

THE BATTALION

Vol. 72 No. 168
6 Pages

Tuesday, July 10, 1979
College Station, Texas

News Dept. 845-2611
Business Dept. 845-2611

Weather

Mostly cloudy through Wednesday with a chance of daytime thunderstorms. High Tuesday and Wednesday low 90's, low early Wednesday mid 70's.

NASA begins Skylab monitor

United Press International
WASHINGTON — The space agency activated its Skylab command center Monday to monitor the final hours of the flight of the doomed space station, now expected to drop out of orbit sometime during a 20-hour period centered on 12:10 a.m. EDT Wednesday.

It was still too early to predict where Skylab's debris will fall, but space agency officials emphasized the chance of injury was very slight.

About 500 pieces capable of causing injury are expected to survive the 77-ton spaceship's fiery plunge through the atmosphere and scatter along a 400,000-square-mile zone.

The latest re-entry estimate, issued by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration at midday Monday, narrowed the period of uncertainty by 10 hours, to 10 a.m. EDT to 10:10 p.m. EDT Wednesday with 12:10 p.m. EDT the most likely time. A 95 percent likelihood was placed on that 20-hour period.

Skylab at midday was circling Earth in a near-circular orbit about 118 miles high.

The special Skylab center located in the headquarters building of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration opened at 8 a.m. to receive periodic reports on Skylab's status from the North

American Air Defense Command and the Johnson Space Center in Houston.

In addition to 11 NASA personnel in the windowless room, it was staffed in the opening hours by representatives from the Federal Preparedness Agency, the State Department and the Federal Aviation Administration.

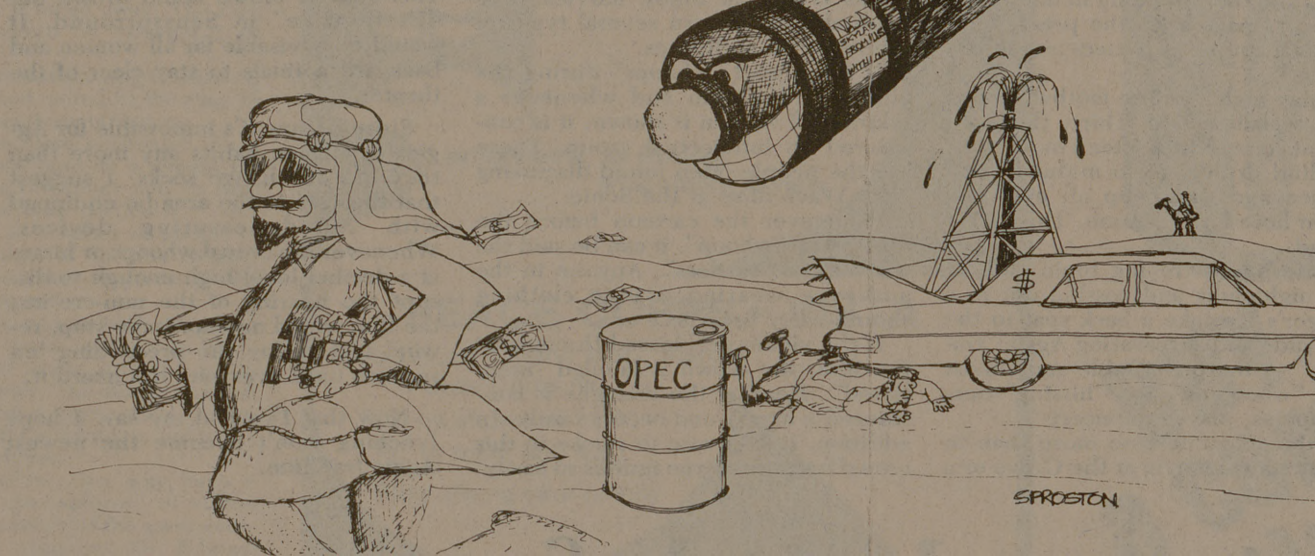
At 9 a. today, the control center in Houston reported that Skylab was on its 34,947th orbit of Earth and had logged more than 87 million miles around the globe since it was launched in May 1973.

In a report Sunday, NORAD's Space Defense Center, located in rooms excavated from granite in Cheyenne Mountain in Colorado, said the space station had dipped to within 119.2 miles of Earth. At that time NORAD was estimating Skylab's fall during a 30-hour period centered on 10:28 a.m.

That calculation was 10 hours shorter than Saturday's predicted re-entry period. Spokesmen said the time would be refined even more today.

Richard Smith, deputy NASA associate administrator, reported that all Skylab coordination activities were "going very well." He said the systems aboard Skylab also were working well 48 hours before its demise.

