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Fashions to favor fat-less females

A crowd of about 500 people watched 38 Texas A&M University students model spring and summer fashions Thursday night in Rudder Theater. Please see page 7.



2 oil firms indicted for overcharging

HOUSTON — A federal grand jury Wednesday indicted two oil companies and five officials accused of \$4 million worth of illegal overcharges on crude oil.

U.S. Attorney Tony Canales said the indictments in an 8-month-old inquiry to Department of Energy allegations of billion in petroleum overcharges were part of a continuing investigation.

The 84-count indictment named Uni Oil Co. of Houston, Ball Marketing Enterprises of Lafayette, La., and officials of both companies on racketeering, mail fraud and conspiracy to violate DOE rules, violate DOE rules.

Also named were Thomas M. Hajecate, James E. Fisher and Charles R. Akin of Uni and Charles Goss of Ball Marketing as defendants.

U.S. District Judge Robert O'Connor is-

sued bench warrants for the defendants and said he would free each on \$200,000 bond upon surrender to federal authorities.

O'Connor earlier accepted the guilty plea of Victoria oilman Albert B. Alkek on charges he knew of the conspiracy to defraud the government but helped conceal it.

Alkek and federal prosecutors agreed he would pay DOE \$3.2 million and cooperate with the continuing inquiry into oil pricing. O'Connor sentenced Alkek to three years unsupervised probation for misprision of a felony.

Canales said Alkek's testimony helped produce the indictments.

The bargained plea was the second arising from an eight-month federal grand jury investigation of companies suspected of misclassifying oil in order to obtain higher prices.

U.S. Attorney Tony Canales read O'Connor a statement of criminal information accusing Alkek, who had waived his right to grand jury review of the charge, of "knowingly and willfully concealing" the fact that Uni Oil Co., of Houston took advantage of multi-tiered federal pricing to increase its profits on crude oil sales.

