

Twinkle, twinkle David Stockman

by Dick West

United Press International

WASHINGTON — Nobody would be so foolish as to try to equate astronomy with economics. Nevertheless, a confused layman who attempts to keep abreast of the latest developments in these two sciences can scarcely avoid drawing a few parallels now and then.

That old feeling of *deja vu*, or having been there before, came stealing o'er me as I was reading about a new hypothesis regarding our home galaxy, also known as the Milky Way.

Certain sky-watchers now postulate that we have in the core of the galaxy our very own "black hole."

A black hole, in case you came in late on this, is a huge mass so tightly compressed that nothing, not even light rays, can escape its gravitational field.

Astronomers have been spotting black holes out there in the firmament for a number of years, but none of us confused laymen thought much about it.

The fresh evidence that one exists so close to Earth, relatively speaking, places them in an entirely different perspective.

The key element, as I understand it, is the belief that the Milky Way's black hole "periodically swallows great pieces of material, even entire stars."

Maybe that explains what happened to my electric bill last month.

The real source of awe and wonderment, however, is how much the astronomers who conjectured the existence of the black hole sound like budget special-

ists expounding on the economy.

Indeed, by putting a few words in the economists' mouths, we can have them saying almost exactly the same thing:

WASHINGTON — The President's Council of Economic Advisers today reported the discovery of a "black hole" at the core of the federal budget.

They hypothesized that the phenomenon is located between Medicare and Medicaid, the twin outlays of the Trojan Horse constellation.

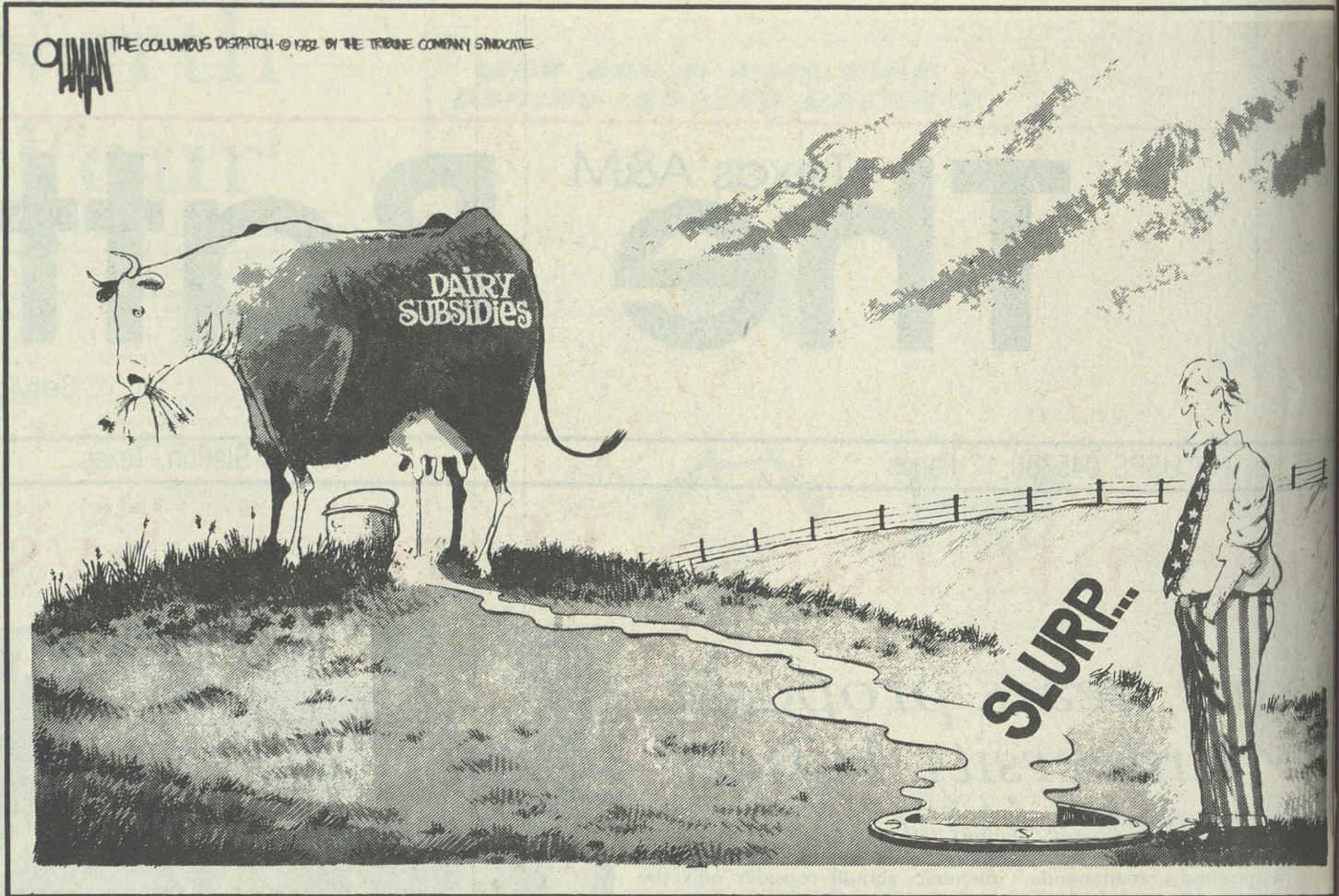
As seen by Dr. John Kenneth Turnipblood, a supply-side consultant who first deduced their existence, economic black holes are great masses of national debt collapsed to such density that nothing can escape their pull.

