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## Ozone level subject of research

**United Press International**  
HOUSTON—A government scientist wants to conduct studies in Houston and the Mississippi Delta to substantiate laboratory tests that show ozone pollution can reduce cotton yields by up to 15 percent.

Plant pathologist Howard E. Heggstad, with the Agricultural Research Center, in Beltsville, Md., said although cotton is not a major crop around Houston, the city does have high ozone levels that are carefully recorded and could be used in the research.

"In rural areas, we do not have good information on what the ozone levels really are," Heggstad said. Major crops in the area, such as soybeans and rice, however, are sensitive to ozone pollution, he said.

The major cotton-growing areas in the country are in Texas, California and Mississippi.

Studies done in the San Joaquin Valley of California showed several strains of cotton decreased in yield by about 15 percent in areas where there is ozone pollution, Heggstad said.

The scientist said that in his own studies, he found the California cotton showed significant leaf loss and changed lint and seed quality when exposed to ozone.

However, he cautioned that blaming ozone for leaf loss in cotton plants is tricky. He said plant damage could be caused by some other pollutant, such as sulfur dioxide.

## Warped



By Scott McCullough

## Experts say too good to last

# Inflation low in January

**United Press International**  
WASHINGTON—Cheaper transportation and clothing costs held inflation to an extremely moderate 0.3 percent last month—the smallest climb in a year and a half, the Labor Department reported Wednesday.

Only twice in nearly six years has the Consumer Price Index been lower than January's figure—in July 1980, and in April 1976, department analysts said.

If January's moderate price hikes were repeated for 12 consecutive months, the annual rate of increase only would be 3.5 percent, the Labor Department said. That would be far below last year's average of 8.9 percent.

Most striking in the new figures was the drop in prices for transportation, the first since April of last year, and the second drop in clothing prices in three months.

A substantial decline in gasoline prices was primarily responsible for the transportation price decline, the department said. Prices for new cars also went down, while used car prices went up by the smallest amount in 19 months.

The gains on the inflation front for January, February and March are especially significant, since they determine the annual cost-of-living increase that Social Security recipients receive in July. Last year's adjustment of 11.2 percent cost the government \$37 billion in additional payments. This year's adjustment could be far less.

The Consumer Price Index was set at 282.5 for January, which meant it cost \$282.50 to buy the same sample market basket of goods and services that could be purchased for \$100 in 1967.

Of the seven major categories of prices, only three increased over December, when the monthly hike in the overall index was 0.4 percent.

Transportation costs went down 0.2 percent. Clothing prices dropped 0.1 percent.

Housing costs climbed 0.3 percent, as the heavily weighted home ownership costs went down, partially offsetting increases in the price of fuel oil for heat.

The cost of buying a house went down 0.4 percent, offsetting a 0.2 percent increase in

mortgage interest rates for 18 months.

In contrast, a still-weak rental price index that has risen 0.4 percent in January, up 0.7 percent in December, when the official index.

Food prices climbed 0.2 percent in January, up 0.7 percent in December, when the highest rate of increase in the index.

Large price hikes for vegetables and fruits in January, up 0.7 percent in January, up 0.7 percent in December, when the highest rate of increase in the index.

The medical care index climbed the most, 0.8 percent in January, up 0.7 percent in December, when the highest rate of increase in the index.

The Cougars have a row of Aggies and have

# Democrats propose alternative to Reagan's economic policy

**United Press International**  
WASHINGTON—Democrats on the Congressional Joint Economic Committee answered a challenge from President Reagan Wednesday by proposing an easing of monetary policy, delay of 1983 tax cuts and conservation of credit.

"The president told us to put up or shut up, and we decided to put up," Rep. Henry Reuss, D-Wis., the committee chairman, said Thursday in an interview on NBC's "Today" program. He referred to a remark Reagan directed to critics of his economic program during a Midwest trip

just after release of the administration's 1983 budget blueprint. The Democrats' plan, as it was outlined Thursday, includes:

— Stop the administration and the Federal Reserve from further tightening the money supply

— Defer the 10 percent cut in individual income tax rates now scheduled for July 1983. (They proposed no change in the 10 percent cut scheduled for this July.)

