

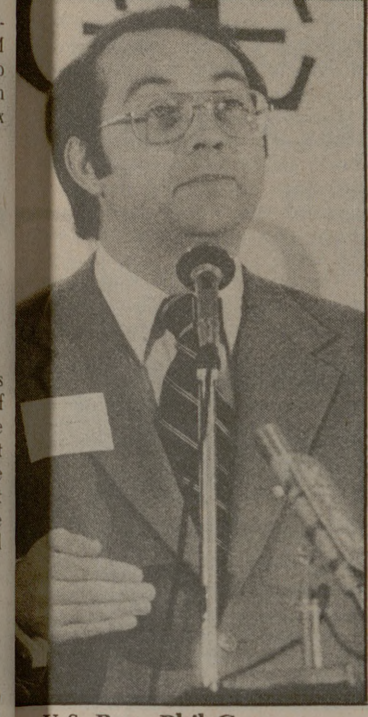
No federal programs must be cut

Gramm: Balanced budget by '82

By SCOTT PENDLETON
Battalion Staff

American can balance its budget without cutting any federal programs.

A startled audience heard Rep. Phil Gramm, D-Texas, add that idea to his familiar balanced budget discourse at the Chamber of Commerce annual banquet Tuesday night. More than 1,000 of the community's business leaders and their spouses crowded the new Brazos Center, where the banquet was held, to hear the College Station congressman speak.



U.S. Rep. Phil Gramm

"If we can slow down the rate of growth of federal spending this year and next year and the year after to 5.5 percent per annum we could balance the budget by the end of 1982 without cutting a single federal program," the congressman said.

Limiting federal spending to a 5.5 percent annual increase would allow tax revenues to catch up with spending, despite a projected \$29 billion deficit next year. Inflation increases government revenues by "floating" taxpayers into higher tax brackets, Gramm said.

"Because of the current 8.8 percent inflation rate, federal taxes next year are going to grow by \$60 billion without any increase in tax rates. And the projected level for the next year if our current level of economic expansion continues is a whopping \$75 billion growth in federal tax collections," he said.

The balanced budget and 5.5 percent limit will end deficit spending, which Gramm called a major cause of the increasing inflation rate.

"I believe that this Congress is going to address the problem of government deficit spending. I'm not saying it's going to do so in a lasting effect such as a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution," Gramm said.

Gramm said some people think that 5.5 percent growth in spending is too little to meet the needs of those who depend on federal funds. "And that may be so. But it seems to me that it's important to look at the problem in perspective.

"The after-tax income of the average American worker in the last decade has only grown at about 5.5 percent a year. So the program I'm talking about is a program to simply ask the federal government to live within the same kind of restraints as

those faced by the average citizens. In my mind that's a perfectly rational request."

Gramm pointed out that the average worker's paycheck, due to inflation and taxes, is no better off than in 1967.

"We have never in the whole history of our nation had a decade where the worker, the person who is pulling the wagon in which we all

ride, has found himself in terms of what he can actually command in the marketplace no better off than he was a decade before," he said.

"Two hundred years ago our founding fathers were fighting a war protesting taxation without representation. But I think it's clear in retrospect that they never envisioned what taxation with representation was really going to be like."

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Union or no union? Employees to decide

By REGINA MOEHLMAN
Battalion reporter

Members of the Office and Professional Employees International reached an out-of-court agreement Tuesday with an attorney for Agency Records Control on which ARC employees would be able to vote in a union election. An official of the National Labor Relations Board was present at the meeting held in the Brazos County courthouse.

The point was to give as many employees as possible the opportunity to vote," said John Smither, attorney for ARC. The employees will vote on whether or not to join the union.

"I think they (ARC) have been very cooperative," said Jack Langford, international representative for the union. Langford said he pleased with the meeting's results.

The NLRB agreement signed by both representatives states that office clerical employees including computer operators, key operators, intex operators, printer operators, data control clerks, shipping clerks, mail clerks, accounting clerks, general clerks, clerks, forms and supply clerks, programmers, maintenance employees, customer service clerks," would be eligible to vote.

Included from voting are "All other employees ... at other office jobs: guards, watchmen, managers, professional and supervisory employees as defined by the (Taft-Hartley) Act," the agreement said.

The exclusions must be agreed upon separately.

Langford estimated that between 205 and 210 employees would be eligible to vote. Langford said he felt very confident of winning the election.

Smither, who estimated as many as 225 would be able to vote, said he also felt confident.

"We think the employees understand the importance of it (the election). They know what is in their best interest and they will decide for themselves."

The election, which will be held at the ARC company headquarters in the East bypass, is tentatively set for April 6, pending official determination by the NLRB.

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