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## Working oil, gas rigs in U.S. down by 3

HOUSTON (AP) — The number of working oil and gas rigs in the United States fell this week to 951, down three from the total posted last week, Hughes Tool Co. officials said.

The rig count had been on an upswing the past six weeks. Last week the count increased by two to total 954.

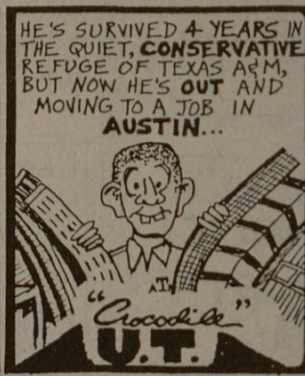
Last year at this time, the count totaled 1,911, Hughes officials said Monday.

The rig count hit an all-time low of 663 in July. It was on an upswing before it dropped to 727 in late August, according to the Houston-based oil toolmaker, which has kept industry statistics since 1940.

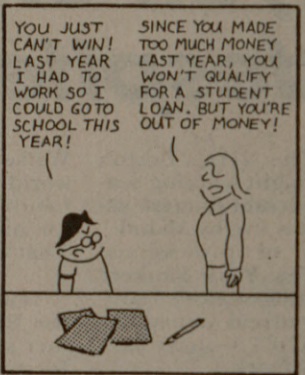
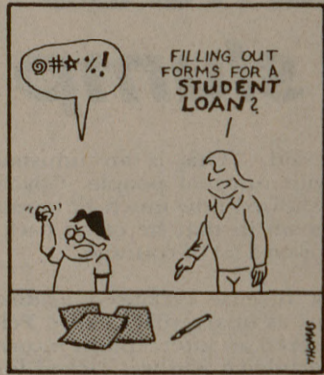
More than 1,000 rigs have been idle since December, when oil prices began to decline, dropping as low as \$9 a barrel. The rig count has dropped steadily from 1,995 since Dec. 23, officials said.

In December 1981, 4,500 rigs were active.

## Warped



## Waldo



## by Kevin Thom

# Reagan administration lowers '87 economic growth projection

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Reagan administration on Monday predicted that the U.S. economy will expand by a modest 3.2 percent next year, up from this year's sluggish growth but a full percentage point below its earlier projection.

Beryl Sprinkel, chairman of the president's Council of Economic Advisers, said the collapse in oil prices in early 1986 and anticipated effects of tax revision were factors in the lowered projection.

At the same time, a group of business economists projected growth for next year at an even lower 2.8 percent and some said that a new recession may be looming in 1988. So far this year, the GNP has risen at an

annual rate of about 2.4 percent.

The new administration forecast projected civilian unemployment, running at 7 percent this year, to decline to 6.9 percent in 1987.

It said inflation, as measured by the consumer price index, would rise to the level of 3.8 percent next year — up from 0.7 percent inflation posted this year because of the drop in oil prices.

Sprinkel said the reduced growth estimate would imply lower revenues than originally projected, making it even harder for the administration to meet the Gramm-Rudman deficit target of \$108 billion that it had vowed to do in its budget for fiscal year 1988.

But the alternative, he told a White House news conference, was "having a high unrealistic forecast."

Though U.S. business economists issued no specific economic storm warnings, the forecasters seemed to think such sluggish performance couldn't go on forever.

"As the U.S. expansion begins its fifth year, economists continue to be concerned about a recession on the horizon," said Jerry Jordan, the group's president.

"Only about 30 percent believe we will be in recession by the end of 1987," said Jordan, a former member of President Reagan's Council of Economic Advisers and currently senior vice president and chief econo-

mist of First Interstate Bank in Los Angeles.

"But about 60 percent see a downturn by the end of 1987, with over 90 percent anticipating a recession before the close of 1988," he said.

In other specific forecasts, surveyed economists said:

- Consumer prices will rise 1.9 percent in 1987, double the estimated 1.9 percent, but with the big increases of the late 1980s and early 1980s.

- The prime interest rate charged by banks will decline by midyear from the current 11.75 percent, but then will rise to 12 percent by the end of the year.

## Mexican party said to lack clear direction

REYNOSA, Mexico (AP) — The Authentic Party of the Mexican Revolution, whose candidates claimed election victories Monday in three major cities on the Texas border, comprises former ruling party members who are disgruntled with the system.

But comments from PARM mayoral candidates in the Tamaulipas state cities of Reynosa, Matamoros and Nuevo Laredo, indicate the party has no clear direction.

The Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI, which has not lost a presidential or gubernatorial election since it was founded in 1929, disputed the PARM victory claims.

