

Energy, like railroads, will be regulated

By ARNOLD SAWISLAK
WASHINGTON — The energy industry might look to transportation for a historical parallel to the struggle now swirling around it.
Starting about the middle of the last century, transportation — first railroad and then automotive — was at the center of domestic economic and political conflict.
It began with government doing everything it could to aid the industry — immense land grants to the railroads for rights of way, billions of dollars to develop highways for motor vehicles.
The political price to the industry — not only for the favored position it occupied but for the abuses it permitted to grow — was increasing government regulation. Some observers claim this was one of the

main factors in effectively destroying the once proud U.S. rail system and that it now threatens to cripple the automotive industry.
Whether it was government or the industry itself that got transportation into trouble, the fact is that the day of the imperious railroad baron and the swashbuckling auto magnate has passed. The rails have been described as the most regulated enterprise in the nation and the auto manufacturers are squirming under federal environmental, safety and energy conservation restrictions.
How did this happen? The Marxists claim it is in the nature of capitalism to dominate government. But they obviously are wrong, in countries where the ditch-digger's vote counts the same as the boss',

private enterprise can and has been brought to heel when it offends public opinion.
That is what the owners and managers of the energy business ought to remember. They may say they have operated without government largess, but plenty of people would contend the oil depletion allowance and other tax benefits are as valuable a subsidy as the gift of land was to the railroads a century ago.
And right or wrong, the industry has become saddled with an image of greed projected by reports of huge profit increases and utility demands that its customers pay for company errors in operating nuclear power plants.
The answer that more profits are needed to pay for the search for more oil

or to develop alternative energy sources probably has a hollow ring for the motorist or homeowner who has seen only fuel price increases for the last five years. The argument that ratepayers must bear the cost of nuclear accidents because it would bankrupt utilities to do so probably makes little sense to the small businessman who has no one but himself to pay for his mistakes.
Commodore William Vanderbilt, asked in 1882 about his operation of the New York Central railroad, supposedly responded: "The public be damned." Five years later, the Interstate Commerce Commission was created to regulate the railroads. And less than a century later, there is no New York Central railroad to regulate.

Many minor mishaps take place at nuclear plants

By DICK WEST
WASHINGTON — Along with the various investigations of the Three Mile Island accident, there recently has been a spate of reports of minor mishaps at other nuclear power plants.
I'm not suggesting such incidents aren't newsworthy, you understand. It's just that there have been so many they are all beginning to sound alike, or somewhat as follows:
At 12:39 a.m., something went wrong with the no. 2 coffee machine in the employees' lounge. The problem eventually was traced to a valve that releases powdered cream. But since the "Exact Change Only" light was burning, the night janitor, who had stopped by for a cup of coffee, assumed the trouble was in the coin slot mechanism. Thus vital time was lost while

he canvassed other night shift workers seeking change for a quarter.
The first inkling of where the real problem lay came when the machine dispensed a cup of black coffee even though the janitor, who always takes cream and sugar, had pushed the "Extra Light" button.
Considering the information available to him at that moment, the janitor's reaction to the emergency was technically sound — which is to say, he gave the machine a kick.
That jolt, however, failed to unstuck the powdered cream valve, and the machine continued to dispense black coffee only.
At 12:59 a.m., the janitor reported the malfunction to his supervisors and at 1:07 a.m., the decision was made to call in a vending machine repairman.
When the repairman reached the site at 8:46 a.m., he found that the door of the machine, having been jammed by the janitor's kick, could not be opened by hand. He therefore was unable to determine immediately whether the problem was caused by a sticky valve or whether, as seemed more likely, the machine simply had exhausted its supply of powdered cream.
Now came the dilemma — the agonizing decision of whether to shut down the machine entirely or merely post a notice advising people who desired cream in their coffee not to use it.
Not wanting to cause panic among coffee addicts, the repairman recommended that the crippled machine be kept plugged in until such time as he could obtain a

crowbar to prize open the jammed door and determine the seriousness of the problem.
The main danger at this point was that the jolt from the janitor's kick may have damaged the machine's thermostat, leading to what vending machine technicians refer to as a "boilover."
What happens during a boilover, essentially, is that the water used to make coffee becomes excessively hot and starts to bubble. When that occurs, moisture from escaping steam may cause the powdered cream to become lumpy. Or, if the bubbles escape, hot water drips out and causes an artificial sweetener meltdown.
Fortunately, none of these "WP" (worst possible) developments came to pass. But the accident may have caused some nuclear plant workers to switch to tea.

