

Slouch

By Jim Earle



"It's a petition to do away with petitions"

## Labor secretary defends policies at NAACP meeting

**Associated Press**  
DALLAS — U.S. Labor Secretary William Brock, faced Monday with the job of representing the Reagan administration before the NAACP convention, defended his department's efforts to put black teen-agers to work.

Brock, praised by NAACP Executive Director Benjamin L. Hooks as an official whose door is always open to minorities, challenged charges that Reagan ignores minorities and is "turning back" the civil rights clock.

"I think there have been missed opportunities for communication" between the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the administration, Brock said in a news conference after his noon speech to convention delegates.

"I don't believe there's anyone who believes Ronald Reagan doesn't want the maximum opportunity for everyone in the country," Brock said.

When asked if he agreed with the administration's handling of civil rights issues, he said, "The president appointed me. I share his views."

Tension during questioning by reporters in the press room — where Hooks shared the podium with Brock and listened as his own words attacking Reagan were repeated — contrasted sharply with Brock's earlier speech.

Brock's talk received polite applause at the Dallas Convention Center ballroom, Brock had spoken of a need to curb teen-age unemployment, which he said has climbed as high as 50 percent among blacks and steadily increased over the past 30 years.

In his keynote address Sunday night, Hooks blasted the Reagan administration and accused it of "open hostility to equal rights."

But on Monday Brock side-stepped the controversy, saying he wouldn't get into a "debate with the Justice department" or any other department at odds with the NAACP, which is holding its 76th annual meeting.

Brock focused on the Labor Department's efforts to solve the problem of out-of-work youth.

"They are in this horrible Catch-22," Brock said. "They don't have a job because they don't have experience. They can't get experience because they can't get a job."

Brock pointed to the new Job Training Partnership Act, which replaced the Comprehensive Employment Training Act as the federal jobs-training program for youth, as a significant step. He said JTPA has doubled the number of job placements after training.

He also said a planned "youth wage," a reduced minimum wage for teen-agers during the summer months to encourage employers to hire them, will also put teen-agers to work.

Restrictions will keep the program from displacing adult workers, as some labor and minority leaders fear, and "400,000 new jobs" will be created, Brock said.

At the end of the news conference, Hooks placed his arm on Brock's shoulder and said he'd known Brock for 20 years.

"Without asking you to commit yourself, when you sit in that cabinet meeting chair, let all the rest of them know we're still here," Hooks said.

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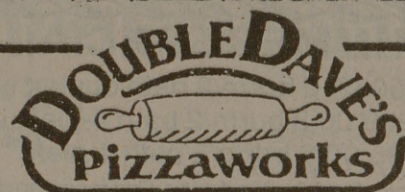
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## Bombing

Security at Houston mosques tightened after explosion

**Associated Press**

HOUSTON — Security was being tightened at Houston's Islamic mosques after a pipebomb ripped through a Moslem prayer room over the weekend in what officials believe was retaliation for the American hostage incident in Lebanon.

Police said witnesses reported seeing a man speeding away in a pickup truck yelling "We did it, we did it," after the bomb went off late Saturday at the Daar Us Salaam mosque in a shopping center in southwest Houston.

"We believe this was an emotional reaction by an unknowledgeable person who doesn't know who he is retaliating against," said Sayed Gomah, president of the Islamic Society of Greater Houston.

Two homemade bombs exploded at 11:30 p.m. Saturday, an hour after worshippers had finished their evening prayers and left the mosque, authorities said. No one was hurt but damage was estimated at \$50,000.

Houston Fire Department senior arson investigator Bill Sammons, however, said it was uncertain whether the bomb was a reaction to the Beirut hostage situation.

"We've had a pipe-bomber in that area for three months," Sammons said. "Whether he decided to hit the mosque because of Lebanon, who knows?"

Society officials say their group, which includes 30,000 Moslems and six mosques in Houston, has been the target of numerous telephone threats in the past week.

But Gomah said the group is non-political and has no ties to the Shiite Moslems who are holding the Americans in Lebanon.

"When it comes to Moslems, the American public is ignorant," Gomah said. "People think that all Moslems are like (Iranian Ayatollah) Khomeini, which is not the case."

"We are Americans, we love America, and we are part of America. We are not affiliated with any foreign organization," he said.

## Bacteria found in cheese eaten by woman

**Associated Press**

DALLAS — A sample of Mexican-style cheese found in the refrigerator of a Fort Worth woman who died last week was contaminated with the bacteria that may be linked to 43 deaths, federal authorities said Monday.

So far in Texas, the deaths of two adults in Fort Worth and an infant

stillborn in Houston have been linked to the tainted cheese.

Ginger Gipson, microbiologist for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in Dallas, said tests of a sample of Jimenez brand cheese from Luz Romero's refrigerator showed the presence of the bacteria *Listeria monocytogenes*.

Romero, 83, died last Wednesday at a Fort Worth hospital, but the

cause of death has not been determined, said Dr. Nancy Bowen, assistant health director for the Tarrant County-Fort Worth County Health Departments.

Romero was diagnosed as having listeriosis several days after eating some of the cheese, Bowen said.

"We confirmed that the *Listeria monocytogenes* organism is present in the cheese we got from the

woman's refrigerator," Gipson said.

Health officials will not be able to determine exactly how the cheese was contaminated because it was taken from an open package, she said.

"Probably, the contamination was in the cheese to start with," Gipson said. "But we don't know where it was contaminated."

## What's up

Wednesday

**MSC GROVE 85:** presents "Love at First Bite" at 8:45 p.m. in The Grove. Tickets are \$1 with a student ID and \$1.50 for non-students.

**STUDENTS AGAINST APARTHEID:** is meeting in 501 Rudder. Information on apartheid will be presented and there will be a guest speaker.

Items for What's Up should be submitted to The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, no less than three days prior to desired publication date.

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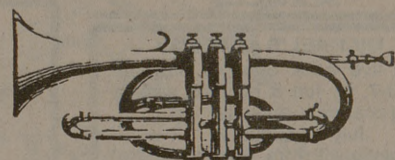


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