Smith said that project officials have de-



ecided to send Skylab into a tumble in orbit when it falls within 75 miles of Earth.

Skylab was stable in orbit at midday today. The plan is to start it tumbling end over end so engineers will better be able to predict the final path of Skylab debris.

Once Skylab hits the upper layers of the atmosphere, it will disintegrate.

Debris would not begin falling for another 4,000 or 5,000 miles, officials said.

Engineers believe two-thirds of Skylab will be consumed by heat as it decelerates

from 16,000 mph at re-entry. About 500 pieces capable of causing injury are expected to come down intact and land in a zone 4,000 miles long and 100 miles wide.

But the chance of any specific individual being hit is 600 billion to one.

Bryan council OKs loan program

By LOUIE ARTHUR
Battalion Staff

The Bryan City Council passed a resolution Monday to instruct city attorney Charles Bluntzer to draw up an ordinance prohibiting the consumption of alcoholic beverages in city parks.

At present, liquor consumption in city parks is determined by the individual parks. In most cases, a sign prohibiting drinking is put up when complaints are received from people who live in the surrounding area.

The ordinance will have to be approved at two public hearings before it can go into effect.

The council unanimously passed a resolution to form a non-profit corporation that would sell bonds in order to acquire student loan notes.

The resolution states the council recognizes a college education is a valuable asset and a student's inability to meet all of the financial commitments should not prevent this education when it is possible to obtain financing.

Four local businessmen were named as directors of this corporation: Harry Polk, Charles Hart, Roy Simmons and Sam Nye. They will review the present student loan program and establish, re-establish or reorganize a non-profit corporation with the power to operate and finance a student loan program.

In other action, the council named Jim Duckett to replace Billy Dodge on the newly formed Board of Equalization.

The board was formed at the June 25 meeting to equalize the values of all property within the corporate limits of Bryan for taxation purposes.

The council also approved a resolution approving the power requirement study for the Rural Electric Division of the City of Bryan concerning financing for the rural division.

Arabs pledge to increase oil production

United Press International
WASHINGTON — President Carter said Monday he has obtained a personal commitment from Saudi Arabia to substantially increase crude oil production for a significant and specific period of time.

Carter did not give the details of the pledge, but a Saudi spokesman said his government will increase production by 1 million barrels a day — up to 9.5 or 9.6 million — for three months.

Carter made the announcement to a Senate-House task force on energy at Camp David, where he is presiding over a "domestic summit" at which he is soliciting ways to beat the twin problems of

energy and inflation.

"The president told members of the Senate and House this morning that he has received a personal commitment from Crown Prince Fahd of Saudi Arabia to increase substantially crude oil production for a significant and specific period of time," a White House spokesman said.

Carter told the members of Congress that the Saudis will announce the specifics "in the near future."

"The personal message made clear that the Saudi decision is based on their historic friendly relationship with the United States, and their commitment to be a dependable supplier of oil to the world," a White House spokesman told reporters in

Washington.

The message from the Saudis was delivered to Ambassador Robert Strauss and to John West, U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia — apparently last weekend. Strauss arrived back in Washington Sunday night.

Deputy press secretary Rex Granum said, "The Saudis will be announcing specific details without delay. The increase will begin to affect world oil markets and should have a moderating effect on world prices."

"In this country, it should help to alleviate further shortages of gasoline, diesel and home heating oil," he added.

Granum said "the president expressed

the appreciation of the American people for this decision. He wishes to emphasize, however, that while the increased production will be helpful in the short term, it does not relieve the United States or other oil consuming nations of the necessity for firm action to reduce significantly their dependence on imported oil."

The United States import 8 million barrels of oil a day. It agreed at the Tokyo Economic Summit to limit imports to 8.5 million barrels a day — meaning it could import 500,000 barrels more a day.

Asked whether the United States had made any commitments to Saudi Arabia on Palestinian autonomy or the status of Jerusalem in return for the pledge of more

crude, Granum said "absolutely not."

Saudi Arabia has rejected the Egypt-Israeli peace treaty, and U.S.-Saudi relations have been strained in recent months.

"Saudi Arabia has been a good friend of this country or some time," Granum said. "They are doing it to be a reliable friend. We made no commitment."

Granum said that "this action by no means relieves this country of the need for action." In fact, he added, "it underscores our vulnerability."

At Camp David, Carter invited those members of Congress working on economic problems and on the possible answers to the energy crisis — including a new standby gasoline rationing proposal.

Reactor in Zachry used for training

By CAROLYN BLOSSER
Battalion Staff

Riddle for the day.
What's 10 feet tall, maroon and white, weighs 20,000 pounds, and sits in the basement of Zachry Engineering Center?
Give up? A nuclear reactor.

