

State and Local

CS area facing surplus in apartments

By **GEORGEANN HUMPHREY**
Reporter

A Texas A&M economist says because builders were a little too optimistic in predicting the community's housing needs, College Station is now facing a surplus in apartment dwellings, in drastic contrast to the situation only a few short years ago. Dr. Arthur Wright, an economist at the Texas Real Estate Research Center, says College Station alone has 26,000 apartment units, 5,000 more than the 21,000 units needed for a city its size. The excess housing has created a 25 percent vacancy rate in the city, he says. "We were too optimistic in the building of these apartment complexes," Wright says. "During 1981 some kids were dropping out of the

University because they couldn't find a place to live." He says the current surplus can be attributed to low enrollment and the lack of growth in the private sector. "Almost all the cities in Texas with the exception of Dallas and Austin have surplus housing," Wright says. "Dallas and Austin lead Texas with a 90 percent occupancy rate. Most cities around College Station have an occupancy rate between 75 and 85 percent."

Wright says duplex housing in College Station used to cost about \$450 per month but now is down to about \$300 per month. He says a large percentage of duplexes are vacant despite the drop.

Louise Barker, assistant manager for Tree House Apartments, says students account for the biggest part

of the apartment occupancy rate in the College Station area. "A lot of students prefer duplexes to apartment complexes because of the freedom the residents have regarding pets and partying," she says. "Although the majority of duplexes are more expensive than apartments, some students would rather pay more than sacrifice some freedom."

Most apartment complexes offer lower rates during the summer, giving students an incentive to stay and work or go to school to keep their occupancy rate up, she says.

"There is a definite difference in types of complexes — there are student and family complexes," she says.

She says the apartments in the College Station area are primarily

for students and the ones in Bryan are family-oriented.

Barker says students tend to congregate in the same complexes in order to have the atmosphere associated with their own age groups and lifestyles.

"A definite plus for occupancy rate in apartment housing is simply the continuous problem with the parking situation on campus," Barker says.

She says the location of a complex has a great deal to do with how high the occupancy rate will be.

"People like to be close to where they work as well as where they attend classes and this is an advantage of College Station apartment housing," she says.

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In Advance Metcalf to speak at Sully's

Texas A&M basketball Coach Shelby Metcalf will answer questions about his team and the upcoming Southwest Conference basketball tournament at his Sully's Symposium speech Wednesday.

Clements to speak at A&M

Former Gov. Bill Clements will speak about his attempt to reform the governor's office Wednesday at 8 p.m. in 201 Memorial Student Center.

Clements' address will be the third installment of MSC Political Forum's gubernatorial series. The group is trying to bring each of the major gubernatorial candidates to campus this year. An open reception will follow Clements' speech.

Republican candidates Tom Loeffler and Kent Hance took part in the series last semester.

by Lambda Sigma, the sophomore honor society, will begin at 11:50 a.m. and last until 12:30 p.m., says Kevin Carreathers, advisor for Lambda Sigma.

Lambda Sigma will sponsor a symposium every Wednesday through April 16.

Ann Levy, director of national programming for Political Forum, said Democrat Andrew Briscoe will visit March 5, and the group is trying to bring Gov. Mark White to A&M.

"One main goal in Political Forum is to present non-partisan political programming," she said.

She said the gubernatorial series, by presenting each candidate, is meant to educate voters and make them more likely to vote.

Hance says Clements owes him an apology

Associated Press

AUSTIN — Republican gubernatorial candidate Kent Hance Monday urged former Gov. Bill Clements to apologize for calling him "ignorant" about the number of state employees on the payroll during Clements' years in office.

Clements was governor from 1979-83, and a recent Dallas Morning News analysis showed state employment rose during 6.3 percent during those four years although Clements had pledged to cut 25,000 employees from state payrolls.

Hance said Clements called him "ignorant" in a recent interview in McAllen because Hance had said the number of employees had increased while Clements was in office.

"I believe that Gov. Clements owes me an apology," Hance said in a statement.

Reggie Bashur, press secretary for Clements, said, "We stand by our figure of a 3,700-employee reduction. We worked hard to establish a system to identify the number of

full-time equivalent employees in all the state agencies and commissions. We never intended that higher education be included in those numbers."