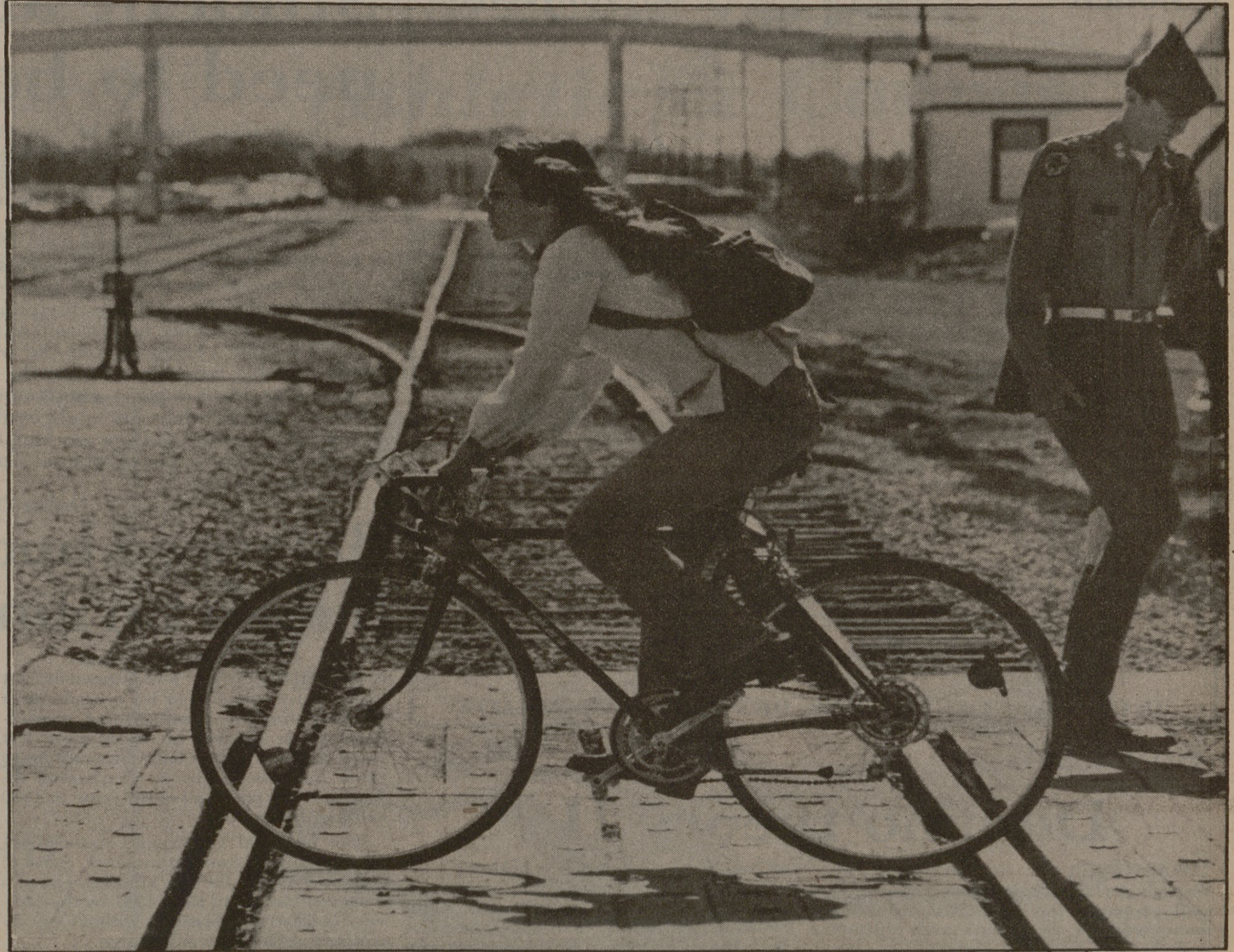
Federal regulations established in 1973 limited the price of oil already in production to about \$5 per barrel, but allowed prices of about \$12 per barrel for oil brought into production after 1973. Alkek, as a consultant for M&A Petroleum, Inc., knew old oil exchanged between the firms was being sold for the "new" price.

A consultant for Uni, San Antonio attorney Jack Guenther, entered a bargained guilty plea earlier. O'Connor ordered him to make \$842,000 restitution and placed him on five years probation.

The judge Tuesday temporarily restrained federal prosecutors from obtaining indictments of Alkek because heart surgeon Dr. Michael E. DeBakey certified Alkek was his patient recovering from a recent heart attack and an indictment might wreck his health.

Alkek agreed to testify for the government in grand jury and trial proceedings and agreed to submit to a lie detector test if necessary. In return federal prosecutors agreed only income tax actions could be brought against him. Canales said he expected no further criminal prosecution of Alkek.

The investigation began last July and DOE has estimated that oil company violations have netted excess illegal profits of as much as \$1 billion.



Battalion photo by Scott Pendleton

A Texas A&M University student cycles over the train tracks on Wellborn Road. Each day, 13 to 15 trains may pass by the Texas A&M campus, on

tracks owned by Southern Pacific. On them could be any of over 1,650 explosive, noxious, radioactive or otherwise potentially dangerous chemicals.

Act on plans or terminate B-CS mass-transit study, says official in charge

By CRAIG ROGERS
Battalion Reporter

The College Station City Council, in a workshop session, heard a report telling the city to move forward with plans to buy mass-transit bus system or to terminate study on Bryan-College Station mass transit.

Holder, in charge of the study, said the project is at a stage where both College Station and Bryan should meet and work out a joint ownership agreement of a mass transit system.

Holder said that if the council is not willing to try to agree on joint ownership, the project, which began in 1975, should be terminated.

Mayor Lorence Bravenec expressed concern about any plan, saying that the percentage of people without private cars is high in Bryan's favor and College Station may end up paying more than its share for a bus system.

