

Too much oil worse than oil shortages

by Dick West
United Press International
WASHINGTON — Add to the list of things to worry about: the worldwide oil glut.

Until recently, clinging to a belief that the oil glut was certain to be short-lived, I was reluctant to spend much time worrying about it.

Now there seems no doubt that the surplus is real, is substantial, is widespread and is causing troubles in many parts of the world.

With petroleum experts predicting the glut will extend into the foreseeable future, and with each passing day producing fresh reports of oil-producing countries struggling to cope with more-than-adequate supplies, truly conscientious consumers have no choice but to admit this problem to their spheres of anxieties.

However, I'm still not sure whether this means we can quit worrying about an oil shortage.

Just be on the safe side, I personally intend to continue worrying about a shortage for a few more weeks, or at least until the situation is better clarified.

In short, the oil glut is no cause for panic — yet. Alarm, yes; panic, no. At the

moment, it merely seems prudent to keep the oil glut in the back of your mind where other perturbations lurk.

Then, later, if conditions warrant, we can stampede ourselves into a full-blown crisis.

Meanwhile, the chair will entertain questions from the floor.

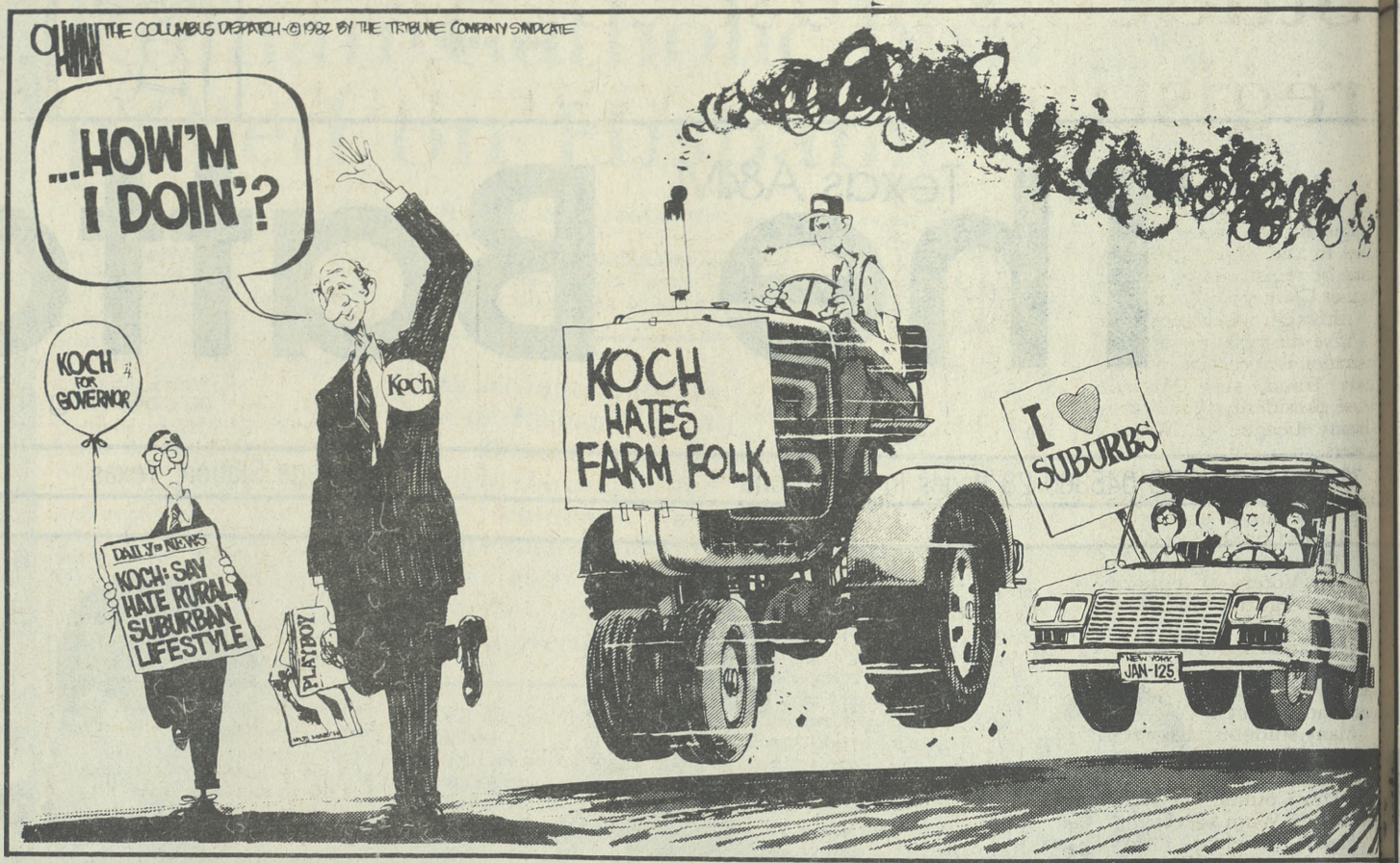
Q. What causes an oil glut?