Letters to the Editor

Sad about grades

Editor:
The end of the semester closes fast upon us, and with the end of tests come one last round: finals. It is disappointing that tests are the primary index one is "graded" by, but for lack of other methods of coping, it's the best we have. Soon the sidewalks will swell with those of bloodshot eyes and listless expression.
It seems that to some the whole world depends on those grades which are to follow, how sad, indeed. Grades do not in any way begin to reflect a person's value as a human being. Nor can they change it.
Education should be more than a means to an end, but we become so highly focused on grades that the real rewards of a college education are overlooked and neglected in favor of more tangible, however meaningless, material gains. Chasing the the GPR exacts its toll. Only by looking beyond A's or C's can one truly make the most of an expensive sojourn in hallowed halls.
The pencil pushers will too late realize what they've missed. Don't take grades too seriously, only you can gauge your progress. It's your option to make the knowledge you acquire work for positive gain or turn it on others, and inevitably, yourself. The corporate machine is surrounded by the husks and corpses it spits out after it sucks dry the lives that once worked within. Grades are merely incidental to the learning process and are an unfortunate "necessity."
God bless those of you who leave us this week, when I see you again I pray that you're still capable of the good humor and human consideration that sometimes vanishes after a good dose of the uncaring world. God bless those of you who will return. I hope that you will truly learn in your remaining months or years, and graduate a more complete human being,

well-rounded and an asset to God and your country.
God bless those of you who will instruct us and impart learning and experience to us. I hope that you, too, can rise above the trappings and annoyances which do so much to work against everyone.
I pray that all of you experience the fullness of life that Jesus Christ came to bring us.
— John McVay, Graduate student

Cops and rich kids

Dear Aggies:
I've about heard all the complaints about the University Police that I care to. You poor rich kids actually think that they are your worst enemy. You actually think that they have nothing better to do than write parking tickets and otherwise harass you. You couldn't be further from the truth, but then again, the truth might hurt, wouldn't it?
You whining crybabies just don't know how good you do have it. Every ticket you get, you deserve. The reason is clear, you just don't care where you park that car your daddy bought and gave to you. So you ignore those tickets for a while, thinking the University Police don't know. Then one day you park it in your usual place, anywhere you choose, you don't care about the other guy, and when you get back four hours later, your car is gone! Those lousy K's just picked your car at random and towed it off! You're lucky they don't come and tow you off. Those unpaid tickets at most universities will cost you more money, a summons to appear in court when you don't pay, and when you don't appear for that, it's jail kiddies, the real thing. The worst that can happen at A&M is to get your car towed away or your grades blocked. Big deal, right? Just write home to daddy, he'll pay your tickets off so

you can graduate, won't he?
It's a lot tougher out in the real world, folks, but most of you have never been there, have you? Maybe nothing I've said so far has sunk in at all. One of these days it'll happen though and you'll be unprepared and daddy might not be there to help.
The next time you run off and leave your lights on, killing your nice car's battery, call a wrecker for a jump. It'll cost you. Right now the University Police do it free and without complaint. You ladies don't have to walk to your dorm at A&M alone from way across the tracks, do you? No, the University Police will take you home, won't they? Will they gripe about? No! How about when you lock your keys in your car or sprain your little toe, who shows up to bail you out? The University Police. That's their job, you say. Yes, you're partly right and so is parking enforcement. Think about it.
If you're really upset about all the parking tickets, do something about it. Bitching at that patrolman is easy, true, but it does no good. He can't change the rules.
Get together with your student government people and have them talk with the administration and the regents. The police can't do anything about the rules, but they can be changed. Quit going around thinking how tough you have it and wise up. Grow up too, children; you're supposed to be in college preparing for life and the real world.
In my three-and-a-half years in law enforcement including eight months with the University Police, I can honestly say that you students are the most unfriendly, ungrateful and downright hostile group of people it has ever been my displeasure of serving!
I'm not in law enforcement anymore and if I were to ever get back into it, I would be sure to get as far away from Texas A&M as possible.

I've got the guts to sign this letter if you've got the guts to print it and I'm betting you don't!
— Thomas Stone

Symbol modified

Editor:
There appeared in the April 25 issue of the Battalion advertisement containing a slight modification of the copyrighted symbol of the United Methodist Church and announcing the formation of a "Wesleyan Fellowship" to assist gay United Methodists in the Texas Annual Conference.
I believe that it is important that both you and your readers understand that this group has no official or sanctioned relationship with either the United Methodist Church or the Texas Annual Conference. All Methodist persons have a right to organize into any kind of groups, but only those groups which are created by vote of the Annual Conference officially represent the church.
I hope this letter will help clarify what will otherwise be confusing to your readers.
— Elza Love
Bryan District Superintendent

Editor's note: This letter was accompanied by 3 other signatures.

Midnight Express

Editor:
This is neither an apology nor a declaration praising the super comfort of Turkish prisons against what you have just seen. For we believe that as far as the concept of justice is concerned, one could hardly criticize another with a clear conscience in an age where Attica, My Lai and Soweto can easily be forgotten.
The point is, rather than appeal to the critical sensibility of the spectator to evaluate — without being abused by the agitation that literally reaps the cheap sentiments in a typically Hollywood fashion — the rationale of the ones involved in making this film; a logic by which, starting out with a single experience, an entire society is condemned as a whole, or in fact being cursed upon.
It is not worthwhile to pay much attention to the details of The Midnight Express, filmed in Malta (island in the Mediterranean) with hardly anything authentically Turkish in it, including the hatred-ridden cast composed of constantly land demanding minority groups with their incomprehensible Turkish.
Yet perhaps it is worth pointing out how racial prejudice could be vindicated and justified by means of distorted characterization and typology.
We believe that the film has the potential to serve as a test through which the spectator can judge for himself, in an age of growing anti-racist consciousness, whether the hidden seeds of racism, and indeed cannibalism, can still interfere with sensible reasoning.
Please, if and when you see it, test yourself for your 'other education' — that scapegoating an ally country (happens not to export oil) for the drug traffic first and then when she is determined to eradicate it — on human rights issues is a pure double standardization.
Remember world's fastest sprinter Bob Hayes on cocaine charges while you sympathize with the heroic addict Billy Hayes; no "Express" for the athlete by the true story (\$) conscious filmmakers?
— Mehmet Sahinglu, Graduate student

