

VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION • TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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Where will windfall profits go?

By JOHN F. BARTON
United Press International

WASHINGTON — Congress has ducked one of the toughest decisions concerning the tax on windfall oil profits: How and for what should the tax revenues be spent?

Windfall tax supporters and critics alike agree the postponed fight over how to spend the tax revenues will make the battle over how much tax to collect look like an ice cream social.

By ducking that decision, critics claim, Congress simply is creating a multibillion-dollar windfall for the Treasury.

For that matter, so is the windfall tax itself, Republicans argue. Better the money had been left with the oil companies, to be used for energy development and increased production, they say.

In fact, the decision on how to spend the

windfall tax revenues is so controversial that Democratic congressional leaders felt the windfall tax itself would surely be killed unless the issues were split.

So they have agreed first only to set the windfall profit tax rate and to create an energy trust fund through which the tax revenues would be funneled. They postponed for later legislation the decision on how the funds shall be spent.

The situation now is a bankers' dream: Congress is figuring how to get money into the Treasury, without deciding yet how it can be withdrawn.

President Carter has asked Congress to use the windfall revenues for three purposes: to expand and develop mass urban transit systems; for energy research and development; and to alleviate fuel bills for the poor, who are hit hardest by Carter's decision to phase out price controls of

domestic crude oil production.

That last purpose sticks like a crow in many congressional throats.

Republicans generally are opposed to using windfall revenues to fund any social programs.

But Republicans and Democrats alike are split on how else to use the funds.

Republican efforts to allow tax credits for oil companies that would reinvest the windfall taxes in energy research or production were killed in the House Ways and Means committee. So were Democratic efforts to use the tax funds exclusively for energy development.

Rep. Andrew Jacobs, D-Ind., believes the multibillion-dollar windfall revenues should be used to reduce the national debt. He intends to offer that plan to the full House at the appropriate time, and could get considerable bipartisan support — and administration opposition.

The Senate will get a crack at the windfall measure — and the subsequent legislation determining how the energy fund will be used — in the near future. But Sen. William Roth, R-Del., already has a plan to use the revenues to roll back higher Social Security taxes.

Roth, who unsuccessfully tried last year to cut individual income taxes 33 percent, believes a tough windfall profits tax combined with greater corporate taxes generated by higher oil prices "would raise at least \$50 billion between 1980 and 1984."

"Approximately \$35 billion of this revenue could be used to roll back the higher Social Security taxes facing the American people in 1981 and 1982," Roth said recently.

The rest of the extra revenue, Roth said, should be used to develop alternate forms of energy and improve the gas efficiency of cars.

A search for gas: get the lead out?

By ROY BRAGG

The gas situation has been a rather distant problem to me this summer. There has been plenty of gas in town this summer since the majority of the students have left, so I haven't had to sweat it out in any lines.

I've had a 1969 Dodge 4-door for the last four years.

The car, the "Millenium Barracuda," is named after the notorious Millenium Falcon in "Star Wars." It has a Saturn V engine and can go almost three miles on a tank of gas.

So, to play it safe, I decided to go out and pay almost \$5,000 (!) for an "economy" car.

Paying 5,000 samolians for a car so small that I could fit it into proverbial flea's navel isn't so bad; what gets me mad is that someone in Detroit actually had the nerve to call it an economy car.

There's a paradox in there somewhere. Maybe I'm just hallucinating on un-leaded gas fumes or something, but I feel as though an economy car ought to be cheap to buy and run.

Paying half of my annual earnings for a car that runs on the second most expensive gasoline available is not my idea of cheap.

Of course, it's a lot better than a car that runs on gold — oops, I'd better watch out. I'd never forgive myself if I gave the auto industry their next big idea.

But I'll have to admit one thing — the

car gets good mileage.

The car has a hatchback and seats four uncomfortably. It's great! To say the car is small is to say Muhammed Ali talks. I only hope my coffin has more room.

I got the car with a few options.

The best one is the factory air conditioning. Sure, the air wastes a little gasoline, but what the hell! I'm going to be comfortable in gasoline lines, even if I have to be in a few more lines because of the air conditioning!

Another option on my new car — it won't blow up if it's rear-ended! For \$200 bucks extra, the factory mounts the gas tank in the driver's side door. What'll they think of next?

The only other option I got on the car is special tires — for \$50 extra, I didn't get Firestone 500s.

Well, after a couple of weeks of driving, the "Millenium Tunafish" has gotten 26 miles per gallon in the city.

