

the state

Windfall taxes

Independents need protection: Bentsen

United Press International
WASHINGTON — Sen. Lloyd Bentsen, D-Texas, introduced legislation Monday to exempt from the windfall profits tax the first 3,000 barrels of oil pumped each day

within the United States by independent producers.

Bentsen is a member of the Senate Finance Committee, which is considering the windfall profits tax. "According to the best estimates

available," Bentsen said, "the recent oil price increase by OPEC will force inflation 2 percent higher in the United States next year and throw a million U.S. workers out of their jobs."

"Our dependence on unreliable and increasingly costly foreign oil has doubled since the 1973 embargo, while domestic production in the lower 48 states is in its ninth year of decline."

"It would be a tragic miscalculation for Congress to take action that might add to this decline. We need to strive for and encourage more production, not less. We need greater energy independence, not more dependence," Bentsen said.

The number of independent oil producers, who drill almost 90 percent of this country's exploratory wells, he observed, has been halved — from 20,000 to 10,000 — since the mid-1950s.

Unlike the major oil companies, which derive income from refining,

marketing, transportation and overseas operations, Bentsen said the independent producer has only one source of income, the sale of the oil and gas he produces.

He cited a recent study by the Independent Petroleum Association of America that shows total well-head receipts for independent producers the past five years amounted to \$3.3 billion. But he noted the same producers spent \$34.9 billion during that period on exploration and production.

"The evidence is clear," Bentsen said. "These independent producers are reinvesting everything they earn and then borrowing more money on top of that to explore for oil and gas."

"I am deeply concerned that imposing the House version of the windfall profits tax on independent producers might discourage desperately needed new exploration. So I am offering legislation to exempt from this tax the first 3,000 barrels a day that the independent produces," he said.

According to preliminary estimates, he added, the proposal would exempt only 15 percent of the total oil subject to the tax in the House bill, but would exempt 99 percent of all producers from the paper work and red tape burden the windfall tax might generate.

Texans' reflections on Carter speech differ

By EDWARD FULTON
United Press International

It appeared that Texans, regardless of political affiliation, reacted to President Carter's energy address according to their own view of the cause of the crisis and the solution.

John Poerner, chairman of the Texas Railroad Commission which rules the Texas petroleum industry, was critical of Carter, charging that the president failed in his speech to even show that there is an energy shortage, and that cutting imports in half by 1980 was, therefore, "unthinkable."

"It's unthinkable," he said Monday, "because the American people will not reduce their demand on hydrocarbon consumption until they believe there is a shortage."

"I was very disappointed. I thought this was going to be the one last time when the president would come forth and lead the country, and he didn't do it. He probably gave away the presidential office to the Republicans because of his inability to act."

Railroad Commissioner Mack Wallace, however, disagreed.

"He has stopped talking at the outset about conservation," Wallace said. "He began to address the need to produce, and that is our essential problem."

Presidential candidate George Bush, reached in Houston, was moderate in his reaction. He said he thought Carter had some good proposals, but questioned whether Carter had the toughness to carry his proposals through Congress.

"In spite of the rhetoric last night, the only question I've got is will he bite the bullet?" Bush said. "Will he be tough enough and strong enough in leading his own democratic controlled Congress? It's going to take some political courage."

William Fisher, a UT professor and leader in developing the so-called "Texas position" on energy, said it would "take some pretty heroic measures" to cut imports in half by 1980. You don't double coal production without lowering the nation's air quality standards.

Speaking on the political impact of the speech, Travis County Democratic chairman Ken Wendler said: "It's not a turn-around speech. I do think it will improve public opinion of him."

Gov. Bill Clements labeled Carter's speech political, and said he had hoped for specific proposals to solve the energy problem.

"We are beyond the time for sermons," Clements said. "Words are not enough. What the American public wants is a plan of action. We want some specifics, something we

can put out teeth into. The president has all the authority he needs. He doesn't need another board, more red tape and bureaucracy."

Clements said Carter's speech to freeze oil imports at the current level has dire implications.

"It would mean a cycle of growth, stagnation of the economy, fewer jobs and more inflation," he said.

A spokesman for Gulf Oil in Houston said Carter's speech reported oil must be accompanied by such domestic economic programs. However, the company, in a statement, was not totally in agreement with Carter.

"The president's equalization on energy production and distribution is a move in the right direction because in the past our industry had emphasized consumption of the company said."

"We agree that synthetic oil must be developed as soon as possible. It must be recognized this will take many years and a tremendous investment in this time can be accelerating the combination of public and private support. The near-term solution continues to depend on increased development of oil and gas."

Farmers demand apology from Brown for cracks

United Press International
AUSTIN — American Agriculture Movement spokesmen said Monday Agriculture Commissioner Reagan Brown called farmers worse names than he did blacks and should

issue specific apologies to both groups as well as a public explanation.

"I wouldn't print any of the meeting in a family newspaper," said Craig Bryant of Egin, one of the

nine farmers who attended the meeting in Brown's office last week, which the agriculture commission used racial slurs against blacks.

The foundation of the Texas Farm Bureau, a yellow-billed cuckoo, was blazing, and the men guaranteed the embassies.

Three women were present Saturday with it wasn't kosher. Bryant and the eight American Agriculture representatives who attended the meeting with Brown issued a Monday calling on him to explain why he opposes creation of a producers advisory board.

"We cannot understand why Brown opposes a commission which would have advisory capacity," Bryant said. "We cannot understand why this would pressure the U.S. space."

Mention of the production advisory board, according to Bryant, sparked an outburst by Brown in which he referred to "niggers" and called the Bureau president, Gray Coffey a Chaloupka, a "god-damned technician's haphazardly applied space."

Bryant said one of the Agriculture representatives tape recording of the meeting the group decided against releasing it for the present.

"I don't think it'd be beneficial at this time for it to be released," Bryant said.

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