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Soviet grain crop disastrous again

MOSCOW — The Soviet Union's top economic planner made a veiled announcement of the nation's second straight disastrous crop and the second worst harvest since 1975.

Nikolai Baibakov, chairman of the Soviet planning agency GOSPLAN, backed into announcing the 1980 grain harvest by announcing figures that would put the harvest at 181 million metric tons, only slightly better than 1979's crop of 179 million tons, described as a disaster by most observers.

"It's very bad," said Western agricultural experts in Moscow, noting the harvest figures are important this year because of the U.S. boycott on grain sales to the Soviet Union.

Baibakov backed into the announcement of the figures, telling the 1,500 delegates that grain production over the Five Year Plan that will end this year was an average of 12 percent above the previous five year plan, covering 1971-75.

Taking those figures and compar-

ing the harvests of the previous nine years, the 1980 grain crop would be 181 million tons — slightly better than 1979's 179 million tons.

The 181 million figure would make it the second worst grain harvest since 1975 when only 140 million tons were reaped and there was mass distress slaughtering of cattle, pigs and poultry.

The veiled method of releasing the grain figure was also resorted to in 1975, when a similar announcement of a five-year average was made at the autumn Supreme Soviet. The release of the actual figure was not until the following January.

Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev admitted in a speech Tuesday to the Plenary session of the Communist Party's Central Committee that 1980 had been a bad grain year.

He lashed out at Soviet economic planners and named a leading agriculture expert, Mikail S. Corbachev, 49, to the ruling Politburo in an effort to reassure the nation it will be able to feed itself despite setbacks caused by the U.S. grain embargo.

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Army was on laughing... and Judy Benjamin joined in...
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MIDNIGHT MOVIE
Friday & Sat.
"THE RODIE"

DPS finds motorists still speed

AUSTIN — Texas drivers have slowed down but not enough, the Department of Public Safety announced Wednesday.

Col. Jim Adams, director of the department, said only 36 percent of Texas drivers were observing the legal speed limit of 55 mph in the year that ended Sept. 30, 1980. That's under the federally-mandated rate of 40 percent.

The result could be a loss of \$8 million in federal funds.

Adams said a survey by the highway department showed that while Texans are still driving too fast by federal standards, most are now staying below the dangerous, very high speeds.

"Only 28 percent of the drivers exceeded 60 miles per hour, and only 10 percent exceeded 65 miles per hour," he reported. "Texas motorists have made significant progress since last year when we barely made the mandated 30 percent compliance rate — or 70 percent non-compliance rate."

Adams promised to "continue an intensive enforcement policy and an aggressive safety education program."



Waiting for the 'Great Aggie'
As Halloween approaches, many students prepare jack-o'-lanterns to decorate their dorm room or apartment. Rick Sutton, a senior, proudly displays his "Aggie" pumpkin. Photo by Andrew...

Strake warns of vote fraud

AUSTIN — Some Texans are still committing election fraud and are depriving others of the right to vote, Secretary of State George Strake said today in announcing an election inspector program for the Nov. 4 election.

Strake said the election inspectors are an attempt to "handle election fraud 'in house' through application of state law and state resources." He said the inspectors will assist local election officials and individual citizens in assuring "fair and honest elections."

However, if state law breaks

down, Strake promised he would not hesitate to refer election fraud or voting rights violations to federal authorities.

The secretary of state, a Republican, was the first witness in a day-long "public inquiry on voting irregularities" sponsored by 13 civil rights and public interest organizations.

"We have had in our Texas history and we still have in our midst people who try to deprive others of their right to vote, people who unduly influence their voting choices, and

people who subvert the results of votes after they have been cast," Strake said.

He expressed "a basic confidence" that local authorities will do their duty in such cases.

"To assist them, we are working with the Prosecutors' Coordinating Council to prepare a manual to advise on how to prosecute election code violations. However, we have already had experience with cases where we felt there was unwarranted delay and a reluctance to prosecute on the part of some local officials."

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