A couple of weekends ago, I decided to go to Fort Worth to see my brother and his wife.

We paid 90.9 cents for gas at a local convenience store for gas Sunday morning.

Few gas stations on the highway were open. Those that were had gas at 99.9 cents and up!

When we arrived in Fort Worth, gasoline was harder to find than good disco music; in other words, impossible.

Slouch by Jim Earle



THIS IS IT, GEORGE, ONLY ONE MORE WEEK TO GO! THIS IS WHEN YOU OPEN UP, PULL ALL THE STOPS, BURN THE MID-NIGHT OIL, LET 'ER RIP, AND ...GEORGE? ...GEORGE?

On the way back, I stared at the gas gauge for too long or something and the needle dropped from three-fourths to one-fourth.

It was 7 p.m. on Sunday. I was getting scared. Only four gallons of gas and miles to go before I sleep.

I pulled into several stations on the road. They had regular, premium and diesel fuel, but no unleaded.

For a few brief moments, I saw myself ripping the catalytic converter out of my car and beating the director of the Environmental Protection Agency with it.

Eventually I was able to fill the car up just outside of Hillsboro at 85.9 cents a gallon because I was able to talk my way into the front of a line that was ready to close. I told the attendant I would kill him if he didn't sell me 8 gallons of gas.

After filling up, I was able to determine that the car got 35 miles per gallon on the highway.

With a sense of relief and accomplishment, I smiled to wife and said, "We'll make it home okay — with the air conditioning on!"

Ahead warp five.

Mail order catalogs next?

CIA now accepting major credit cards

By DICK WEST
United Press International

WASHINGTON — The next sound you hear will be that of another illusion biting the dust.

I have just learned that the CIA now accepts credit cards.

The CIA — once so secretive it had markers identifying its Langley, Va., headquarters as an Alaskan road bureau.

The CIA — where security was so tight the switchboard operator wouldn't give the name of the agency when she answered the phone.

That CIA. That CIA not only now makes some of its publications and maps available for sale to the public; you can charge them to your American Express account.

Suffering spooks! The next thing they'll be publishing mail order catalogs for cloaks and daggers. Or opening a rent-a-spy service that gives Green Stamps.

And where did I learn of this latest dilution of the CIA mystery?

Did the information come from the Los Alamos library where Progressive magazine learned how to built an H-bomb?

Was it whispered to me in a dimly lit parking garage by a disgruntled agent wistfully yearning for the good old days when everybody had a cover story?

Would the source have been even half so dramatic!

Though it pains me to say so, my information came from — yes! — a CIA press kit.

It's true, fellow espionage buffs. The CIA, that long-time symbol of clandestine manipulation, king of undercover, master of the "burn bag," has sunk to the lowest level of bureaucratic flackery — a press kit.

A press kit complete with a diagram of the director's "command responsibilities."

During the past couple of decades, novels based on covert CIA operations have risen to the status of a cottage industry in this country. Even now, we may

assume, some enterprising hack is at work on an updated plot.

In the first chapter, a Soviet secret agency parachutes into a remote section of the Maine woods. His assignment is to obtain a copy of CIA document number SI 78-10058.

Authentic touches are the hallmark of CIA novels. There really is a document bearing that number. According to the press kit, its title is "Influence of Agro-technology and Geoclimate on Grain Yield Potential in the USSR."

Moscow is eager to get its hands on the

document because nobody in the Kremlin has been able to figure out what the influence of agro-technology and geoclimate on Russian grain might be.

Eschewing microfilms, tiny microphones embedded in wisdom teeth, secret decoder rings, exploding cigars and other conventional spy paraphernalia, the Soviet agent carries only one trick device — a clever imitation of an American Express card.

And in the next James Bond movie, 007 will be an insurance agent.

Letters to the Editor

One mother is enough

Editor:

I take exception to Keith Taylor's comments regarding senior exemption policy

as published in the June 26 edition of the Battalion.

It appears Mr. Taylor may need to go back to Math 102 so he can learn to add numbers properly. Granted, he may have a point, but many people may have missed it completely. Since University policy generally prohibits registration in excess of 7 hours per summer session, it usually requires attendance for both sessions in any given summer to gain the equivalent hours of a regular semester. In this light, it is unclear to me just where the distinction between the two types of semesters lies. It would be nice to see August grads cut a little more slack than they are now.

Only one other item is deserving of comment: it's nice to know there is someone out there who is worrying about my missing more education than I absolutely have to; but one mother is plenty.

