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Congressman proposes regulation of oil prices

By MARCY BOYCE
Battalion Reporter

Blaming increasing energy costs for present double-digit inflation, U.S. Rep. Bob Eckhardt, D-Houston, Monday night proposed reinstating government control of oil prices.

In an MSC Political Forum presentation, Eckhardt said that energy prices alone raised overall inflation 3.09 percentage points from March 1979 to April 1979. In comparison, during the July 1973-July 1974 period, they contributed only .03 percentage points, he said.

"And this inflation in the cost of oil triggers inflation in all other items," he said.

For example, he said, consumers are forced to spend more on transportation. In addition, housing — with the cost of heating — now accounts for 38 percent of the total budgetary dollar, up from 28 percent in previous years, he said.

And, Eckhardt said, these increases in inflation upon spending in other areas such as clothing, entertainment, medical care and even food.

Previous attempts by the government to counteract the impact of these energy costs by increasing interest rates have only



U.S. Rep. Bob Eckhardt

provided additional fuel for inflation, he said.

"Energy and interest both press toward greater inflation," Eckhardt said.

It is easy to blame OPEC and the Arabs for escalating energy costs, he said. But from January to the present, Eckhardt said, domestic policy, not foreign oil, has been responsible for the 36 percent increase in gasoline and the 50 percent increase in middle distillates (home heating oil and diesel fuel).

Oil imports in the first quarter of this year actually increased over the first quarter of 1978, he said. But in November 1978, domestic production fell considerably below the normal dip for that period and it didn't recover as quickly in the spring.

Discounting the possibility of a conspiracy among the oil companies, Eckhardt said the production decrease was probably a result of their anticipation for higher prices once Carter phased out oil controls.

Therefore, Eckhardt said, inflation could partially be resolved by reinforcing price controls, but then gradually phasing them out. This, he said would permit an increase in price, but not as rapid.

Classes under water

By TODD HEDGEPEATH
Battalion Reporter

Some students have found themselves taking classes under two million gallons of water at Texas A&M University this semester.

Due to current renovation of the four mechanical engineering shops, 27 sections from four engineering technology classes are being taught under the blue water tower.

"The shops were built in 1921 and were completely outdated," department head Everett E. Glazener said. "Renovation was a necessity."

Machine shop, woodworking and foundry equipment were moved to the new location and temporary sheetrock walls were built to provide two classrooms.

