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Temple calls for action to halt rise in oil imports

Associated Press

HOUSTON — The United States is depending more and more on imports of refined petroleum products, a situation that "threatens our national security and our economic well-being," Texas Railroad Commissioner Buddy Temple said Tuesday.

"This is an alarming trend," Temple said, speaking to mortgage bankers and real estate developers at a program sponsored by Commerce Title Co. of Houston. "In 1984 alone, according to the Department of Energy, product imports jumped 15 percent over 1983 levels, to some 2 million barrels a day. By 1990, if this trend continues, product imports would rise by another 24 percent, to nearly 2.5 million barrels a day.

"In the near future, product imports are forecast to take an even greater share of the U.S. market, further deepening our vulnerability

to foreign suppliers and eroding our domestic refining industry."

Temple proposed to halt the trend by backing a boost in the import tax on refined products or by reimposing quotas on the products.

"Both of these measures would encourage domestic exploration, production and refining, and in so doing would create jobs for Americans," he said. In addition, he said, they would trim the energy trade deficit and put the burden of the import fee on the OPEC nations.

Temple is chairman of the three-member Texas Railroad Commission, which regulates the oil and gas industry in Texas.

Chief among the imports are gasoline, diesel fuel and home heating oil, he said, with gasoline imports in 1984 up more than 30 percent from the previous year and home heating oil and diesel engine fuel imports rising 62 percent in the same period.

And, he added, the growth is not

likely to abate as six new refineries come on line in the next three years in the Middle East and North Africa.

"These refineries, often subsidized by their governments, will add some 1.1 million barrels per day of petroleum product to world markets," he said.

"Market forces and surplus refinery capacity, together with competition from cheaper foreign products, have put refineries in recent years in a serious plight. Refining capacity is down along the Texas Gulf Coast and some operations have shut.

"In all, it's a bleak picture."

Temple blamed the boost in imports on the strength of the U.S. dollar abroad, foreign government investment in their own refineries, and strict import limitations in countries other than the United States.

Child-sex ring

Initial probe full of errors, no new charges

Associated Press

ST. PAUL, Minn. — No new criminal charges will be filed in the case of an alleged child-sex ring because investigators who handled the original probe made too many errors.

"The credibility problems resulted from the initial handling of these cases by Scott County authorities, including repeated questions, a lack of investigative reports and cross-germination of allegations," said Minnesota Attorney General Hubert H. Humphrey III said Tuesday.

The 14-month investigation by county, state and federal agencies scandalized the small town of Jordan, southwest of Minneapolis-St. Paul, drawing national attention last year.

Convicted child molester James Rud pleaded guilty to charges of criminal sexual conduct, a couple was acquitted and charges against 22 other defendants were dropped.

Humphrey said it is known some children in Scott County were sexually abused, as Rud and two juveniles have admitted.

Some children maintain they have been abused by other adults, Humphrey said, but "in the circumstances of these cases, the belief that a child is telling the truth, by itself, cannot support a criminal conviction or establish proof beyond a reasonable doubt.

"The manner in which the Scott County cases were handled has resulted in it being impossible to determine, in some instances, whether sexual abuse actually occurred, and

if it did, who may have done these acts," he added.

The Minneapolis Star and Tribune on Tuesday quoted an unidentified source in the criminal justice system as saying the state had enough evidence to recharge five or six people. The problem, sources told the newspaper, was that the child witnesses had been interviewed by investigators so many times they probably no longer could provide reliable testimony.

Eleven of the 27 children kept out of their homes as a result of sexual abuse charges have been allowed by family court judges to rejoin their parents since Humphrey took over the investigation. Eight more are expected to return home by the end of February.

SHOE

by Jeff MacN...



PBS looks to new funding methods

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Mr. Whipple isn't squeezing the Charmin on "The Jewel in the Crown" and Mr. Rogers isn't singing the praises of the cotton in his sweater. But public TV has been uncovering new money sources since funding has been cut by the Reagan administration.

"People who work in public TV and raise money have been trying an awful lot of things for a long time, but anytime your back is against the wall, you work even harder," said Michael Soper, PBS' vice president for development.

During an experimental phase in the early 1980s that provoked much internal debate over commercialism, New York's public TV outlet, WNET, showed an American Express credit card with the catch phrase: "Don't leave home without it."

Lance Ozier, PBS' vice president for program administration and development, said that wouldn't be done these days, although new PBS guidelines do allow broadcasts to cite specific products and brand names.

In April, eight General Foods brands, including Oscar Mayer Bacon and Cool Whip Topping, will underwrite a new PBS series, "The Sporting Life," and spearhead a coupon-clipping drive.

President Reagan's first budget, for fiscal year 1982, cut PBS' fund-

ing from \$200 million to \$137 million. Last year, Reagan vetoed two bills that would have authorized higher spending ceilings, calling them "excessive."

Since then, bipartisan congressional maneuvering has restored some of those cuts, and Reagan's proposed budget, introduced last week, calls for \$150.5 million for PBS in fiscal year 1985, \$159.5 million in 1986 and \$186 million in 1987.