—Fred Bolton, '79

Writing the editor

The Battalion welcomes letters to the editor on any subject. However, to be acceptable for publication these letters must meet certain criteria. They should:

- ✓ Not exceed 300 words or 1800 characters in length.
- ✓ Be neatly typed whenever possible. Hand-written letters are acceptable.
- ✓ Include the author's name, address and telephone number for verification.

TOP OF THE NEWS STATE

Rabies possible cause of death

An 8-year-old girl from Eagle Pass, Texas, died at Santa Rosa Children's Hospital in San Antonio Tuesday from a suspected case of rabies. Jack Finger, hospital spokesman, said the girl died at 2:10 p.m. of cardiac arrest, after suffering six heart seizures over night. Finger said four of five laboratory tests conducted by the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta registered negative, but that further tests and an autopsy were being conducted. If confirmed, it would be the first rabies-related death in the United States this year. Three persons died of rabies nationwide during 1978. Two other children — a 2-year-old girl from nearby Poteet, Texas, and an 8-year-old boy from Piedras Negras, Mexico, — remained hospitalized at the same institution.

NATION

Five gang members shot in N.C.

Five members of the "Outlaws" motorcycle gang were found shot and stabbed to death early Tuesday in north Charlotte, N.C., city and Mecklenburg County police said. Authorities said a club member found the bodies of four men and one woman at the clubhouse just north of Interstate 85 at about 5:30 a.m. The victims, in their 20s and 30s, have not been identified. Authorities said they found shell casings in the clubhouse that appeared to come from a handgun and an automatic rifle. The "Outlaws" motorcycle gang has been in existence for more than a decade. It has been frequenting the Charlotte-Gastonia area this year.

Ford raises prices on small cars

Following the example of General Motors Corp., Ford Motor Co. in Detroit has announced a price increase on its fast-selling, smaller models — its fourth price hike of the model year. Ford officials said Tuesday the increases go into effect Thursday. They range from \$204 on the four-door Fairmont Sedan, hiking it from \$4,016 to \$4,220, to \$100 on several Granada and Monarch models as well as the Pinto Pony.

A statement by the automaker indicated the increases were due to increases in labor and material costs.

Second space shuttle flight fails

Another attempt to test the space shuttle Columbia's three-rocket cluster failed in Cape Canaveral, Fla., Monday when a hydrogen turbine overheated, forcing shutdown of the engines after 21 seconds of a 520-second firing. It was the second fruitless attempt to test the engines of the space shuttle, whose maiden flight has already been postponed well into 1980. In the first test, on June 12, an instrument problem forced a shutdown. The rockets are being tested at National Space Technology Laboratories, Bay St. Louis, Miss.

WORLD

Soviet soldier defects to Norway

A 19-year-old Soviet soldier walked across the Russian border at Kirkens, Norway and turned himself over to border police saying he was "fed up with the Soviet Union," the Foreign Ministry said Wednesday. The unidentified soldier, who was serving with Soviet ground forces stationed on the Kola Peninsula, crossed into this NATO country on Monday, police reported. The Foreign Ministry refused to say if the man had asked for political asylum. Soviet authorities have been informed about the defection.

Yugoslav quake causes no damage

An earthquake in Yugoslavia rocked the Livno area in the sparsely inhabited Dalmatian Mountains about 190 miles southwest of Belgrade Wednesday but caused no damage, seismologists said. The quake measured 4.6 on the Richter scale and was felt along the central Adriatic coast up to the central Yugoslav city of Sarajevo.

Spanish legislator shot in Madrid

A member of the Cortes (the Spanish parliament) was shot and critically wounded in Madrid, Spain during the night in what appeared to be an attempted kidnapping by Basque separatist guerrillas, authorities said Wednesday. The victim was Gabriel Cisneros Laborda, 38, secretary of information for the ruling Democratic Center Union and a member of the parliamentary committee studying a proposed statute of Basque autonomy. The statute is opposed by the guerrilla organization ETA which seeks independence for the Basque provinces of northern Spain.

Iran: death blow to kung-fu films

Iran's revolutionary ax, which has already banned liquor, drugs, and mixed swimming, fell Tuesday on Bruce Lee and kung fu films. The head of the state-owned film publicity and exhibition organization, Mohammad Ali Najafi, announced in Tehran that martial arts movies in particular would be banned, and other foreign films limited as part of official post-revolution policy.

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.

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