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Visions of Hitchcock

Photo by DEAN SAITO

These black birds were flying over Beef Cattle Road early Sunday night. Unlike those in "The Birds," these weren't af-

ter human prey. Instead, their evening feeding was disturbed by the incoming cold front.

Economist: Farm problems not likely to improve soon

By MARK SPICER
Reporter

Texas farmers haven't had this many economic problems since the Great Depression and there are few signs of improvement, Dr. Carl Anderson, an economist with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, says.

Anderson said the current farm financial stress is largely a result of depressed crop and livestock prices, steady increases in costs, adverse weather conditions and high interest rates that increase costs and strengthen the dollar against foreign currencies.

"We still have a high value dollar and we can't see that coming down until we get some control on our deficit spending, which is really the culprit behind all of this," he said.

Anderson said American farmers are in a delicate position competing with foreign agricultural producers because most of the foreign producers have a more favorable cost of labor relative to the United States.

He said American farmers gained their foothold in agricultural production through capital investment, intensified agriculture and high technology.

Most of the agricultural problems today, however, come from factors that are beyond the traditional agricultural realm, such as national eco-

nomie, trade and monetary policies, he said.

Anderson said the effective purchasing power of agriculture is around 25 percent to 30 percent of what it was in 1979, and that this situation is affecting all farm sizes.

He said during the 1970s interest rates were low relative to the rate of inflation, thus providing a favorable condition for farmers to expand their operations. However, when interest rates shot up, farm prices went down and farmers who were carrying 30 percent to 50 percent of their net worth are now in a tight financial position, he said.

Anderson said some of those farmers carrying 50 percent debt have no way of commercially paying it at this time, and they will either have to be picked up by emergency-type credits or guaranteed credit by the federal Farmers Home Administration.

"The federal government has expanded the Farmers Home Administration loan program somewhat," he said, "but they've also put very restrictive policies with it."

"If a commercial bank has a farm loan that looks like it can't be paid out based on its equity and net income flow, the Farmers Home Administration has procedures where if that commercial lender will write-off

10 to 25 percent of that loan, they will then take it over on a guaranteed basis."

Anderson said the commercial lender will do this only if it looks like they are going to lose more than that percent writing-down the loan normally.

He said the farmer still can stay in business, but that he will not be in a favorable situation because of the heavy debt.

"One of the worst things you can do to an agricultural operation is just to have enough money to barely buy seed and maybe a small amount of fertilizer, when you really need to buy the very highest quality seed, an optimum level of fertilizer and herbicides and other supplies," he said.

"If you start cutting back on these, then you're probably going to end up hurting the level of production and very likely cutting into net income."

Anderson said when a Texas farmer sold commodities worth one dollar in 1970, about 25 cents of that was his to pay for all his expenses.

"The farmer has seen his income situation erode to the extent that now for every dollar he sells, he has 10 cents, not profit, but 10 cents to pay for all his family, labor, management and all the equity that he has in his operation," he said.

Khadafy does not want U.S. in Mediterranean

United Press International

VALLETTA, Malta — Libyan leader Col. Moammar Khadafy Sunday denounced President Reagan as "mad, mad" and said U.S. and NATO forces should withdraw from the Mediterranean.

Khadafy, making a surprise appearance at a political rally during an official visit to Malta, made no reference to Egypt's announcement Saturday that it foiled a Khadafy-backed hit squad sent to Cairo to assassinate former Libyan Prime Minister Abdel Hamid El-Bakouh.

But Egyptian officials speculated that Khadafy flew to Malta to punish the head of the Libyan intelligence station who was duped by Egyptian officials who sent him faked photographs of El-Bakouh covered with blood.

The official Libyan news agency JANA, monitored in Rome, "categorically" denied Egyptian accusations that Libya planned assassinations of moderate Arab and Western leaders.

In Cairo, Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak called on the West to unite to "stop" Khadafy,

saying he was financing organizations plotting assassinations of Britain's Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, French President Francois Mitterrand, West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Saudi King Fahd.

JANA called the accusations a plot "drawn up by imperialist forces" to create "a suitable occasion for an aggression against Libya, the execution of which would be entrusted to President Hosni Mubarak."

