

STATE AND LOCAL

Drill removes sediment intact

'Piston coring' aids study

By DONNA HARSHMAN
Reporter

The Ocean Drilling Program, which is supervised by Texas A&M, operates a research ship that drills unbroken sediment samples that are used to explain the earth's origins.

The ship, JOIDES Resolution, has drilled as deep as 27,000 feet and uses "piston coring" to obtain the unbroken core samples.

While most drills rotate when taking samples, "piston coring" allows the drill to move straight down. The rotating drills cause fossils to break or become damaged, but "piston coring" removes entire sediment samples intact.

"We can look at the climate of the past," says Dr. Philip Rabinowitz, director of the Ocean Drilling Program. "By looking at the past, we can look at the future."

He says the samples are helping to explain continental drift. "There is no doubt the continents are moving," he says. "We are looking at why this is going on."

"We drill near the margins to examine continental drift. For instance, what caused Africa and South America to move apart?"

After the samples are removed, they are studied at A&M, the University of California at San Diego and Columbia University.

"We can look at the sediment and the way it was formed," Rabinowitz says. "We also can look at fossils and species."

Samples have been obtained from several voyages, Rabinowitz says.

"Each cruise lasts about two months in duration and is designed to solve a certain geological problem," he says.

"About 50 scientists and technologists staff each leg," Rabinowitz says. "All the technologists are from Texas A&M."

"By looking at the past, we can look at the future." — Dr. Philip Rabinowitz, director of the Ocean Drilling Program.

"One scientist from A&M serves as a liaison of sorts," he says.

The first voyage, called leg 100, was in January. The JOIDES Resolution was tested and modified under varying sea conditions during this trip.

"Major modifications cost \$15 million and the vessel is one of a kind," Rabinowitz says. "The laboratories on board are unparalleled."

The second voyage, leg 101, involved the ship's first international crew. The crew studied the evolution of the region near the Bahamas.

And during leg 102 in the mid-Atlantic, scientists examined the physical properties and structural features of the Atlantic's crust.

Samples recovered from leg 103, in the Galicia Bank off Spain, revealed that the area near Spain was flooded by a shallow, muddy sea nearly 150 million years ago.

Leg 104, which is now being conducted in the Norwegian Sea, will be completed in mid-August. The crew is investigating Norway's continental margin to learn more about the evolution of ocean margins.

The voyages have added to the prestige of the drilling program, the largest research project at A&M. It has attracted interest worldwide.

Additional voyages off the coasts of Newfoundland, France, Senegal, the West Indies, Panama, Peru and Chile are scheduled for later this year.

The National Science Foundation, France, Germany, Canada and Japan are involved in the research and funding. The United Kingdom and the Soviet Union have expressed interest as well.

TDC may be forced to let inmates go

Associated Press

HUNTSVILLE — Unless Texas prison officials can find extra space in the next month, about 140 women inmates may be released before Sept. 1.

The date is the first deadline of a negotiated settlement to a prison overcrowding lawsuit that prevents housing prisoners in temporary facilities.

Prison spokesman Phil Guthrie called the situation serious, saying, "Any situation where we might not be able to meet the court order is serious."

The prison suit settlement, signed in May, states that all inmates must be out of temporary housing by Sept. 1.

Guthrie said male inmates were no longer put in temporary housing, but one of every 13 women prisoners in the state will have to be released if additional space is not found.

As of Tuesday, the prison system had 1,784 women inmates.

Parole board director John Byrd said 45 women were paroled last week after a special panel of the parole board reviewed 150 cases in an effort to expedite the release of some whose paroles previously had been rejected.

When the inmate level, now at 94 percent, reaches 95 percent, some prisoners must be given additional "good-time" credit, making them eligible for parole sooner.

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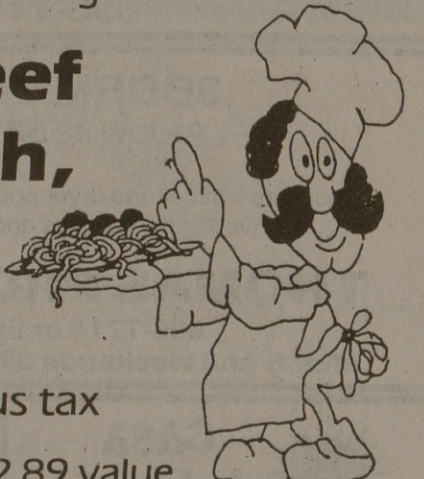
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Unemployment benefits running low

Associated Press

AUSTIN — Quick action is needed on the federal and state levels to make certain jobless Americans can receive unemployment protection, a national labor leader said Wednesday.

Thomas R. Donahue, secretary-treasurer of the national AFL-CIO, told Texas union leaders that only a fraction of those out of work currently receive unemployment compensation.

