 22 positions. The organization started two years ago after much planning in an effort to consolidate and represent the mass of off-campus students attending Texas A&M. The 23,000 students seem to be scarce when it comes to their own organization. The only qualifications for running are a 2.25 grade point ratio and residency in the zone they would represent. The organization is still a fledgling. But it could be as important as the on-campus organizations that unite students in common goals, like the Residence Hall Association or Student Government. The deadline is 3 p.m. — How about it?



The oil embargo threat - 5 years later

By JOHN F. SIMS
UPI Business Writer

WASHINGTON — Just suppose the Camp David Middle East summit between Egypt and Israel had failed. And suppose President Sadat of Egypt had been able to persuade his oil-rich Arab friends the only weapon that might bring pressure to bear on Israel would be an embargo on oil deliveries to the United States. If the Arab oil producing countries went along with it, what would be the effect on the United States? Five years ago today, in the middle of the Yom Kippur war, the Arab oil producers put into effect an oil embargo aimed at swaying world support in favor of the Arab side of the conflict. In 1973, the United States depended on Arab oil producers for 13.6 percent of total imports and 4.8 percent of total supplies. Where do we stand five years later? In the first three months of this year the Arab producers provided 49.6 percent of total U.S. imports and 15.5 percent of U.S. needs. The United States depends on Arab oil much more now than it ever did. Robert Hemphill, a deputy assistant secretary at the Department of Energy, said President Carter had given formulation of a national energy policy such a high priority precisely because of America's increased reliance on imported Arab oil. What are the chances of another oil embargo? "It is difficult to discount completely," Hemphill said, as long as Israel remains at loggerheads with its Middle East neighbors. "The cost of another embargo would be so vast that it is wise to take any and all precautions possible," he said. Frank Ikard, president of the American Petroleum Institute, said: "Five years after the Arab oil embargo the nation has accomplished little toward alleviating the effects of a possible new one. To put it bluntly, should an embargo occur tomorrow, we could be more vulnerable than ever," he said. In fact, before the Camp David summit there were reports that President Sadat had asked Arab oil producers if they would back his political efforts with an oil embargo if necessary. Their answer, if the reports are correct, is not known. The embargo began Oct. 18, 1973, and lasted until March 18, 1974. The cutbacks imposed gradually by the Arab oil producers reduced the availability of Arab oil from 20.8 million barrels a day in October, 1973, to 15.8 million barrels by December. The total Arab cut was 5 million barrels a day. Increased production in Canada, Iran and Nigeria made up about 600,000 barrels a day. The cutback was on the order of seven percent of total daily production, but shortages were widely felt.

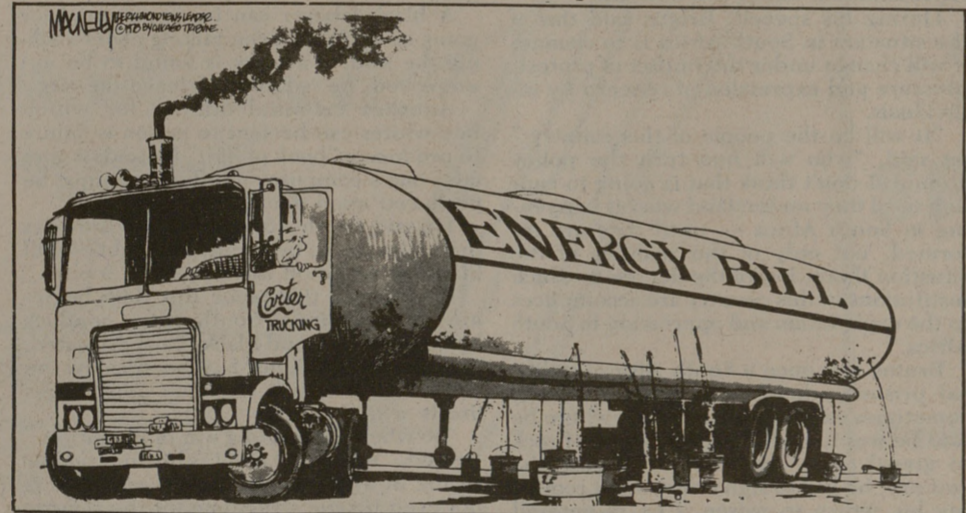
In Europe, Germany and Holland banned all except emergency use of automobiles on Sundays. Queen Juliana and the rest of the Dutch royal family rode bicycles to set an example. The blow for European countries was cushioned by their stockpiles of as much as two months of average need. Arab attitudes toward consumer nations changed as the latter changed their Middle East policies. Britain, which significantly shifted its pro-Israeli stance to clear-cut support of the Arab position early in the October war, was placed on the Arab "priority" list to receive oil imports as usual. But the oil companies still cut exports to Britain despite angry confrontations with then Prime Minister Edward Heath. Japan, which depends on imports for about 98 percent of its oil needs, issued a series of statements designed to appease Arab exporters and week by week shifted away from support of Israel. American oil experts have said the embargo worked so well in the United States because of U.S. government regulations. To "share the shortage," the government prohibited refiners from processing more than a certain amount of crude oil even if it had been available. According to some, if price restrictions had been lifted American oil companies could have paid the kind of prices that would have brought the United States all the oil it needed from non-Arab sources. The evidence does not really support that view. The German government, for instance, decided to rely on market forces to keep up essential supplies. But despite the fact Germany was paying higher prices for oil than, say, France, it still was among the worst affected. Later analysis revealed the Arab oil embargo was 91 percent effective. Economists are divided on how badly the United States would be affected by a new embargo. Some, looking at the simple fact half America's oil imports are from Arab countries, fear a disastrous worst.