Holder said traffic projections show the such a mass-transit system in the Bryan-College Station area is showing a possibility. Right now, Holder said, the mass traffic in the area moves at the same rate as Houston's traffic did in 1972. Projections show that the traffic problems in the area will increase to the same point as Houston's.

"The local area has an opportunity to get the line before an energy crunch sets in," Holder said. Al Mayo, College Station City Planner, agreed, stressing that the club can back out of the project with no loss any time until the equipment is ordered.

Holder said the development time for a mass transit system is two to four years and the

project should continue at least until a final commitment is needed. A survey showed that over 75 percent of the local residents support a mass-transit system.

The proposed bus system would cost an estimated \$1.3 million to buy the equipment and \$15 per hour to operate each bus.

Difficulty in obtaining federal funding for new off-street bike paths was also discussed. D.D. Williamson of the Highway Department said that funding is not available for new projects. If the local area would pressure the federal officials, he said, it could help the problem.

"Apathy in the local area is the biggest problem," he said.

Off-street bike routes are envisioned circling Texas A&M University.

City Forester Eric Ploeger told the council of his problems with the city street tree plan.

"I have not found an area to plant that is not within a few feet of a utility," he said.

Utility lines have been laid along existing streets, and trees cannot be planted close to them. The highway department has also said visibility would be impaired at intersections by some of the trees.

Ploeger estimated he will not be able to plant more than 30 percent of the area in the city plan.

The council also heard a report on the status of Holleman Street and the possibility of widening it. The city engineer said plans were completed, but the city does not have the right-of-ways to proceed any further.

No action on any of the matters was taken.

Rail officials say railroads safest for chemical transport

By MARILYN FAULKENBERRY
Battalion Reporter

Each day, 13 to 15 trains may pass through the Texas A&M University campus. And on them could be any of over 1,650 explosive, noxious, radioactive or otherwise potentially dangerous chemicals.

Southern Pacific owns the tracks, which are also used by Missouri Pacific. Southern Pacific runs an average of six trains through College Station and Missouri Pacific about eight or 10, according to Monroe Gilbert, Houston superintendent of hazardous materials control for South-

ern Pacific. He said each train may have no cars to six cars carrying hazardous commodities.

Southern Pacific Vice President Alan D. DeMoss estimates that one of every 23 railroad cars in the nation carries hazardous materials. These chemicals, though dangerous in the raw form, are essential to everyday life.

Railroad companies and the Federal Railroad Administration both hold that even though the danger of derailment is always present, the private rights-of-way on the railroad provide much safer transportation than could be found on public streets or highways.

The railroads are closely regulated by the Department of Transportation, especially when hazardous chemicals are concerned. Railroads and shippers must follow the Code of Federal Regulations Title 49, Parts 100-199, to the point of how much a container of chemical can carry and specifying what type of packaging material can be used. Each chemical requires a certain grade of steel of lumber and type of nails, screws or staples to its containers.

Federal regulations also control in what order chemicals can be transported; for example, liquefied petroleum gas cars may follow one another but may not be placed next to a car carrying explosives.

Labeling is also controlled; even the shade of the color on the placard found on the car must meet specifications.

Wading through the regulations and adhering to them is a job in itself, and Gilbert said he must keep a copy of them on his desk as a reference at all times.

Gilbert said the railroad is subject to federal inspection at any time. He said Southern Pacific has received citations as recently as last year for not writing a sentence on a waybill as specified in the Code of Federal Regulations.

The railroad or shipping companies can be fined as much as \$10,000 for a civil offense and \$25,000 plus five years imprisonment for a criminal offense.

Gilbert said Southern Pacific has not been fined for any accident in recent years.

The conductor on each train has a list of the cars and what is on them, Tony Aleman, cars and what is on them, Tony Aleman,

assistant public relations manager, said. He has a waybill for each car carrying a dangerous chemical, with the classification of the chemical and instructions for handling it in case of an emergency.