"We are not afraid of Reagan, America and NATO," Khadafy said in a 15-minute speech in Cospicua, six miles outside Valletta at a rally for the socialist Labor Party of Prime Minister Dom Mintoff.

"The Mediterranean people do not want the Americans and NATO in the Mediterranean," he said.

"And the president of the United States is mad, mad," Khadafy said.

He charged that NATO and the United States did not wish to see Malta independent and that they wanted to station their forces there.

"We don't want the American forces either in Libya or in Malta," Khadafy said. "We will not give them a chance to occupy Libya and Malta again."

The Egyptians tricked Libya into believing El-Bakouh was assassinated by leaking to the Libyan embassy in Malta fake photographs showing the opposition leader covered with blood.

Egyptian officials have said the hit squad was recruited by Libyan agents in Malta and speculated Khadafy went to Malta to punish embassy officials for getting duped. The four-man hit team was arrested.

"According to our information, the Libyan reaction so far took the form of an interrogation conducted by Khadafy of the staff of the Libyan people's bureau (embassy) in Malta, whose chief was their connection with the death squad," he said.

The Libyan leader, who last visited the Mediterranean island in 1982 and is scheduled to leave today, accused the United States and NATO of wanting to retain a hold on the people of the Mediterranean.

Artrain to stay in area until Tuesday

By ANN PARKER
Reporter

Artrain, the nation's only traveling art museum housed in railroad cars, will continue its five-day Bryan-College Station tour through Tuesday.

Located on the railroad siding at Wellborn and F&B Roads, Artrain will be open to the public from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. today and Tuesday. Admission is free, but donations are accepted.

Artrain was founded in 1971 by the Michigan Council for the Arts to bring fine art to the public. Headquartered in Detroit, Artrain tours Michigan during the spring, and other states every fall.

The three-month Texas tour marks Artrain's first visit to the Lone Star State. Bryan-College Station is the ninth of 10 stops during the tour, which concludes Nov. 28 in Galveston.

Ruth Clearfield, local gallery guide coordinator and steering com-

mittee member said, "We had to work very hard to get the Artrain here. It was on a very competitive basis."

Artrain is made up of three converted passenger cars, a converted baggage car and a caboose, used as an office by Artrain's staff.

Housed in the first car is "Creative Impulse," an exhibition of drawings, paintings, prints and sculptures created by American artists.

Jim Tottis, director of operations, said that each of the works in the "Creative Impulse" collection was selected to reflect the artist's individual experience and the influence of his environment.

Included in the collection is Frederic Remington's "Bronco Buster," painted antelope skins and several colorful photographs of churches and cathedrals.

Located in the second and third cars is a second exhibition, "Texas on My Mind: Contemporary Visions of the Lone Star State," which high-

lights the works of 36 Texas artists.

This exhibition was assembled for the Texas tour by Becky Duval Reese, education curator for the Archer M. Huntington Gallery at the University of Texas at Austin.

"We want the people of the state to see the high quality of the work being done today in Texas," Reese said.

Included in this exhibit are Jimmy Jalapeño's hand-painted photograph of Sixth Street in Austin, James Drake's "The Trophy Room," which features deer horns made from welded steel and Melissa Miller's colorful canvas painting, "Out of the Coop."

Nancy O'Connor's "Breaking Horses and Learning" is a picture story of vaccinating cattle on a ranch near Victoria with the owner's barely-legible perception handwritten beneath the photos.

The fourth car, the Helen W. Milliken Studio, accommodates three demonstrating artists that travel on the train. Twenty-five local artists and potters will fill the third slot during alternating 3-hour shifts.

Artrain serves educational as well as entertaining purposes.

"We have hundreds of classrooms throughout Texas involved in our comprehensive educational program," said Artrain executive director John Hohmann.

Artrain is completely booked for school tours during the local visit.

Artrain is touring in cooperation with the Missouri-Pacific, Southern-Pacific and Santa Fe Railroads. Its visit is sponsored by the Arts Council of Brazos Valley and partially funded by the City of Bryan, the City of College Station, Brazos County and the Texas Commission on the Arts.



Children watch pottery being made on the Artrain.