The low power AGN-201 reactor was specially built for training and research, said Jim Zgliczynski, the reactor supervisor. It is licensed by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to operate at a maximum of five watts.

"The reactor was specially built for training students," Zgliczynski said. "There's no way to get power out of it."

In NE 405, a required nuclear engineering undergraduate course, students conduct experiments with the reactor and learn how to operate it, Zgliczynski said. The reactor's average power level of operation is around one watt, he said.

Texas A&M got the reactor in August, 1957. It was originally set up in the mechanical engineering shops building because there was no nuclear engineering department then, Zgliczynski said.

He said the reactor laboratory in the Zachry Engineering Center was specially designed to house the reactor.

Public concern about nuclear power has been aroused and has become a political issue. Many citizens question the effect nuclear power has on the public's health and safety.

Robert Cochran, head of Texas A&M's nuclear engineering department, said he blames much of the fear that nuclear power is unsafe on the media and others.

"The reason they (the public) feel that way is because of the misinformation from Ralph Nader and others who become instant experts on everything," he said.

The release of radioactive materials from nuclear power plants have caused many to fear its impact on human health and the environment. Cochran calls this fear "a lot of nonsense" and criticizes the media for "dredging up some of these characters that say radiation is bad for you, yet we're subjected to it all the time."

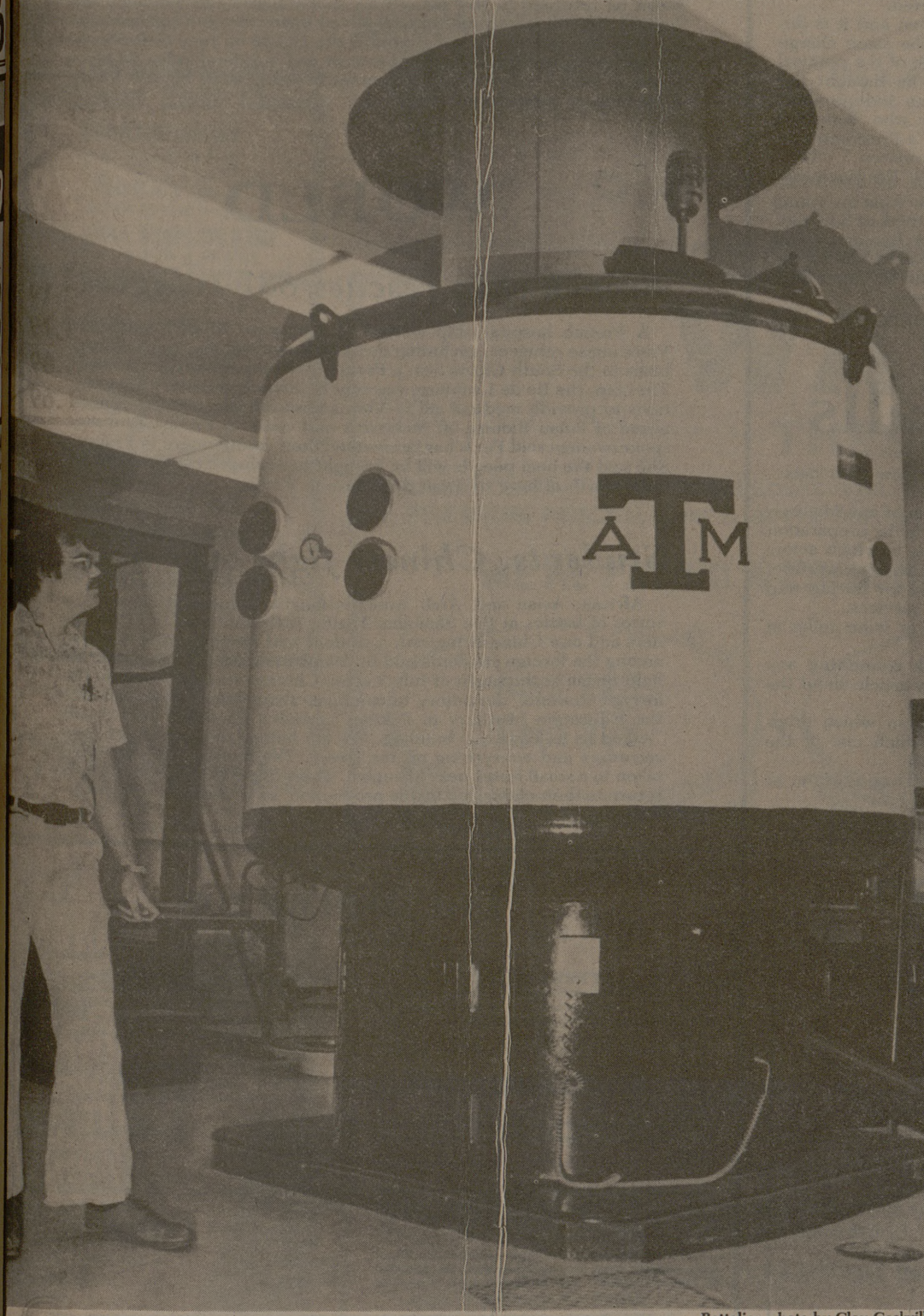
Radiation exposure from the nuclear power industry is far less than the radiation a person receives from the natural environment (soil, water, sun), medical X-rays and other sources, Cochran said.

