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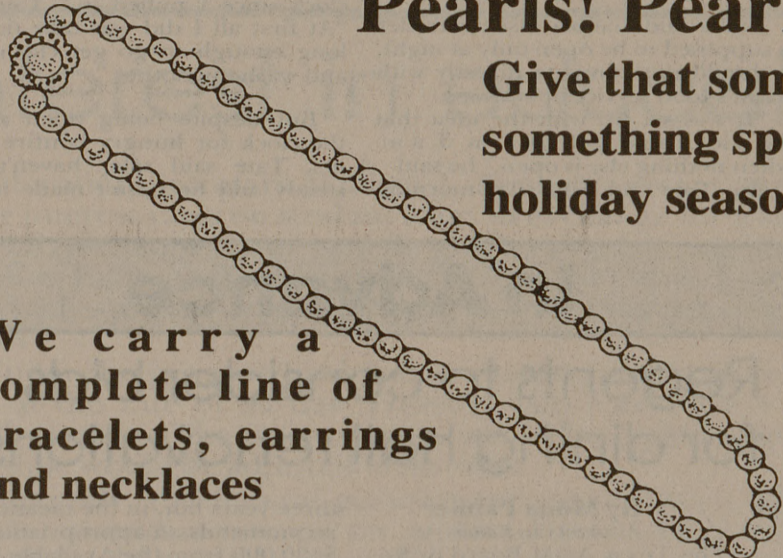
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E.L. Miller Lecture Series

Researcher: Biotechnology to be billion-dollar force by year 2000

By Olivier Uyttebrouck
Staff Writer

By the year 2000, biotechnology will be a \$60 billion to \$200 billion industry and will be the driving force behind such areas as agriculture, computer science, medicine and pharmaceuticals, a researcher said here Thursday.

Dr. Baldwin H. Tom, associate director of the Bioprocessing Research Center in Houston, spoke at MSC Political Forum's E.L. Miller Lecture Series about the promising areas of biotechnology.

Regarding computers, Tom said: "I like this area because it's so wild that I need to tell you about it. There are university scientists developing what are called 'biochips' that primarily use organic compounds . . . as signaling devices in computer-like systems."

"Because of the three-dimensional configuration of proteins and enzymes . . . they've calculated that these biochips would be 1 billion times faster than the present silicon chips."

Tom noted that a Houston

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— Dr. Baldwin H. Tom

firm is commercializing a technique for raising livestock animals to jumbo sizes by raising them on growth hormone.

The firm is raising "super-rabbits, super-pigs and super-cattle" that grow to be twice the size of their litter mates while they eat only 30 percent more food, he said.

"Any biological material existing in nature can theoretically be exploited for our own use," Tom said. For example, he said, scientists may one day be able to use the web-spinning gene in spiders

to produce a new kind of having the qualities of strength and water-resistance that spiders have.

Tom's area of specialization is bioprocessing, which uses a technique called electrophoresis to isolate and purify such biological products as proteins and man hormones.

Tom's research unit at the University of Texas Health Science Center Institute has one of the two machines in the country are designed to perform electrophoresis on a large scale in space, he said.

Electrophoresis is a technique of running an electric current through an organic culture to separate out the valuable compounds from the "garbage," he said.

In space, organic compounds can be isolated and purified to an extent impossible on earth, where the force of gravity damages and proteins during the purification process, Tom said. Materials also can be processed hundreds of times faster in space than can be on earth, he said.

Group turns to Democrats to name English as official language of U.S.

AUSTIN (AP) — The American Ethnic Coalition, which convinced the State Republican Executive Committee to adopt a resolution calling for adoption of English as the official language, now has set its sights on state Democrats.

"I have confidence that even though it may take awhile, the Democrats are going to come into line with the Republicans because it's so logical," said Bill Toney of Nacogdoches, chairman of the Democratic caucus of the American Ethnic Coalition.

Texas Democratic Chairman Bob Slagle Thursday gave the resolution little chance of winning approval from the State Democratic Executive Committee.

He said supporters of the resolu-

tion seem like "a bunch of people who are probably paranoid and who believe there's a bunch of people in dark, dank cellars plotting to make them speak Spanish."

The American Ethnic Coalition, largely a Texas organization, was formed on the Fourth of July. Its chairman, Lou Zaeske of Houston, said the organization's purpose is "to prevent the division of America along ethnic lines."

A constitutional amendment making English the nation's official language would go a long way toward preventing the division, Zaeske said.

"Every other ethnic minority took pride in embracing English as the language of their new country," said Zaeske, an engineer. "But now we are being increasingly populated

by immigrants, many of them who feel entitled to be educated and live their whole lives in the language of their native countries."

The coalition includes "several thousand" members, all of whom can trace their families to state and groups, Zaeske said. Zaeske is half-Czech, and "I speak English with almost no accent at all."

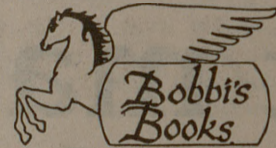
Toney, a retired professor at Grambling State University in Louisiana, said his attempts to get language resolutions at previous county Democratic conventions were rebuffed.

"I believe that I was sandbagged by school teachers and professors," Toney said.

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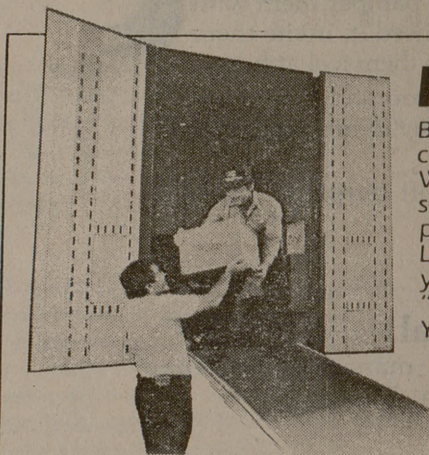
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