TOP OF THE NEWS ROOM

CAMPUS

Library carrels due for renewal

Graduate students and faculty members should renew locker and study carrel assignments in the Sterling C. Evans Library at Texas A&M University before May 28. Reassignment may be arranged in the library administrative offices in Room 200. Persons who fail to renew or check out forfeit the key deposit. A library spokesman said there is a waiting list of 200 for carrels and anyone who fails to renew goes to the bottom of the list. Carrel and locker assignments are for one semester. Renewal by May 28 is good through August.

Real estate program shortened

Studies of Advanced Real Estate Subjects (SOARS) has been condensed from two weeks to eight days. SOARS was developed by the Texas Real Estate Research Center in 1973 to offer real estate professionals the opportunity to obtain advanced real estate knowledge without the necessity of enrolling in a full-time, degree-granting program, said Harold Jambers, course coordinator. The \$600 tuition includes all instructional material, lodging and meals at Texas A&M and the use of the university athletic and recreational facilities. Sixty people may register for the course by writing Harold Jambers, Texas Real Estate Research Center, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas 77843.

STATE

Lightning strikes Texas men

Lightning struck a group of cowboys herding cattle in Montgomery County Sunday, killing two of the men and their horses. Three other riders escaped serious injury. Montgomery County sheriff's deputies identified the dead men as James Casey, 36, of Montgomery and James Davis, 25, of Conroe. Deputies said the men were struck while riding in a field near Dobbin about 9 a.m. Sunday in a thunderstorm.

NATION

Arrests expose art fraud ring

FBI arrests of two men who tried to make \$10 million selling a phony Da Vinci has led to the demise of an international art fraud ring. An FBI spokesman said. The FBI agent said two men were arrested Saturday while trying to sell an Illinois resident what they represented as a Leonardo da Vinci painting entitled "Disputa Jesu." The FBI spokesman said the suspects never showed the prospective buyer the painting but, instead, showed only a photograph of the artwork they said they would deliver upon payment. The suspects were identified as Jon Kent Boran, 53, of Phoenix, Ariz., who currently is a resident of Zurich, Switzerland, and Guy Alfred Taylor, 31, of San Diego, Calif. The arrest culminated a two-month investigation and led to the execution of search warrants to uncover further ring activity.

Thief steals gas worth \$2,800

Gasoline shortages and weekend closings of service stations won't be a worry for a daring thief in Phoenix, Ariz., who now has a 4.24-gallon personal supply. Gasoline valued at \$2,800 apparently was pumped from an underground tank at an Exxon station at a major intersection during hours when the station was closed, police said Sunday. The theft occurred sometime between Thursday and Saturday, officers said. The storage tank was not forced open, police said, theorizing the theft could have been the work of somebody "in an official-looking truck."

Castration bill killed in Oklahoma

The Oklahoma House Monday defeated by only five votes a bill calling for "asexualization" of certain sex offenders, described by a supporter as "the next best thing" to execution. The vote was 48-46, with 51 votes needed for passage. The House last week voted to insert the amendment outlining "asexualization" procedures. But the House Monday sided with arguments summed up by Rep. Bill Wiseman, R-Tulsa, who said: "This is not Iran. This is not Hitler's Germany. This is Oklahoma." The bill provided for "incapacitation of the external male genitalia" for persons convicted of first-degree rape or oral sodomy, under certain conditions, by cutting nerves to the penis.

WORLD

Egypt breaks relations with Iran

Egypt has decided to break off diplomatic relations with Iran in reply to similar action taken by the Tehran government, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said Monday. The spokesman charged the Iranian regime of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini was drawn into the rupture with Egypt under pressure from Arab "reactionist" states opposed to the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. Officials said Egypt was informed of the Iranian decision to sever relations by its embassy in Tehran.

Pot discovered in cow intestines

The long arm of the law in Agana, Guam, reached into a cow's intestines Sunday, pulled out 10 pounds of marijuana and arrested a 46-year-old mother of six. Lourdes Toves was arrested at Guam International airport where customs officials discovered marijuana concealed in a cow's intestines. A spokesman for the customs department said Toves told officers she had bought the intestines for home cooking. She was arrested and later released after posting \$10,000 surety bond, the spokesman said. She faces a maximum five-year jail sentence if found guilty of smuggling marijuana into this American territory. Officials did not say where her flight originated.

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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