A Shell Oil Co. spokesman, for instance, warned: "We can weather a short embargo, but an extended embargo would entail a disruptive change and possibly a major economic recession." Others, bearing in mind customary disension within the Arab world, an improved stockpile situation and the probability of better organization of supplies, are more hopeful. The United States itself has virtually no "shut-in" production capacity — which means there is almost no leeway to produce more oil domestically in an emergency. Non-Arab oil exporting countries — Iran, Nigeria, Indonesia, Venezuela, Canada and others — have some excess capacity they could bring into play. But the total would fall far short of making up the difference. Three years ago the United States decided that by 1982 it would establish a strategic oil reserve of about 500 million

working stocks and instead reflects anticipation of oil or natural gas shortages," an API report said. The storage tank orders indicated a trend toward more private sector stockpiling, although economists say that the amount of oil in storage is difficult to measure. It is also possible that buying the petroleum products now in storage over the years has inflated consumption figures at least slightly. What could have been done in the last five years to improve the situation? "Any number of things," according to Hemphill. "For example: President Ford proposed the gradual decontrol of the price of crude oil and President Carter proposed the crude oil equalization tax that would have had the same effect on the market. The congress did not act on either." According to the oil companies, the real problem has been a continuing burden of government regulation and unrealistically low prices which they say have deterred exploration. That argument does not sit easily with the facts that 1) exploration activity is at its highest level ever and 2) newly-found petroleum can be priced at the world market level. Jerry McAfee, chairman and chief executive of Gulf Oil, told UPI there had been some progress in the last five years. "But the country has procrastinated in a fundamental area — in erasing the myth of cheap energy, and in eliminating the unrealistic pricing structures that serve as a disincentive for producers, and an incentive for consumers," he said. "Despite the well-meaning efforts of three presidents and nearly six sessions of congress our existing 'energy program' is a labyrinth of laws, regulations, taxes and subsidies that encourage consumption, discourage U.S. production and increase U.S. reliance on imports." McAfee called on President Carter to use executive authority rather than wait for congress to take the necessary steps. "Whatever the fate of President Carter's energy program the president already has within his authority — under existing legislation — the power to increase crude oil prices incrementally to near the world market level by 1981," he said.

analysis

barrels, enough at that time to ensure about three months supply. President Carter revised the plan to make 1980 the target date for the three-month reserve. But by August the nation had only six days supply in underground storage. The Department of Energy plans to have 125 million barrels stored by the end of the year. One interesting development noted by the American Petroleum Institute has been a quantum leap in orders for storage tanks. In the two years that followed the Arab oil embargo, American businesses and consumers — apart from the oil companies — sharply increased their purchases of oil and gas storage tanks. "Since petroleum demand declined during this period, the increased capacity was not required to maintain a stable level of



"This, plus phased deregulation of natural gas prices, would not only encourage more use of fuel but would offer impetus to increase our domestic supplies. And it would help supply the tremendous capital required to develop invaluable alternate fuels." Shell Oil, reviewing the period since the embargo, added: "It has taken us five years just to reach a point where more than 50 percent of the people agree that there is an energy problem. The major question is how rapidly can we now move toward resolving the problem," a Shell spokesman said.