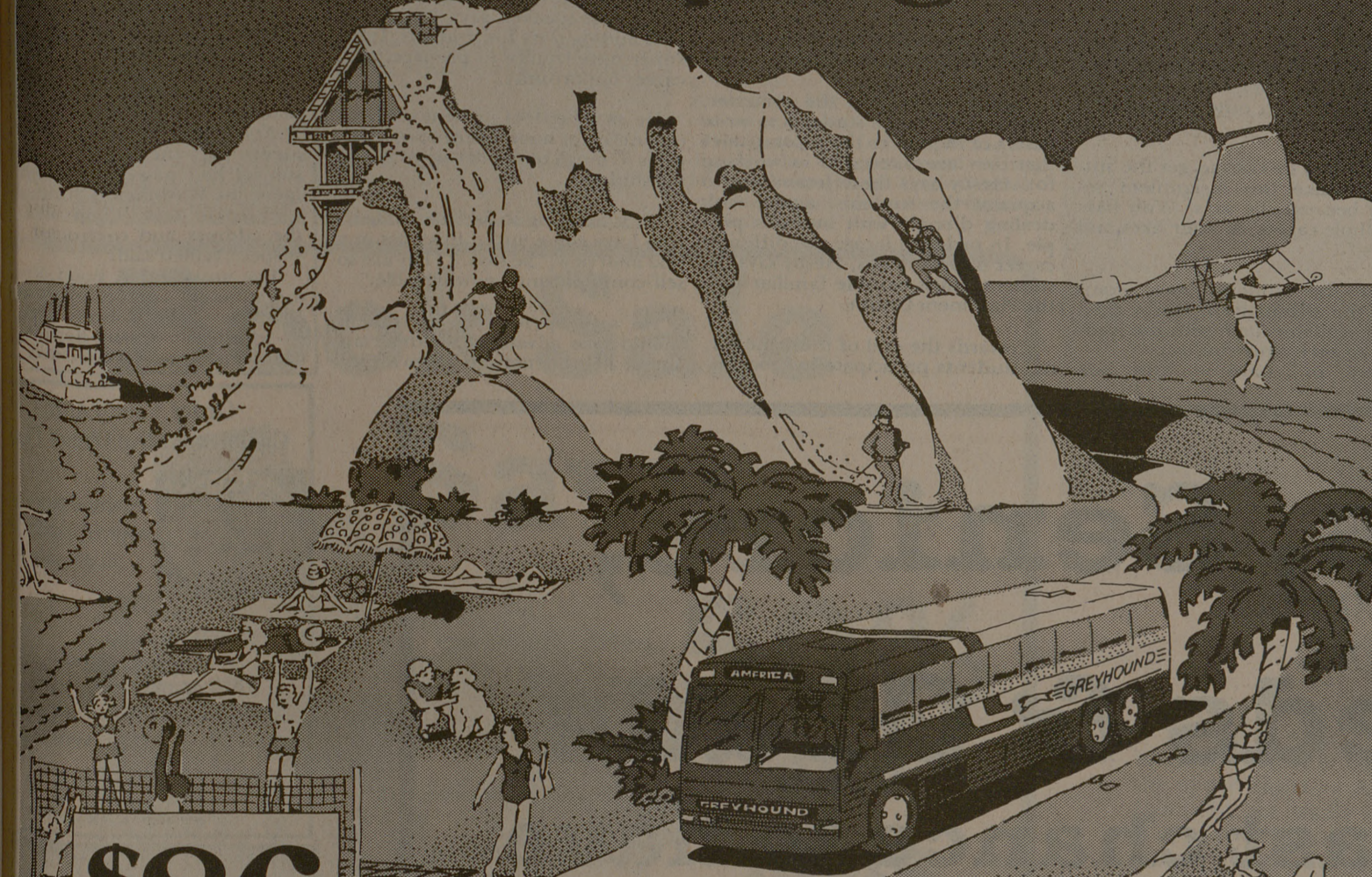
Bashur said Clements had no comment on Hance's statement.

Hance also said Clements could not be elected in November because he "makes spontaneous emotional responses to anyone who disagrees with him, whether that person is a public official or not. That's the reason he lost in 1982 and that's why he can't get elected in 1986."

Bashur said independent polls and those commissioned by Clements showed he was the only candidate who could defeat Democratic incumbent Mark White. White defeated Clements in 1982.

In other political developments, Railroad Commission candidate John Poulard said he thought there should be a limit on how much campaign money comes from political action committees. He said he would reject all PAC contributions.

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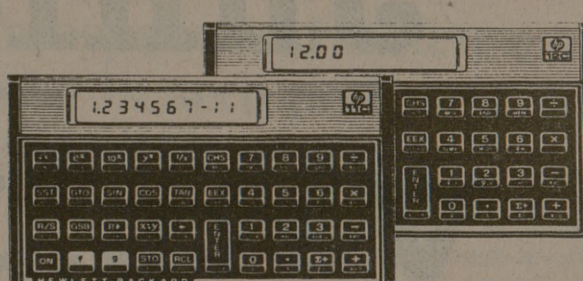
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