State party spokesman Felipe Garza said Monday in Ciudad Victoria, the Tamaulipas capital, that the PRI won the governorship and that, al-

though results were not complete, "we feel that we have won all 43 mayors' races," including the three border cities and four towns that were held by opposition parties. All three PARM candidates are former members of the PRI.

Ernesto Gomez Lira, PARM mayoral candidate in this city of 265,000 people, just south of Hidalgo and McAllen said, "The PARM is a party of the system." Hidalgo was referring to the PRI domination. "I have a lot to lose if I become an enemy of the system."

Sonia Martinez de Villar, PARM mayoral candidate in Matamoros, Tamaulipas' largest border city just south of Brownsville said, "We're the real opposition."

In Nuevo Laredo, mayoral candidate Jose Trinidad Garza Salinas said he defected from the

PRI to the PARM because he was "disgusted at the corruption that exists in the official

Gomez Lira, 60, announced early Monday he had defeated Ernestina Icaza de Contreras, the dominant Institutional Revolutionary Party known as PRI. Contreras also is claiming victory.

Gomez Lira, one of 13 nominees for PARM oral candidate in Reynosa, became the PARM nominee after he lost to Contreras in two primary elections.

The PARM, nearly dead four years ago because of lack of support at the polls, won two federal congressional posts by margin, which is almost unheard of for an opposition party.

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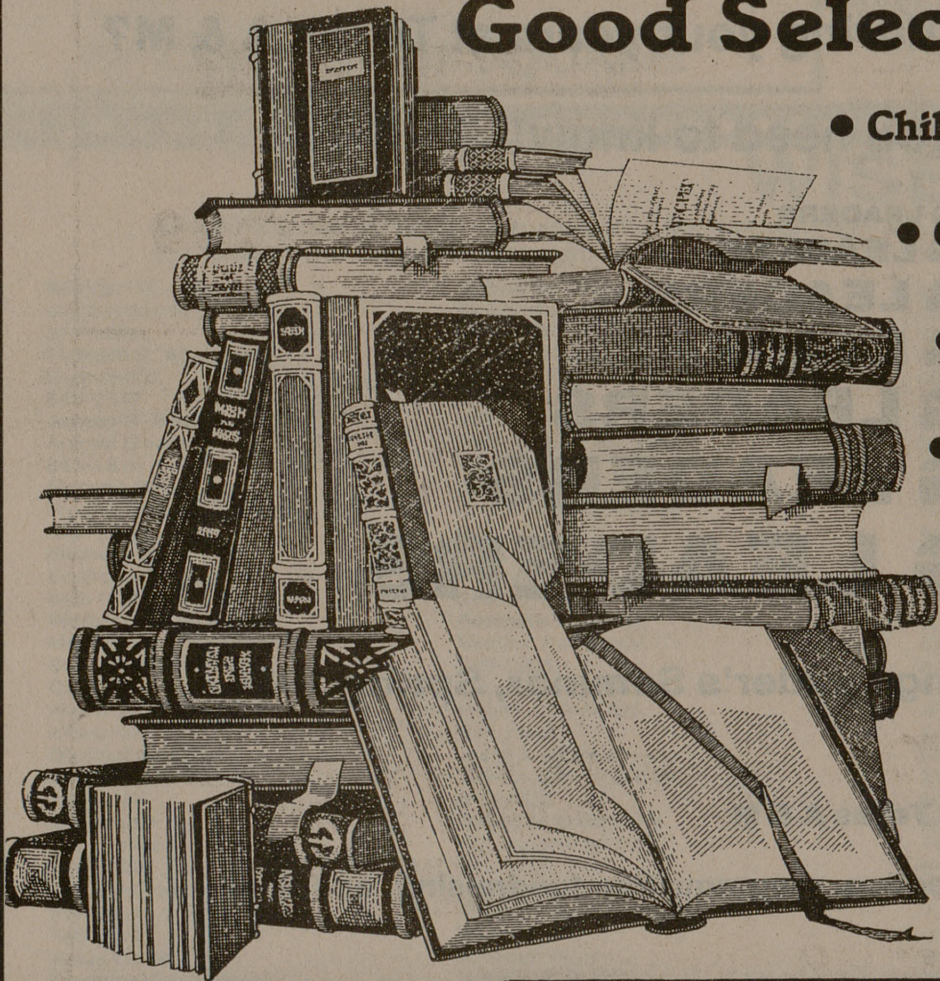
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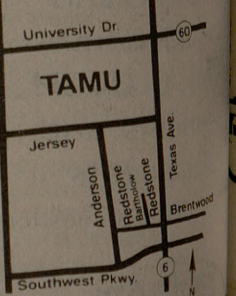
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