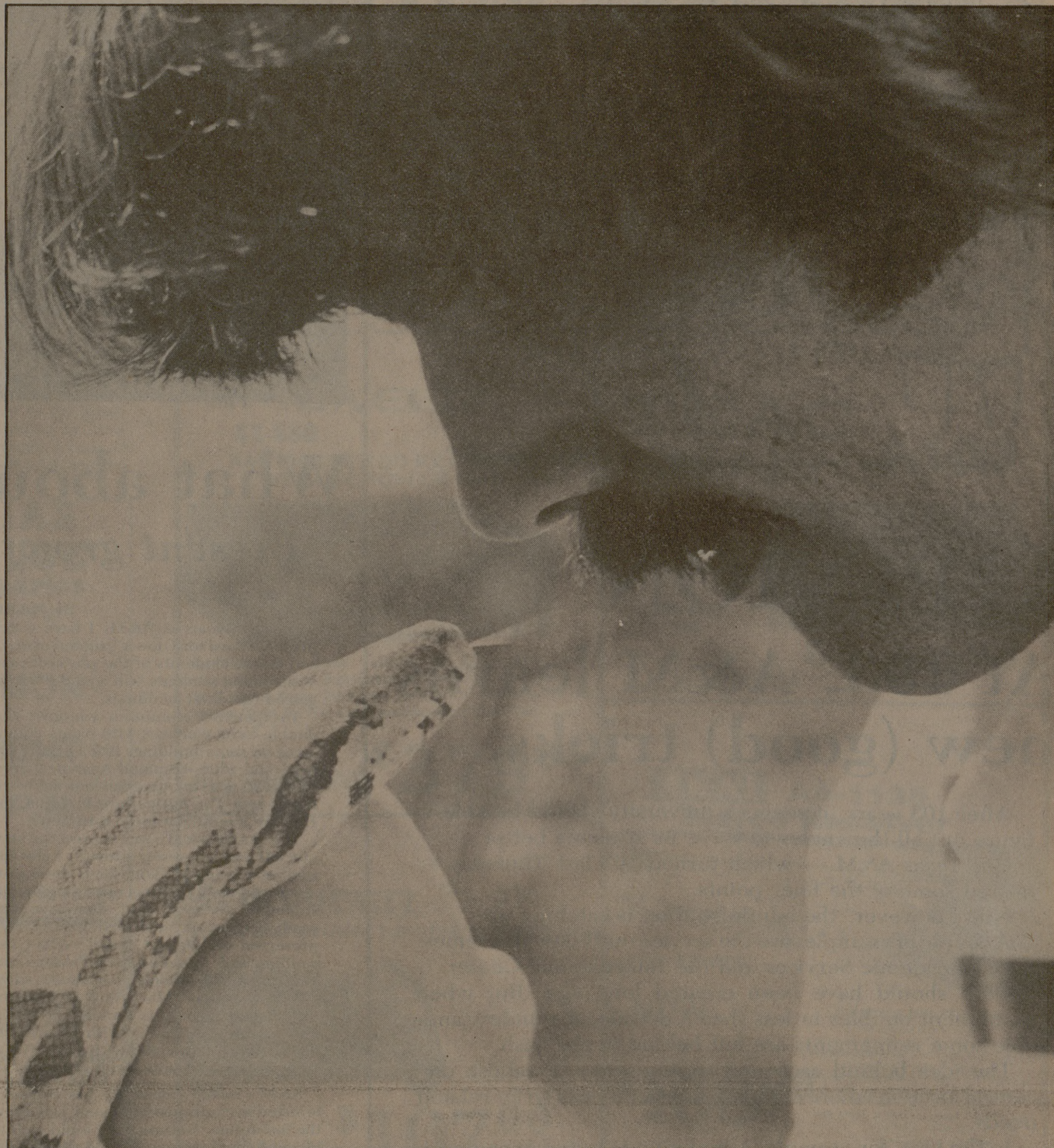
Glazener said the water tower was the only space available with room enough for all of the equipment.

The area beneath the tower had previously been used for storage by the Physical Plant Department.

When asked what it's like to have class underneath all that water, student David Glass said, "Whenever we hear any noises from men working outside we all slowly look up to make sure it's not coming from above."

The water tower isn't the only new location for E.T. classes, though. Glazener said that the Agricultural Engineering department has been helpful, allowing E.T. 106 classes (a metal forming and fabrication course) to be located in the P&M Building across the tracks.

Renovation on the shops began June 15 and construction is scheduled for completion by next fall. Glazener, though, said work was ahead of schedule and classes might return to normal before then.