"The fact is that last month, unemployment benefits were paid to the lowest percentage of unemployed workers in the last 25 or 30 years," he said.

"Last month, 26.9 percent of the unemployed in this country — those who are unemployed and looking for work — were eligible for unemployment insurance coverage," Donahue told the opening session of the Texas AFL-CIO convention.

"That's a very, very serious problem that we have to deal with in the first moments of the good economy of this country and in the first legislative opportunity we get," he said.

Donahue said little attention has been paid to problems with unemployment compensation as the nation's economy has improved.

Many Americans have been out of work so long they no longer qualify for benefits or have been unable to work long enough to requalify before being laid off again, he said.

"We have over 8 million people still unemployed," Donahue said. "We've been hanging at that 7.3 (percent) unemployment figure (nationally) for a lot of months now. What is not obvious in that unemployment figure is the absolute destruction of the promise of unemployment insurance."

With only 26.9 percent of the jobless drawing benefits, he said, "The

other 73-odd percent had either been out of work so long that they've exhausted their benefits and there's no supplementary available, or else they couldn't work long enough to qualify under some restrictive interpretation or another."

In Texas last month, he said that "15 percent percent of the unemployed collected unemployment benefits. The highest was 45 percent in Massachusetts and 37 percent in California. That's a tragedy that nobody is talking very much about and that we'd better address."

Also speaking to the 1,500 delegates from 900 local unions was Gov. Mark White, who criticized President Reagan's foreign trade policies. Those policies are eroding many of America's basic industries, such as steel and oil, White said.

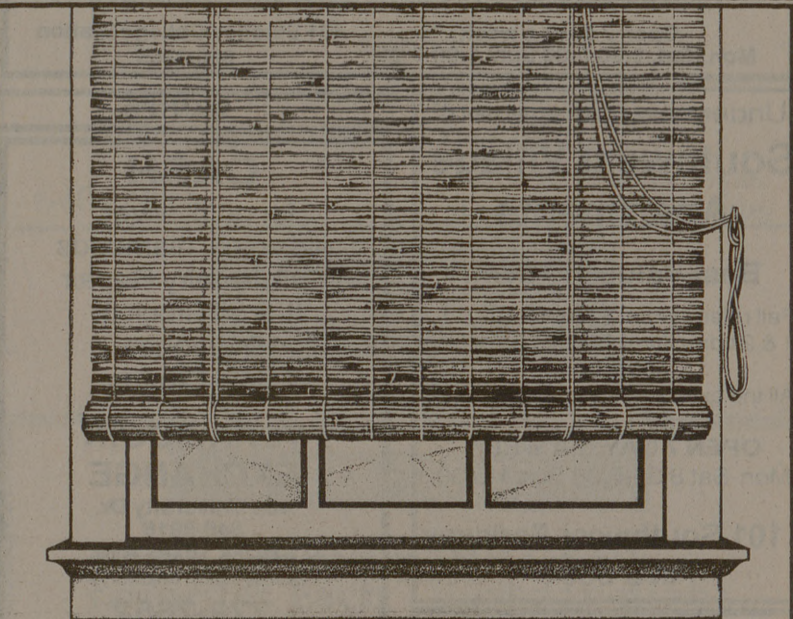
"The current laissez-faire trade

policy being practiced by the current administration has the potential of leading to an economy that loses its basic industries and is left only with service industries," White said.

"In a sense we will be left with those service industries that may be doing nothing more than shining each other's shoes — and the shoes are imported from some other country," he said. "That's not a strong economy, and we have to guard against that happening."

White also announced a \$2.2 million assistance program, combining a \$740,000 federal grant with similar amounts in state and local funds, for unemployed steel and copper workers in Texas.

The help will be going to steel workers in northeast Texas and Harris County, and copper workers in the El Paso area.



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Correction

In Thursday's Battalion Dr. Zerie Carpenter was incorrectly identified as the director of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station. Carpenter is the director of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service.

The director of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station is Dr. Neville Clark.

The Battalion regrets the error.

More fish kills expected in Trinity

Associated Press

ARLINGTON — More fish kills can be expected in the Trinity River below the Dallas-Fort Worth area unless additional stringent waste discharge limits are enforced, a state parks and wildlife official predicts.

But Dallas city officials say tougher sewage treatment regulations won't prevent pollution.

Dallas City Councilman Jerry

Rucker and others argued that as water quality in the Trinity improves, fish from downstream will migrate farther upstream only to be killed when pollution levels rise.

Dennis Palafox, a pollution surveillance officer with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, said that five fish kills in the river since 1971 were caused by low dissolved oxygen which resulted from deposits

of oxygen-demanding sediments, which come from wastewater treatment plants in the Metroplex. Palafox testified at a public hearing on new waste treatment standards.

Dallas officials say they do not oppose the proposed tougher standards on sewage treatment. City water officials say it would cost \$30 million to upgrade the plants.

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