He also has a "red book," a list of the materials classified as hazardous and how to handle them. The conductor also carries instructions for firemen on how to handle a fire for each chemical, he said.

Derailments cause most of the accidents with chemicals on railroads, but the cause of the derailments is more obscure.

Gilbert said derailments cannot be attributed to any one cause and that poor condition of the tracks is not the main cause.

A Southern Pacific Bulletin states that major tracks are inspected twice weekly and lesser tracks without block signals are inspected more often. It also says that \$100 million will be spent on track improvements this year.

Most people do not realize that the railroads do not own any of the compressed gas tank cars and railroad employees do not load or unload those cars, a Southern Pacific newsletter says.

"The vast majority of our emergency situations involving tank cars are a result of the shipper's non-compliance with federal regulations," the newsletter says, adding that this is a fact the government has overlooked in the enforcement of regulations.

Even so, Southern Pacific has initiated a safety training program to handle the increasing number of accidents, Aleman said.

Including Gilbert, there are six specialists in hazardous materials and explosives along with six vans and four trailers equipped with emergency devices which are on call 24 hours a day. This team travels with the "Dome Mobile," a tank car designed to simulate emergencies, to present safety programs to employees, shippers and firemen.

The presentation has been given to over 300 fire departments in an effort to improve their ability to handle emergencies Aleman said.

"People think we don't know what's on our trains," Aleman said. "We do know ... and we know what to do in case of an emergency."

March 31 is deadline for funding applications

Profits from the Memorial Student Center Bookstore will be allocated soon, and student organizations have until March 31 to submit their budget requests to the Student Finance Center.

The Bookstore Allocation Fund provides financial support for officially recognized student organizations, excluding sports, hometown or religious clubs.

Funds are allocated at the end of each fiscal year by the Student Organizations Board, made up of student services staff members and students.

Carolyn Adair, director of Student Activities, said the amount of each allocation is determined by the club's budget and available bookstore funds.

Adair said the board usually receives about 250 budget requests. She estimated bookstore profits used for allocations will be around \$120,000.

The funds, however, are not designed to finance all of any club's activities, and they may not be used for social activities. Only certain expenses such as travel, speakers, film and publicity expenses are covered.

Sandy Booth, assistant to the director of student activities, said that in the past, requests were accepted after the deadline, but this year no late requests will be considered.

Budget request forms may be picked up and returned to the Student Finance Center in Room 217 of the MSC.

White claims 'unconstitutional invasion' by U.S. government in energy commerce

By ROY BRACC
Battalion Staff

The federal government is forcing Texans to lose money in energy dealings with other states, State Attorney General Mark White said Wednesday.

White, speaking at a district and county clerks seminar at the Ramada Inn, called for the federal government to end its "unconstitutional invasion in the right of Texas to regulate its own commerce."

The situation, White said, originated because of two recent federal government decisions concerning coal and natural gas.

The first, he said, is a regulation forcing Texas to burn coal instead of natural gas in power plants to produce electricity.

This move has resulted in a lawsuit by the city of Austin and 10 other parties against the state of Montana.

The suit against Montana — filed in that state's district court in 1978 — claims the 30 percent tax levied on coal imported by Texas is too high, he said.

The second governmental regulation, White said, is the energy bill passed by Congress last year. One of the bill's major provisions establishes price ceilings for intrastate natural gas sales in addition to interstate gas sales.

Previously, the price of interstate natural gas was regulated by federal law, but gas sold intrastate was not regulated.

White said the free enterprise system in Texas forced the price of natural gas and electricity higher than most other states. But, he added, the prices had recently dropped and a surplus of natural gas was appearing when the energy bill passed.

The end result of the federal actions and the Montana tax, White said, is that private industry has to sell natural gas to northern states for a lower price, and buy coal for a higher price.

White also pointed out that the lower price cuts into tax revenue, and the state is losing millions in cash and royalties.

White said "rulemakers in Washington" are the biggest source of problems for states today.

However, he added, law enforcement is one area where Austin and Washington should work together.