— Repeal the indexing of taxes, now scheduled to start in 1985, under which inflation no longer would push people into higher brackets

— Defer further "deep reductions in spending for social programs" until after the recession ends and extend unemployment insurance coverage so it would run for 39 weeks in all states

— "Conservation" of credit. The administration and Federal Reserve would encourage banks to channel loans to productive

uses, including small farmers, housing and private investment, rather than productive uses such as rate take-overs and speculation in commodities.

— Launch an "income policy," under which the floor and ceiling on labor and business wages and prices. Democrats urged the team and House committee have made Thomas had an extensive assignment. Republicans responded by urging:

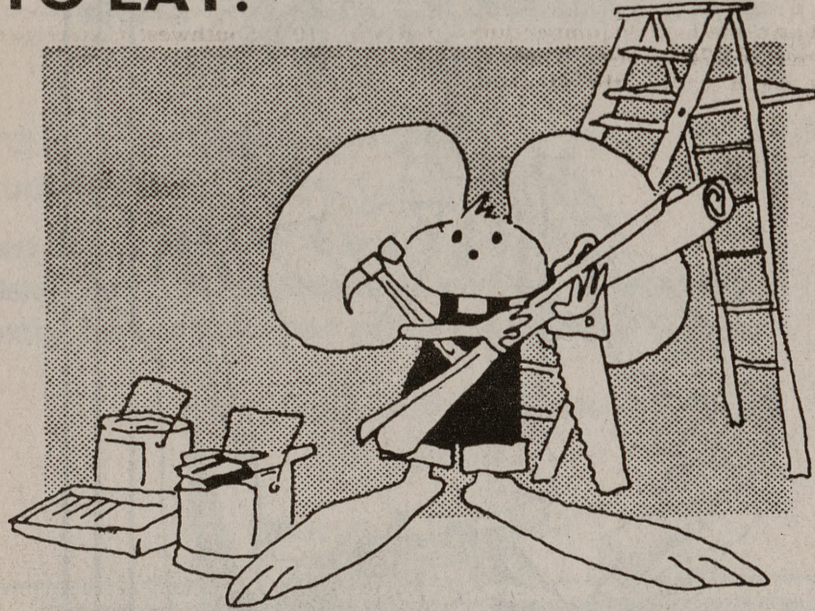
— Further efforts to curb the federal budget deficit by cutting additional spending rather than not by tax increases and knocked out of the way out.

— Consideration of alternative tax measures to encourage saving, investment and productivity

— Redoubling efforts to move burdensome federal regulations

— A renewed commitment to maintain non-inflationary growth.

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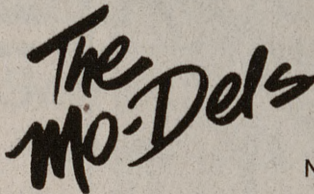
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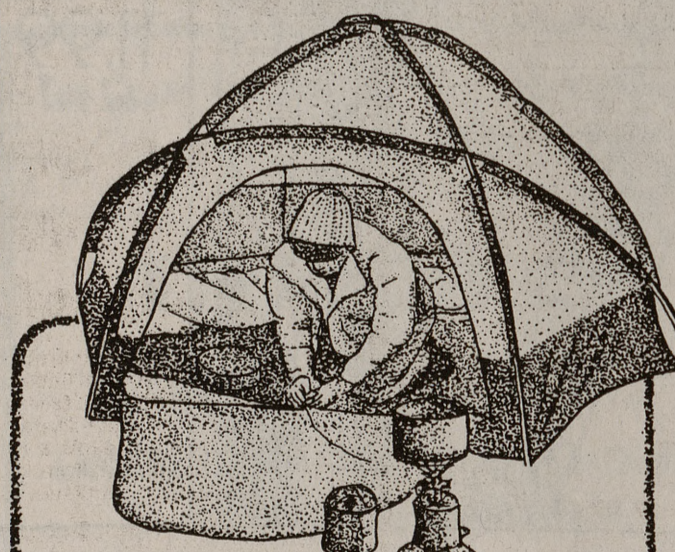


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