The cuts forced public television to find new financial outlets. Besides the liberalized rules on commercial underwriting, Soper said PBS stations are strengthening their relationship with members. One approach is using studios as lecture halls.

On May 11, Gerard Nierenberg, whose lectures and writings on the art of negotiating have been used by hundreds of companies and the State Department, is scheduled to conduct a closed-circuit seminar at WNET that will be linked by satellite to studio audiences at other PBS stations around the country.

Stations will benefit by charging Nierenberg for production costs and keeping 40 percent of the gross, paid by those attending the seminar, said Diane Tryneski, WNET's director of video conferencing.

Dead rose can cheer sender

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — With Valentine's Day coming up Thursday, flower business should be booming. Kevin Milmoie hopes the same holds true for dead roses for dead romances.

Milmoie, 28, started the Rose Co. — which charges per bad bouquet — after his friend over the pain of being jilted.

"He was miserable and didn't know what to do about Milmoie said.

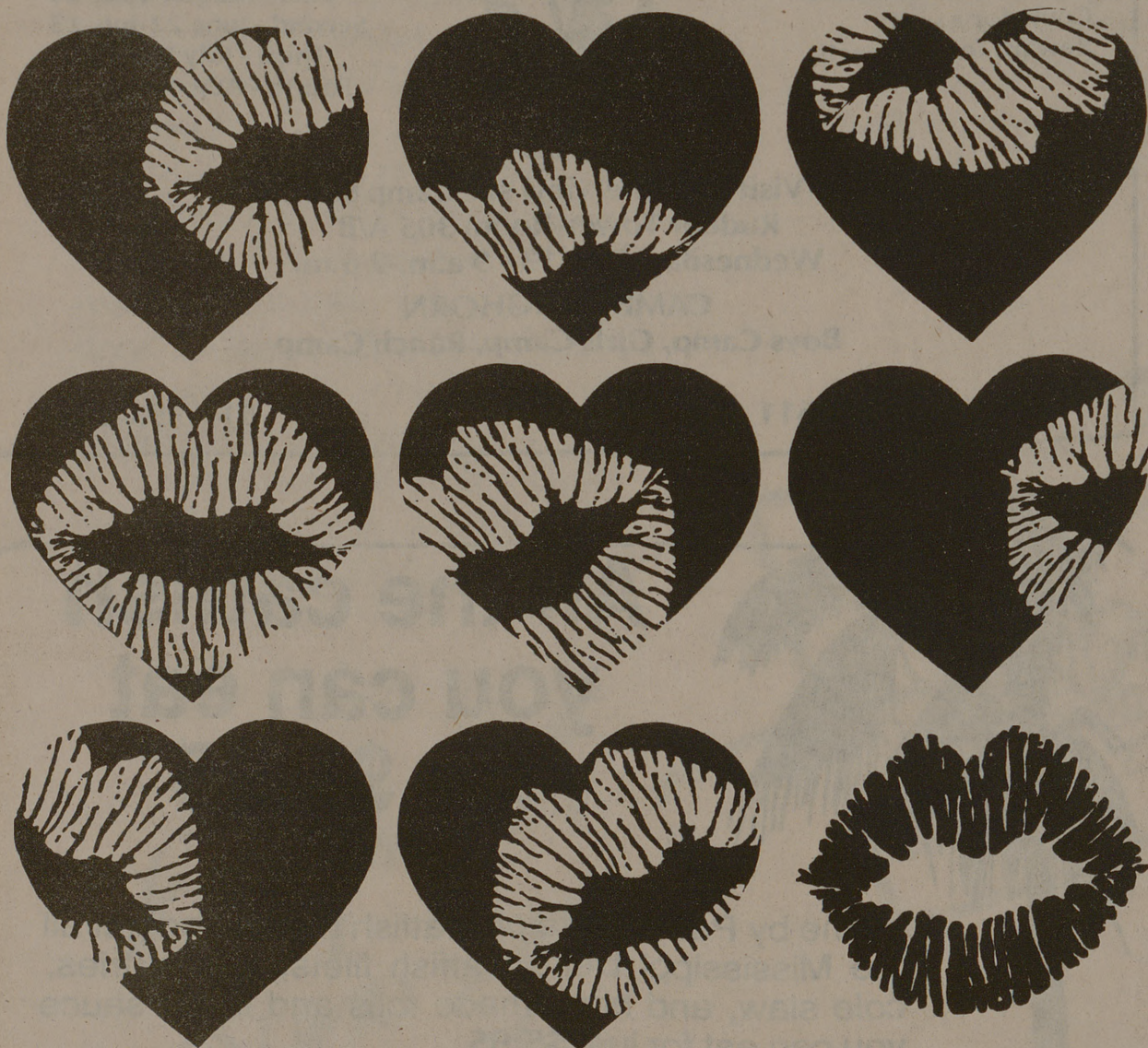
"I said, 'Why not send something to let her know you feel?'"

Milmoie took a wilted bouquet of roses, wrapped them in black paper with a black ribbon and labeled them — brown, limp, ugly — to the offending party.

"She didn't know what to think, but it cheered him up," Milmoie said.

"It seemed like a polite way of telling that not-so-special one exactly how you feel."

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