Federal funds and manpower are needed to intensify law enforcement in rural areas in south Texas near the Mexican border, he said, as well as along the Texas coast.

White mentioned funding for the project would be available in federal matching funds to go along with state money.

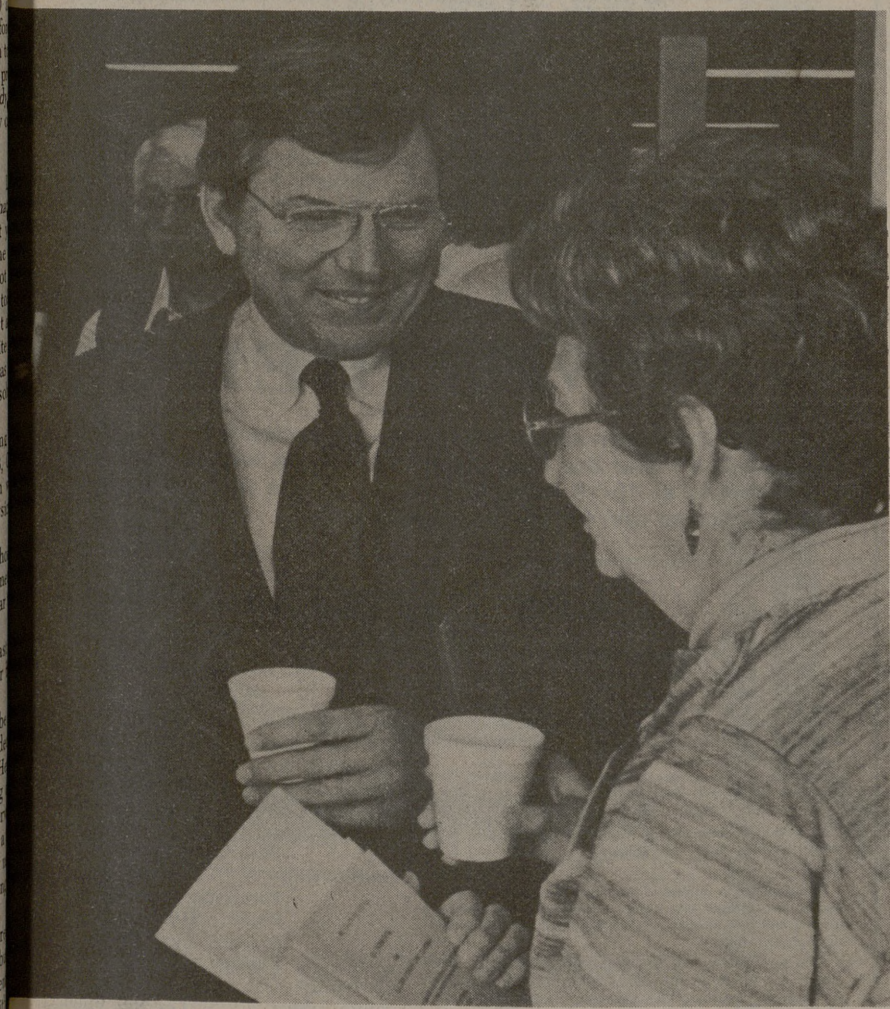
In addition to money for drug enforcement, the legislature, White added, is sure to allocate money to expand and update the state prison system.

The Texas prison system, he said, with a population of 25,000, is slightly overcrowded, but is still one of the best-run in the country.

Although law enforcement and punishment are important issues, White said, crime prevention is one area where the state needs to concentrate its efforts.

"It's too late to start a drug education program in high school," White said. The best place to start such a program, he said, is at the elementary level.

See related story, page 5.



Texas Attorney General Mark White spoke Wednesday at a district and county clerks seminar at the Ramada Inn. He called for the federal government to end its "unconstitutional invasion in the right of Texas to regulate its own commerce."

Battalion photo by Clay Cockrill