Letters to the Editor

Football season isn't over, Ags

Editor: Saturday night, I attended the A&M-UH football game. After the game was over, I overheard many people, mostly former students, saying that A&M "might as well throw in the towel after that one!" Why are these Ags ready to give up on our team, coach, and season so easy? Sure, we lost the game. But is that the end of the season? Are we out of the conference race? No way! Don't tell me that I'm just freshman and I don't know enough about A&M football to say these things. One doesn't have to be a student here to know how far Coach Bellard has brought the Aggies. I'm sure that our football team doesn't have this attitude. Is there a reason for us to?

— Mark Hudgens, '82

It's a shame that an Aggie could be so cruel and immature. The fact that he admitted to the crime seems to imply that he is proud of his sadistic deed. One such individual should read Eric Berne's "Games People Play," paying special attention to the game he is playing. To those readers who are pet owners, it should be easy to understand the grief caused by the loss of a pet and the anger felt by knowing the act was DELIBERATE.

— Randall Beggs, '80
Ron Wells, '79
Karl Owen, '79

Editor's note: this letter was accompanied by two other signatures.

Keep sports fun

Editor: I just got back to my dorm room after officiating two flag football games. I'm not in a very good mood because I have had to put up with complaining, moaning and groaning from opposing teams for two hours. Sure there are times when you expect to get "bad" teams in terms of sportsmanship. Also, there are "bad apples" on every team, so there is sure to be someone giving it to you most every game. But folks, this is getting ridiculous.

Teams are showing up hostile towards officials, openly in contempt (and ignorant) of intramural rules, and generally acting like horse's butts. This isn't happening just occasionally, but for the majority of men's games and some women's games (co-recreational seems, for the most part, to be immune from this sickness). All of you are missing the real joy offered from participating in intramurals. These leagues are not the NFL, nor the officials the best in the nation (however, they do a good job considering their level of experience and pay scale — if you don't agree please come by and apply. James Welford is an equal opportunity employer and invites anyone who can do the job to come and try). Intramurals is an avenue for fun and fellowship with other students. It also offers a medium of competition which many enjoy. This is all lost when people are constantly "hot and bothered" by other teams, or an official's call, or their own ineffectual performance. Let's put the fun back in intramurals. I know it goes against human nature to be agreeable, respectful of officials, play by the rules, control our tempers, and have the maturity to congratulate the other team when they make a good play (rather than chalking up to luck). But if we all put in a little effort it is possible and I believe the rewards will be readily seen. Of course it may be that acting like

"Good Ags" on the playing field is too much of a price to pay to give up such pleasurable activities as cussing out officials, intentionally roughing up other players, and getting mad at ourselves for not measuring up to our own over-inflated evaluations of our physical abilities.

— Scott Lane, '80

New readers' letter section

The Battalion is offering a new reader's letter section to give students more access to the newspaper and to the University. "Talk with Dr. Miller" is a forum for readers to address questions to the administration about University policies and procedures. Questions should be addressed to The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, and should specify that they are to be used for this column. Names and phone numbers will be required on all questions and Dr. Miller has the option to decline to answer a question or request others on the staff or faculty to answer it. Questions and answers will be published on the editoriat page.

Absentee voting opens today

Absentee voting begins today at the Brazos County clerk's office. Balloting opens at 8 a.m. and closes at 5 p.m. each day, Monday through Friday, until Nov. 3. Residents wishing to vote absentee must bring their yellow voter registration card.

STATE

Prisoner costs up in county jails

Harris County commissioners have voted to send a letter to a federal judge requesting that 33 county-housed prisoners testifying in an inmate lawsuit, be moved to a Texas Department of Corrections unit at Sugar Land. County Judge Jon Lindsay said the federal government should build its own jail to house federal prisoners and relieve the county of that burden. The commissioners voted Monday to have county auditors determine exactly what it costs to hold prisoners in county facilities. Lindsay requested last week that the \$8-a-prisoner-a-day cost that the county assesses the Justice Department be raised to \$25. He said it cost at least \$14 a day to house the prisoners. "I want to discourage them (federal officials) from sending any federal prisoners to us," Lindsay said. Other officials doubted it cost more than \$8-a-day to care for the inmates. The county ordinarily houses about 75 federal prisoners at any given time.