Viewed from the White House, the budget is a giant, flattened system of spiraling expenditures containing billions of federal programs.

It is known that all debits and liabilities, including the vast military buildup, circle around the budget's core. However, the center is obscured by swirling clouds of surplus cheese, making direct observation difficult.

"Entire spurts of revenue enhancement are drawn into black holes," Turnipblood has speculated. "Their attraction is so strong that even tax cuts and spending drops cannot escape."

"This is why many economic programs produce no visible results. The benefits trickle down into a black hole and are never seen again."



GOP fish have a lot to learn

by Don Phillips

United Press International

WASHINGTON — Freshmen Republicans in the House know that many of them won't survive the 1982 elections, and they are running scared.

Their fear led them into a serious blunder, however, and it is generally conceded by everyone (except the first-termers themselves) that they made fools of themselves in an attempt to blame the Democrats for current economic problems.

There are times, it seems, that an old adage still applies: "Freshmen should be seen and not heard."

It happened this way: The class of first-term GOP members who came to Washington to change the world — as most freshmen do — suddenly have found themselves and their party in an embarrassing position. The economy is faltering shortly after a Republican economic plan breezed through Congress, and a Republican president now has proposed a budget with a deficit that might surpass \$120 billion.

The heat from back home hasn't been pleasant.

What's more, the Democrats in the House have decided not to put a comprehensive budget on the table yet, choosing to go the normal route of the budget process that would not call for a comprehensive plan for several weeks yet.

That means that the GOP budget is sitting out there like a big target on a short gun range. But there is no Democratic budget to shoot at.

So, someone in the freshman class had a bright idea: all 54 of them would line up on the Capitol grounds and hold a press

conference to denounce the Democratic leadership for dragging its feet and failing to bring any major legislation to the floor.

They picked a spot with just the right light and just the right view of the Capitol dome for the television cameras.

They ignored quiet pleas from both the White House and GOP leader Bob Michel of Illinois to cool it during this sensitive period when both parties are working behind the scenes to find a budget compromise. They were so adamant, in fact, that they refused even to give Michel an advance copy of the material they were going to hand out to the press.

Promptly at 10 a.m., Thursday March 11, they began their press conference. At about 10:01 a.m., things began to fall apart.

To begin with, the morning was foggy, so the Capitol dome didn't stand out as dramatically as they hoped.

Then reporters began asking questions that they hadn't counted on: Aren't you just grandstanding to take the heat off your own party? How can you say the House isn't busy when there are 40 to 50 committee hearings every day? Isn't the budget process right on schedule, as written in the budget act?

Putting 54 politicians together in one place and expecting them to be silent while one of the group talks — especially politicians good enough to be elected to Congress — is like expecting one dog to eat in the kennel at feeding time.

Members began shouting from the back of the group, and the press conference gradually deteriorated into a shout-

ing match. Small groups of members and reporters broke off into small groups for arguments.

Freshman class president Thomas Hartnett, R-S.C., abruptly called a halt to the press conference, wagging his finger at a reporter and sputtering: "Just report our actions; don't interpret them."

But the embarrassment didn't end there. Michel, their own GOP leader, sat on the House floor that he disapproved the Congress is moving too slowly.

"I don't think we can make a judgment on the effectiveness of this body or the other house on the basis of what we hear on this floor," said Michel in response to questions from Rep. Robert Walker, Pa., who daily has complained of slow action.

"There are some orderly procedures around here that have to be pursued," said Michel. "And we have to wait for those committees to work."

