



Battalion photo by Lee Roy Leschper Jr.

Few students took advantage of General Telephone Company's "gripe session" Wednesday which the company had

offered as an opportunity for students to air any complaints they might have against the company or its service.

Students tell G.T.E. their gripes

By STEVE LEE
Battalion Staff

"Geel!" "No, G.T.E.!" So goes the cutesy line in the television advertisements for General Telephone and Electric, the company that provides telephone service for this area.

But some students here are not amused. Two weeks ago, the student government business and consumer relations committee passed out phone service surveys in the Memorial Student Center. An overwhelming majority of those who completed the surveys indicated they were unhappy with the phone company.

When asked how they would rate the services of G.T.E., most students answered either "fair" or "poor," according to the unscientific survey.

Some phone company representatives came to campus Wednesday, at the request of the student committee, to talk with students. Few students attended, but those who did had complaints ranging from billing problems to "snotty" operators.

Bill Erwin, division manager of the Bryan branch of G.T.E., fielded the complaints, offering solutions and taking down the phone numbers of those students whose phones have been acting up.

Erwin emphasized that the account manager — the student who is billed each month for all long distance calls made from one phone — is responsible for collecting money from his roommates. If he fails to pay the full bill, it detracts from his credit rating, even if the unpaid bill was his roommates' fault.

"You are building up telephone credit here at A&M," Erwin said. "A lot is going on you."

This also means if a roommate leaves without paying a bill, and he can't be found, the account manager is responsible. But if the roommate is found, then the account manager can be cleared.

One student told of how she was forced to go without a phone for four months when she was assigned to a dorm room in which a previous occupant had an unsettled phone bill. Her roommate was the account manager and the ex-resident had left the country with some \$300 in overdue bills, leaving the account manager responsible. The phone was disconnected when the new resident moved in.

Erwin replied, "This is a situation we'll have to work with." Another major complaint involved an off-campus resident whose phone was disconnected, even after an overdue bill was paid. He received notice that the company would disconnect his phone in 20 days if the debt was not settled. He paid the bill a few days later, but the phone was disconnected. The company said he would have to pay a \$20 fee to have the phones reconnected.

Erwin said this should not have happened and that the company would investigate.

Ted Geoca, chairman of the student committee, said about 400 surveys were filled out. He said most of the students' gripes dealt with billing problems, noise on the line during long-distance calls, calls being cut-off and undesirable attitudes of certain operators.

Another problem students cited, he said, was phones disconnected over the Christmas holidays due to an unpaid bill. He said notices were mailed to the students' local addresses during the holiday, and many were unaware their phones would be dead when they returned. Erwin said students should give the company their home addresses before they leave.

Geoca was disappointed with the low turnout Wednesday and said another session may be planned soon.

Oil firms asked to use profits wisely

WASHINGTON — President Carter says oil companies should be made to plow back into exploration and increased production all profits reaped from price decontrol so they cannot "buy circuses or timberlands or motels."

Continuing his fighting talk to the oil industry, Carter said Tuesday at his 47th news conference and his first in Washington since Feb. 27, he will fight for a windfall-profits tax.

And, given the mood of the country, he expects to get it, he said.

Even with such a tax, Carter said, the industry would get \$6 billion in increased revenue during the next three years.

"I would certainly favor either laws or administration action to put constraints so that they would plow back that oil into energy production," he said.

"For them to take that money and use it to buy circuses or timberlands or motels or department stores," Carter said, "contravenes the need of our country, and it contravenes the purpose I and Congress have in mind when we give them that additional income."

"The American people are willing to face the hard reality of the petroleum problem," Carter said. "But

they are not, and I am not, willing to see their sacrifices mocked by a wholly unjustified giveaway to the oil companies."

Carter also said: "I believe we will see a turn very shortly in the inflationary trend downward." He reiterated his opposition to mandatory wage-price controls and expressed undiminished confidence in anti-inflation adviser Alfred Kahn.

—He would establish "very quickly" a presidential commission to investigate the causes of the Three Mile Island nuclear plant accident and recommend safety remedies, but said the nation cannot turn away from nuclear power "in the foreseeable future."

—A few issues remain to be resolved in reaching agreement with the Soviet Union on a strategic arms limitation treaty. Press secretary Jody Powell said later he did not expect a SALT II agreement to be reached during the 10 days Carter is on vacation.

—Allegations that some bank loan funds received by the Carter family peanut business may have been channeled into his 1976 election campaign are "absolutely and totally untrue," and he will cooperate fully with federal investigators probing those allegations.

NASA's dolly has 90 feet; no speedster

United Press International
AKRON, Ohio — What has 90 feet and carries \$500 million on its back? A device called a "strongback dolly" used for ground transport of NASA's space shuttle orbiters. The feet are Firestone transteel radial tires — 80 of them on the dolly and 10 slightly larger ones on the truck that pulls it. The dolly isn't geared for fast getaways, however, it moves at a sedate pace of three to five miles an hour.

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