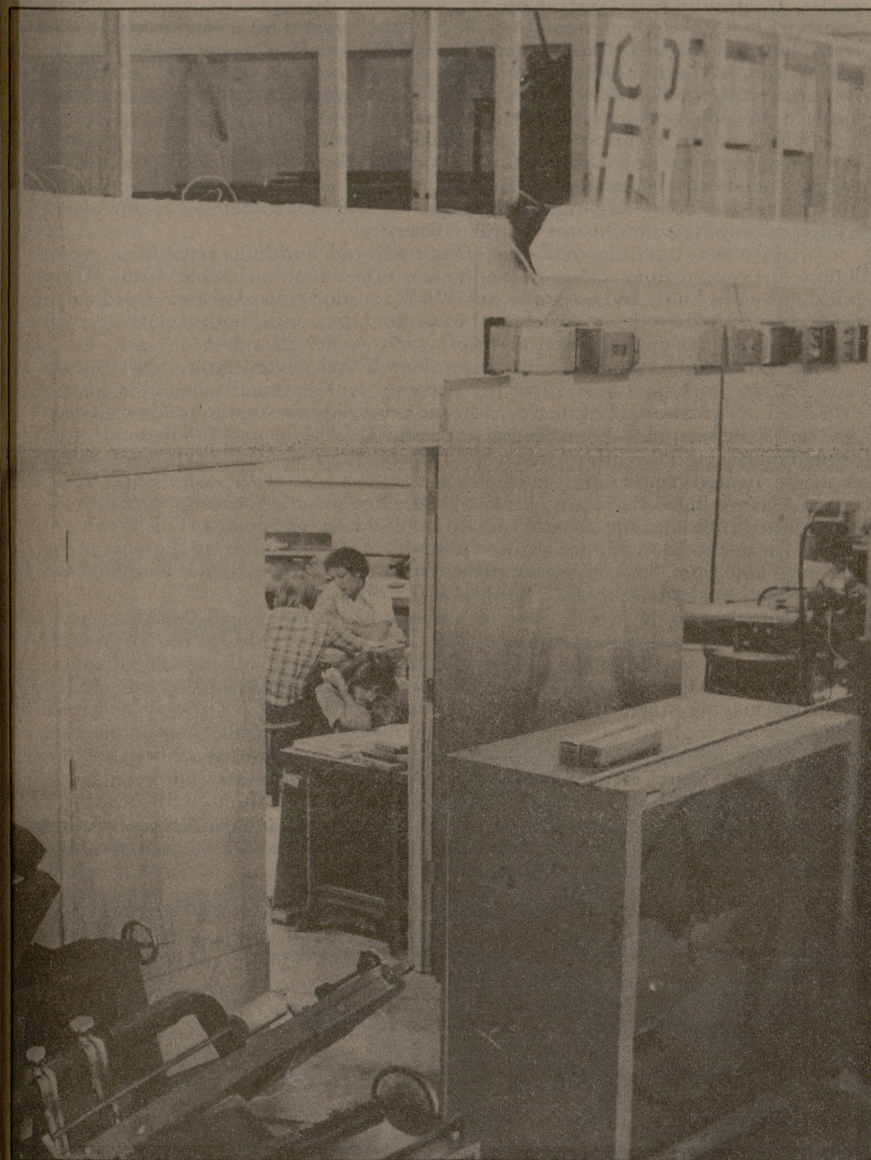


Close Friends

Chuck, a 6½-foot boa constrictor, is thankful to his owner, Richard Myers of Houston, for a chance to get out of his traveling bag and stretch after a long

drive. They recently were visiting the Bryan-College Station area.

Battalion photo by Kathryn Williford



Engineering technology students, seemingly oblivious to the tons of water above them, work in one of two temporary classrooms built under the Texas A&M University water tower.

Bryan Municipal Utilities District

Council rejects MUD annexation

By SYLVIA FELLOWS
Battalion Reporter

The Bryan City Council rejected annexation of the Municipal Utilities District by a vote of 4-3 Monday night.

Councilmen Henry Seale, Joe Hanover, Wayne Gibson and Peyton Waller voted against the ordinance while Councilmen Fles Turner, John Mobley and Mayor Richard Smith voted for annexation.

The council chamber was packed with spectators as 75 residents of the MUD attended the meeting, presenting new evidence in favor of annexation.

The MUD is the only utility district in Brazos county. It was set up to provide utilities for approximately 2,000 residents in an unincorporated, 695-acre area west of

Bryan. The MUD pays for installation of utilities and service through the sale of bonds.

Presently, the MUD has a \$2.3 million bond debt. The city of Bryan would take over this debt if it annexed the MUD.

Laurence Dillon, MUD resident, told the council that the MUD has \$500,000 in escrow account money which the city would acquire if the annexation passed. The money, he said, could be used to help pay off the debt the city would inherit through annexation.

The discovery of the \$500,000 came from the latest MUD quarterly report, he added.

Mayor Richard Smith said the \$500,000 was important, and asked for a delay in the

vote over the annexation. The motion to delay the vote failed.

Of the four other tracts being considered for annexation, only one — an undeveloped tract southeast of Bryan with no residents — was approved.

In other action, the council also approved the second and final reading of the 1979-80 budget by a vote of 4-3.

Councilmen Seale, Turner, Mobley and Mayor Smith voted in favor of the budget with councilmen Hanover, Waller and Gibson voting against it.

The new budget totals \$38 million — an increase of \$5 million over last year's budget.

The only change in the budget from the first reading was an additional \$11,000 for

funding of the Neal Day Care Center, a child development center for 35 children under age five.