Because of its low power level, Cochran said the reactor in Zachry Engineering Center doesn't generate any appreciable amount of radioactive waste. "The product waste stays in the fuel element and just dies out before we operate it (the reactor) again, so there's no problem," he said.

In the fission process, uranium splits into two new atoms. This process produces small amounts of radioactive products. Referring to the low power reactor in Zachry, Cochran said, "There are microscopic levels of plutonium produced at that level, but it would be impossible to separate it from the fuel."

Cochran said he believes nuclear power is the safest and cleanest way to produce electrical energy. He said the coverage of the accident at Three Mile Island "absolutely misrepresented" the nuclear power industry.

"There hasn't been a clear, honest report of what did happen at Three Mile Island," he said. "The important thing was that no one was killed, no one was injured and no one was over-radiated."



Battalion photo by Clay Cockrill

Jim Zgliczynski, reactor supervisor, poses beside the miniature nuclear reactor owned by Texas A&M University. The reactor, which is used only for teaching purposes, is housed on the ground floor of Zachry Engineering Building.

Changes in SALT II treaty could cost the U.S. \$30 billion

United Press International

WASHINGTON — Top administration officials opened the Senate's great debate on arms limitation Monday by warning it would cost at least \$30 billion to match unrestrained Soviet arms programs if SALT II fails. They said any attempt to change the treaty could open pitfalls for the United States.

Secretary of State Cyrus Vance began what he called the "fateful" process by warning the Senate that any attempt to amend the treaty might jeopardize points in the treaty which are favorable to the United States.

Secretary of Defense Harold Brown said that an unrestrained arms race would result from Senate rejection of the treaty, and that competition could cost the United States an extra \$30 billion.

Brown and Vance were the lead-off witnesses beginning a month of committee hearings on the pact which Senate critics assert is biased in favor of the Russians.

In testimony prepared for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's first day of hearings on the arms pact, Brown assured the Senate that U.S. intelligence can monitor and verify any significant Soviet cheating. Verifiability of the pact has been one of the main sticking points cited by opponents.

"My judgment is that this treaty will make the people of the United States more secure militarily than we would be without it," Brown said. "For that reason, I recommend the Senate give its approval."

He said the new treaty "is designed to assure that we do not need to rely on trust."

"It is verifiable. The Soviets cannot gain a military advantage by concealed actions that violate the agreement," he said.

Vance said, "We proceed today with the second step in a fateful joint responsibility."

The first stage — the negotiation and signing of the pact — was done, he said, with an unprecedented amount of cooperation with Congress.

Vance acknowledged that the United States would have preferred lower levels arms limitation, but he said, "The issue is where we are better served with this treaty or without it."

He said it is his belief that "we cannot realistically expect to shift the bargain more in our favor now through a process of amendment and reservation."

"Even if it were possible to reopen the negotiations, certainly they would be reopened to both sides. This could lead to the reopening of points that are now resolved in a manner favorable to our interests."

The Senate is expected to vote sometime in November on ratification of the treaty which President Carter and Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev signed in Vienna last month.

Senate Democratic leader Robert Byrd said on a national television show Sunday that if a Senate vote were taken today, the treaty probably would not win the needed two-thirds majority.

A major question looming in the debate is what would happen if the Senate amends the treaty text.

Byrd, who returned Saturday from talks with Brezhnev and other Soviet leaders, indicated the Russians have softened their "no amendments" stance and probably would agree to renegotiate the provisions. But in that case, he said, the Soviets would try to win new concessions for themselves.

Brown said SALT II would mean greater stability and predictability in strategic challenges, "and so the balance will be maintainable at a substantially lower level of destructive power than would otherwise be the case."

Registration for second session begins July 12

Registration for the second term of the summer session at Texas A&M University will be Thursday July 12. Card packets can be picked up at DeWare Field House and registration will take place in G. Rollie White Coliseum. Students with last names beginning with E-K can pick up their packets and begin registering from 8:00 a.m. until 9:00 a.m. Students with last names beginning with L-R register from 9:00 a.m. until 10:00 a.m. S-Z will register from 10:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. A-D will register between 11:00 a.m. and noon.

Classes for the second term begin Friday July 13.