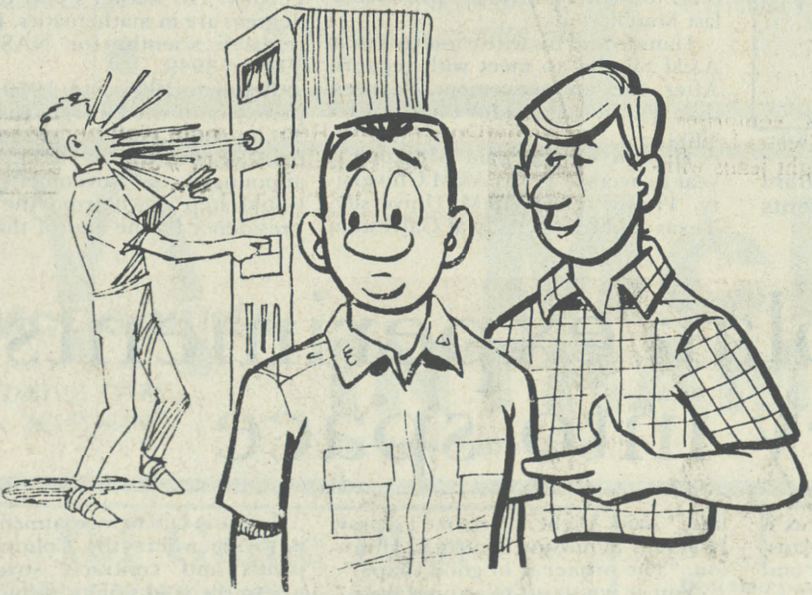
Budget Committee chairman James Jones of Oklahoma then called a press conference to express his anger at the freshman action, accusing them of being hypocritical because many of them had privately agreed with the way he was handling the budget.

"I wish they would be honest, and they are schizophrenic I wish they'd see a doctor," said Jones.

Jones threatened — perhaps half seriously — to throw President Reagan's budget onto the House floor and demand an immediate vote if that's what the freshmen wanted. Clearly that's what they want. None of them wants to vote for a deficit that large.

The freshmen don't know exactly what they want now, except off the hook

Slouch By Jim Earle



"It's the ultimate in vending machines! First, it was bottles, then paper cups; and now they've eliminated the cups!"

Letter: Students should increase political awareness

Editor:

As you may know, many so-called Reagan supporters are now publicly attacking his administration for high interest rates. Rather than going for the real culprit behind the current industrial collapse, Paul Volcker, they chide that the budget must be further cut and taxes increased to bring down the deficit. These hypocrites claim that the high deficit is pushing interest rates up.

You don't have to have a degree in economics to see that the opposite is actually the case. America needs affordable credit to produce. The unconstitutional independence of the Federal Reserve must be put to an end. It should instead function under the U.S. Treasury Department. Also a new series of U.S. notes backed by our gold reserves must be issued at 4%-6% interest for capital intensive investments in agriculture, industry and commerce. These notes would be channeled through the private banking sector for tangible wealth creating enterprises only.

Limited space prevents me from elaborating further on how to increase the money supply without fueling inflation, for reindustrializing the United States.

However, if you or anyone you know are concerned about the economic future, I implore you to come by the Rudder fountain area and get more information from the National Democratic Policy Committee, March 25 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Political Forum is sponsoring "Political Awareness Day" on March 25 and

many groups including the NDPC will be represented.

Also at 7 p.m. the same day in room 604 A&B Rudder will be the first organizational meeting for the National Democratic Policy Committee. A videotape presentation will be given on how to reverse the current agro-industrial collapse. I implore all those who support economic growth based on advanced agricultural, industrial, and nuclear technology to come to this video presentation.

Brian Wilson
College Station

that was taken has strong sentimental value to my friend. My clothing is of no use to you unless you are a size 9. Neither are my towels, tennis shoes, sweats, or laundry basket. Instead of dumping what is left of our belongings in the nearest trash receptacle, please leave them in a bag in front of either Walton E-4 or Mosher 418. Our belongings do us no good in the garbage, but their return could help ease some of the burden you have put us under by your actions.

Carol Glaser

Final salute to professors

Editor:

With the recent passing of Spencer J. Buchanan, Professor Emeritus of Civil Engineering, an era of outstanding professors who had immeasurable influence on many Aggies has passed. The uniqueness of these men was in their desire to not only implant the seed of technical excellence, but that of self-confidence and enthusiasm for life and all its adventures.

In a final salute and thanks to you:
Mr. J.B. Baty
Mr. S.J. Buchanan
Dr. E.L. Harrington (ret.)

Mr. C.J. Keese (ret.)
Mr. Roger McGee
Mr. Joseph Orr
Dr. E. Sanstedt
Mr. J. Sorrels

Dr. S.R. Wright
Mr. Robert Rhodes

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Pittsburgh, Pa.

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The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Communications.

Questions or comments concerning any editorial matter should be directed to the editor.

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, show the address and phone number of the writer.

Columns and guest editorials are also welcome, and 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) 845-2611.

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