Although the budget increase calls for \$11,000 to be given to the center, the actual cost to the city will be \$5,000 since \$6,000 in building use fees will be returned to the city by the Bryan school district, owners of the building.

Gibson spoke out against the center. He said he was against funding the center with city money because it did not serve the city as a whole.

Smith, speaking in favor of the center, said he thought the program was part of the community development program and could be justified.

The head of the Texas Education Agency, which oversees operation of public schools across the state, said he supports the back-to-basics movement as well as new emphasis on realistic vocational training, discipline in classrooms and local control of schools.

"Just as war is too important to be left to generals, education is too important to be left to educators," Bowen told the annual convention of the Texas Association of School Administrators and Texas Association of School Boards.

Bowen, 63, urged school officials to listen to demands from taxpayers and parents for a return to basics in education and to act decisively to "recreate the confidence of the people we serve and justify the hope of the children in our care."

"I'm suggesting that we concentrate all of our resources — both human and monetary for the next five years on reading," Bowen said.

The former Bryan school superintendent who became head of the Texas Education Agency on Sept. 1, minced no words in his first major public speech.

"We have added on, incorporated into, infused, and I sometimes think confused just about every element of our public school curriculum," Bowen said. "Would you believe that in the past 50 years, we have not cut anything out of the curriculum?"

Bowen said a statewide curriculum study will begin soon to make a realistic assessment of the desired elements of a basic curriculum.

On one of Texas' most controversial school issues, Bowen said the value of bilingual education is unclear.

"There is some evidence that bilingual

education facilitates the educational development of limited English-speaking children. Other research indicates that it is not the most efficient and expeditious method," Bowen said. "The jury is still out on bilingual education."

Bowen said for now educators should adhere to state laws requiring bilingual classes for young children with limited ability to speak English, but said the programs should be "transitional" and aimed at moving children into the mainstream rather than trying to preserve their home language or culture.

The education commissioner said too little recognition is given to vocational education students and called for improved training to prepare students to earn a living.

"You and I know that no child can tread the economic waters — much less swim upstream in the mainstream — without the training to make a dollar," he said.

Bowen said educators need to involve business and industry representatives more deeply in planning for vocational programs.

"They may wonder why we are spending \$300 million a year to provide vocational education to people in this state and industry still can't find well-trained skilled employees," he said.

Bowen told school administrators there is no place for violence in schools and called for swift imposition of discipline.

"We should not allow our teachers to be abused and the learning process to be disrupted by a few rowdies in the schools," he said. "We must have order."

Bowen said federal education efforts are uncoordinated, fragmented, unplanned and aimed at social goals rather than improving teaching.

Castro to visit U.N. 'in the middle of this week'

UNITED NATIONS — Cuba's ambassador to the United Nations confirmed Monday that President Fidel Castro will visit the United States for the first time in 19 years to address the U.N. General Assembly. He will speak as chairman of the 93-nation bloc of non-aligned nations.

"The Secretary General has been

informed by the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations that President Castro will visit the United Nations headquarters this week to address the General Assembly," U.N. spokesman Rudolf Stajduhar said.

"We understand he will be coming in the middle of the week," a State Department spokesman said Sunday.

"But we don't have a precise date yet. I'm not sure if that has been set by the Cubans."

In Washington, earlier the State Department said Castro will visit the U.N. this week amid continuing tension over the stationing of Soviet troops in Cuba.

It will be Castro's first trip to the United Nations since his celebrated

1960 trip shook up security men and angered U.S. diplomats. That also was the General Assembly session at which Soviet Prime Minister Nikita Khrushchev banged a shoe on a table during a debate.

The United States and Cuba have maintained "special interests sections" in Havana and Washington

under the flags of other countries since Castro expropriated American businesses in 1960 and diplomatic ties were broken off.

Relations between the two nations had warmed somewhat in recent years, but took a turn for the worse recently with the debate over Soviet troops in Cuba.

The State Department said administration officials do not plan to confer with the Cuban leader during this week's visit.

"There are no plans for a meeting between him and any U.S. officials," the spokesman said. "As far as we're concerned, he's visiting the United Nations — not the United States."