A. As best I can ascertain, the villain of the piece is the same as the chief culprit in the recent shortage — namely, fossil fuels.

Geologists and petroleum engineers tell us that fossils are highly erratic and subject to whim. Their eccentricities make it all but impossible to anticipate and predict the rate at which fossils are likely to convert themselves to fuel.

Throughout most of the 1970s, the world's fossil population was engaged in a dramatic slowdown. For the most part, fossil remains remained fossils, rather than taking the final, fateful plunge into combustibility.

Then, about a year ago, for reasons that deny rational interpretation, fossils suddenly speeded up the transmutation process, liquifying themselves faster than the government could issue off-shore leases.



Slouch

By Jim Earle

"Be grateful that you have a short name."

Go for a night out at the Commons

The following is an excerpt from a proposal I plan to submit to the Texas A&M Building Planning Committee this spring:

Gentlemen,
Texas A&M is blessed with the resources — monetary, material, and human — to create gorgeous campus landscapes, to construct luxurious athletic facilities, and to provide more than adequate living and dining halls for the students. The Commons is a fine synthesis of all three.



Yet, I propose that we breach our near-sighted standards and move a step further in the development of the Commons rooming/boarded complex. With a few minor enhancements, the Commons could become a vanguard in elite college facilities. Allow me to explain.

Already, students have proven the need for elegant dining and recreation on campus. When students haven't time for dressing up, when they need a quick, nutritious meal, when they are too rushed to bother with impressing their peers, they speed through Sbis Hall for an informal bite.

Yet the Commons provides a more sophisticated atmosphere. A girl spends time on herself before dinner; the fellows slap on cologne. The cafeteria just in-

nately carries a certain aplomb that escapes the other, more bourgeois campus eating houses.

The air of the Commons reeks of potential.

Structurally, the building is perfect for a diversified complex of refined social activity. Starting with the cafeteria: paneling, carpeting, candlelight, and personal table service should transform it into a splendid restaurant — allowing the students to look no further than southside for a formal socializing.

Upstairs, the area surrounding the TV lounges would make a luscious disco with leather and walnut furniture, Polynesian music, peacock feather table decorations, and lots of smoked glass. Behind the disco, the bar and lounge (formerly the

snack bar) would provide refreshment for dancing patrons and members of athletic club (to be built later on Durney Field) ...

Also, I include material for a proposal brochure:

"... Under the brilliant College State zenith, watch your romantic dreams come true on The Commons' starling walkways ... gaze from your townhouse window over Texas A&M's majestic skyline ... allow our doormen to welcome you and your date to The Commons' rhapsodic dance hall where your troubled schoolwork dissolve into our heavenly punch bowl ...

"Can you afford to let your figure waste away during college years? The Commons' fully trained health club will insure you a trim, fit appearance for a few fun-filled hours on our running track, in our pool, and in the community sauna ...

"Top off a long, uneventful day with a meal at The Commons restaurant — perhaps our chicken florentine, or our gaudy mushrooms and gulf shrimp crepes ... Membership starts at \$300.

Any support for this predication wish to offer may take the form of a letter to the Building Planning Committee, Texas A&M University.

Letters: Writer needs a lesson in military history

Editor:

I feel compelled by all that is sane in this world to respond to the mindless drivel submitted to The Battalion by Barry Elmer. It was Elmer's expressed opinion that America's supposed propensity for military aggression could be evidenced by the nature of our role "in all theaters of warfare." He went on to cite several specific conflicts of this century. I could hardly believe what I was reading! Elmer's lack of historical memory, it seems, is only outshone by the defects in his reasoning.

Let's take each major conflict of the century. World War I: We managed to stay out of the first three years of this one and after the war, rather than try to ravage the defeated powers with reparation demands, President Wilson tried to push his "14 points" which stressed humane treatment for the vanquished. He failed, but he tried.

World War II: Yes, indeed! Our sailors at Pearl Harbor certainly did aggress against those poor bombs that were being dropped on them. Our only crime against the Japanese was our refusal to sell them the raw materials to continue their rape of China. And again we spent over two years trying to stay out of the war and, after it, trying to rebuild the defeated countries.

around to attacking North Vietnamese positions in Cambodia, the North Vietnamese already controlled half of that country.

As for the Bay of Pigs, I concede the point. Let's see, that's Elmer — 1, the truth — 4.

