

Calls for action on fuel crisis

Nobel prize-winner speaks

by Rebeca Zimmermann
Battalion Staff

A Nobel Laureate scientist said Friday that Americans must review the energy problem and find alternative energy sources. "In my opinion, we Americans should again take the energy problem seriously," said Dr. Hans Bethe, the first speaker for the Eugene L. Miller Lecture Series on Public Policy. "We are far less prepared for an energy emergency than a military attack," he said.

He said the Reagan administration has no plans to cope with an energy emergency. Private industries are left to cope with the problem.

"Until 10 years ago it was taken for granted we would always have enough energy and could choose what kind to use," he said.

"We have to remain aware that oil is a scarce commodity and we have to do everything to reduce oil consumption in this country."

Long range predictions show the world running out of oil in about 2075. With a curtailment of consumption, he said, oil probably will last past the year 2100.

By 2030, Bethe said the world will need three times as much energy as today.

He said there are two separate energy problems: providing enough total energy and providing enough oil for transportation uses, which cannot have substitutions to replace it for years.

Bethe said solar energy is not the answer to the energy problem; it is not economically feasible.

He listed three ways to attack the energy problem: conservation, finding other energy sources and substitution of

other fuels.

He said an important future energy source is shale oil in the United States. He said shale oil could provide four or five times the total amount of normal petroleum.

Bethe said not much can be done about transportation energy use except to make more efficient cars, but other industries which use oil can have substitutions.

He said heating of residential and commercial buildings may be accomplished just as well or better with natural gas.

Alternatives for oil include coal, electricity and nuclear power, he said. However, he didn't discuss recent developments at the University in the use of hydrogen as an alternative energy source.

Coal causes pollution, but scientists are working on solutions for this.

Coal is abundant, but it is abundant only in the U.S., U.S.S.R. and mainland China. Also, coal mined in Western Europe is more expensive to buy there than coal mined and shipped to Europe from the United States.

The most pressing problem, Bethe said, is that the burning of coal—and any fossil fuel—produces carbon dioxide.

The current increase of 0.3 percent a year may lead to a greenhouse effect in 100 years, he said. This greenhouse effect would cause an increase in temperature on the earth and air and water vapor circulation may decrease.

Electricity works well with machinery he said. The use of electric heat pumps has a high efficiency, but it is only useful in certain climates.

He suggested electricity used

at night could be sold at a cheaper rate than daytime prices.

Nuclear power is needed in countries which have no fossil fuels, he said.

"For Europe it is far more economical to build nuclear plants than coal plants," he said. By 1990 France will receive two-thirds of its energy from nuclear power plants.

"Many people believe the waste from nuclear plants is a terrible problem, an insoluble problem," he said. "However,

from a technical viewpoint, it is perfectly clear. Put the waste deep underground."

He said nuclear waste buried 2,000 feet underground in geologically stable areas will be "quite safe." Strong glass cylinders buried in horizontal holes and surrounded with a special clay-like rock will probably contain the material for millions of years.

He said the French and the Swedes already do this.

"Even if all failed," he said, "it

would take an enormously long time for radioactive material to come out."

He said in the long run coal and nuclear power will be the main energy sources available. Coal will last about 1,000 years and nuclear power will last millions of years.

"If we put our mind to it then we could make our country oil independent of the vagaries of Middle East policy," he said.

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'Missing' author to talk tonight

Thomas Hauser, author of "Missing," will speak tonight at 8 in Rudder Theater.

The Pulitzer prize-winning book, and subsequent movie, alleges that the United States was behind the 1973 coup in Chile that overthrew the Marxist government of Salvador Allende. The story concerns the search by an American father

for his son who is believed to have been executed by the Chilean government.

Hauser is a graduate of the Columbia Law School and worked for a Wall Street law firm before taking up writing.

The presentation is being sponsored by the MSC Great Issues Committee.

Freshmen hold runoff Tuesday

The top vote-getters in the freshmen class will square off in Tuesday's runoff election for Class of '86 officers.

The two candidates who received the most votes in each individual contest will face each other in a runoff because neither candidate received a majority in last week's elections. However, three candidates will be competing for the office of vice-president since only one vote separated the second- and third-place candidates.

Candidates for president are Billy Cassel and Mike Cook; for vice-president, Brad Wynn, Brian McConnell and Doug Wittrup; for secretary-treasurer, Robert Shepard and Maureen Lassonde; for social-secretary, Lori Zeigler and Stephanie Ackles.

Results from the elections should be posted outside room 216 of the MSC Tuesday night after they have been tabulated and approved by the judicial board.

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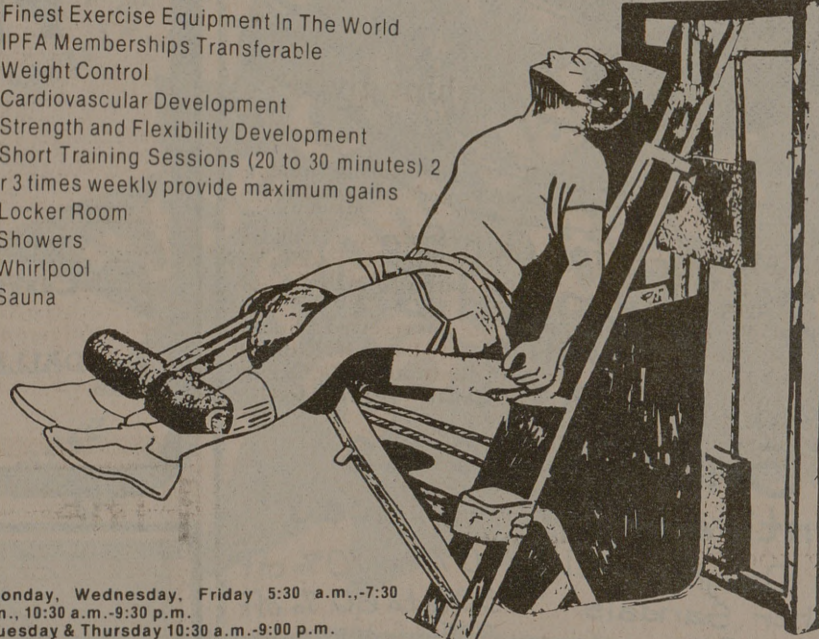
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