Hill protests energy legislation

Attorney General John Hill, the Democratic nominee for governor, says he will file a suit by next week challenging the mandatory natural gas pricing provisions of the new Federal Energy Act. Hill, speaking in San Antonio on Monday, said he has not decided whether to include a protest against the mandatory allocation provision of the new legislation. The provision gives the federal government power to allocate natural gas produced in Texas to other states. The attorney general said research for the suit is being done by his chief energy aide, Piet Schenkkan. He said the suit will challenge the federal government's authority to supervise pricing of natural gas produced on state-owned lands, and will contend the federal government cannot control pricing of gas produced on private land where sale is to customers within Texas.

Gas rate increase approved

Lone Star Gas Co. has won a battle for increased rates in five counties, but has been ordered by the Texas Railroad Commission in Austin to reduce its bills systemwide by about 0.2 percent due to overcharges. Monday, the commission authorized Lone Star to raise rates for customers in Leonard, Tioga, Wellington, Paducah and Pilot Point. Lone Star was ordered to credit customers on the current billing cycle for \$86,952.55 in overcharges levied during September and October of 1976. Joseph J. Piotrowski, director of the gas utilities division, said an audit of Lone Star's books disclosed the company had failed to adjust its average cost of gas estimates during those two months. The commission agreed to a 5 percent increase in Leonard, 4.8 percent in Tioga, 5.15 percent in Wellington, 5.6 percent in Paducah and 7 percent for Pilot Point.

TRC okays discarding pipeline

The Texas Railroad Commission in Austin has voted unanimously to allow LoVaca Gathering Co. to abandon a 31.8 mile pipeline in South Texas that has leaked 135 million cubic feet of natural gas per year. The leaking line runs from Poth to Falls City to the Bee County boundary. A hearing examiner said Monday it would cost \$32,000 a year for repairs and \$9,000 for maintenance each year to keep the line in operation. Cost of replacing the line is estimated at \$1.6 million. The examiner said at June 1978 prices, the cost of gas leaking from the line would amount to \$280,000 a year. LoVaca supplies gas from the line in Wilson and Karnes Counties to Entex Inc. of Houston for resale to 10 rural customers. All the customers agreed to convert to propane.

WORLD

Vance to extend African talks

Secretary of State Cyrus Vance probably will extend his scheduled two-day talks with South African leaders in Pretoria in a Camp David-style attempt to reach agreement on the future of Namibia (South West Africa), U.S. sources said Tuesday. South African Foreign Minister Roelof Botha said at the start of the second day of talks that "everyone is agreeable to stay on if necessary." Tight security and secrecy surrounds the talks at the Government Union buildings in Pretoria. The negotiators are trying to head off a confrontation with South Africa over its occupation of the disputed territory. An escalating guerrilla campaign against South Africa's presence threatens increasing bloodshed unless Pretoria compromises on a Western plan for U.N.-supervised elections and a transition to majority rule. The urgency of the discussions with South African leaders was underscored by the deaths of 17 blacks in a landmine explosion in the northern region of Namibia.

WEATHER

Sunny skies, mild temperatures clear and cool tonight. The high will be in the mid-70s and the low in the mid to upper 40s. Winds will be East North Easterly at 5-10 mph.

THE BATTALION

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 Letters to the Editor, The Battalion, Room 216, Reed McDonald Building, College Station, Texas 77843. Represented nationally by National Educational Advertising Services, Inc., New York City, Chicago and Los Angeles. The Battalion is published Monday through Friday from September through May except during exam and holiday periods and the summer, when it is published on Tuesday through Thursday. Mail subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester, \$33.25 per school year; \$35.00 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request. Address: The Battalion, Room 216, Reed McDonald Building, College Station, Texas 77843. United Press International is entitled exclusively to the use for reproduction of all news dispatches credited to it. Rights of reproduction of all other matter herein reserved. Second-Class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.

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