Look, I am not one who responds to criticism of my country in a hostile, reflexive way. I am quite critical of America myself, especially its foreign policy. Being willing to criticize is but the loving gesture of a true patriot, but along with learning that your country can be wrong, one must remember that it can also be right. Barry Elmer seems to have forgotten this. He has rewritten history in his letter to the disadvantage of his nation and such is his hypocritical penchant that he debunks both our "massive military buildup" and our "firepower inferiority" in the same letter.

He claims that our military history makes it inevitable that ours will be the first strike in a nuclear war. Yet he isn't bothered by Russian invasions of Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan, their imprisoning of half of Europe, or the fact that the Russians armed and supported the true aggressors in Korea and Vietnam. Amazing!

One of the few things more dangerous than blind bias in favor of one's country (also called "nationalism") is blind bias against it (also called "flatulence"). Guilty, Mr. Elmer, guilty.

in the wind and a slight shuffling of feet. Some people are bowed in silent prayer while others are gazing at the twinkling stars among the clouds. The mood is somber, for you all have come here with a common goal: to pay your respects to a fallen Texas Aggie.

The quiet is broken by the clicks of a marching unit's footsteps. Slowly, methodically, the Ross Volunteer Firing Squad approaches the plaza between Sully and the flagpole. They halt and prepare for their salute. The silence of the moment is shattered by the first volley of seven rifles. Your heart jumps, adrenaline flows and you hear the fluttering of birds as they fly from the trees. The second and third volleys come and go and your heart is greatly saddened. Then, from out of the darkness of the Academic Building, the strains of "Silver Taps" cut the cool night air. Once...twice...three times they are played. And then their harmony fades back into the night. The ceremony is over but the experience will stay with you forever. You have taken part in probably the most beloved and beautiful of all Aggie traditions. Although you may not have known the fallen Aggie, the eternal bond that all Aggies experience is present and you are filled with a good feeling.

valuable part of an education, but there are the life experiences — the "other education" — that aid you just as much as having your nose crammed in a book. You get out of Aggieland just what you put into it. Traditions don't carry on through apathy.

"I didn't know him/her so what's the difference?" Of all the times I've gone to Silver Taps in my three years at Texas A&M, I have only known one of the fallen Aggies personally. Face it, an Aggie is an Aggie whether you know him/her or not. Out of all of mankind through the years, only approximately 100,000 have attended Texas A&M. We are a select few; therefore, we should be much more caring towards each other. Try the golden rule on for size the next time you get apathetic.

I don't want to lecture on this matter, but it looks like that is what I have done. I know I will make many people angry and I guess that's the way the cookie crum-

bles. It is just that I love A&M and traditions dearly, and I don't want to them die when there's no real excuse great deal of the strife and tension present in Aggieland today has resulted from the apathy towards such traditions as Silver Taps. Silver Taps is one of the functions that serves to melt the barriers we have built up so that we will be closer Aggies, whether black or white, non-Corps, Christian or Moslem, Republican or Democrat.

So just remember the next Silver Taps is tentatively scheduled for April. Hopefully, we will not lose any Aggie but if we do, take an hour out of your schedule and pay your respects rather than make excuses. You won't be sad and you'll help to perpetuate something that serves to keep Texas A&M University the best damn college anywhere!

Lance Wright
McInnis Hall

More people should attend

Editor:

It is 10:20 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month.

You walk outside and a cool breeze is blowing. You see many friends and acquaintances, but you just nod in acknowledgement — no words are spoken. Everyone is destined for a common site, the Academic Building. The moon is in its first quarter, and it casts a serene glow on the campus.

You arrive at the Academic Building, and you take your place within the crowd. The only sounds audible are an occasional cough, the rustle of the trees

But, there is a question in your mind. Out of approximately 35,000 Aggies enrolled in the University, why did only around 2,000 show up?

I ask myself the same question every time I go to Silver Taps. I try to understand the many excuses I get from people but it has come to the point where I can't relate with most of them anymore.

"I have a big test tomorrow, and I need to study really bad." Hey, I go to school here too, you know, and I have had tests, major reports, lab assignments and all kinds of academic work due on the day after Silver Taps. The R.V. firing squad has things to do. So does the Silver Taps team. It wasn't the Aggie's choice to die; he may have had plans for the rest of his life ... did you think of that? They changed Silver Taps to once a month so everyone could make plans. You are a college student now ... learn some time organization. You may not be able to put "attended Silver Taps" on a resume, but you can't put "played racketball at 10:30 p.m." or "went to bed at 9:45 p.m." on one either. Grades definitely are in-

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Letters Policy

Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length, and are subject to being cut if they are longer. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length, but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must also be signed, with the address and phone number of the writer.

Columns and guest editorials are also welcome, but are not subject to the same length constraints as letters. Address all inquiries and correspondence to: Editor, The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843, or phone (713) 846-2611.

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