

Hobby discusses Texas' economic condition

Addresses challenges of new Legislature

By Sherri Roberts
Staff Writer

Lt. Gov. Bill Hobby discussed the economic condition of Texas and the challenges facing the 71st Legislature in a lecture sponsored by the Political Science Society last night.

"Certainly, there's nothing in Texas that we need more than economic development," Hobby told an audience of approximately 35 people in Rudder Tower. "We have too much real estate and not enough money in our banks. Oil prices are too low, farm prices are too low and employment is too high. Texas needs industry and new jobs."

Industry relocation and expansion — an educated workforce and a healthy business climate — are supported by state tax dollars.

However, he said, the high dropout rate of one in three students and low literacy level of many high school graduates signaled a need for changes in the present educational system.

"If it costs more money to solve this problem, we need to make sure we get more for that money," Hobby said. "We now have the tools to measure student and teacher performance. Schools that don't produce quality education should be required to improve. Schools that improve should be rewarded. That is called accountability. You deserve that when

you are paying the bill."

Hobby commended the research activities of A&M, saying research will boost the sagging economy.

"The biotechnology research initiative this University plans in Houston should create dozens of new products and thousands of new jobs," he said. "The expense of universities is paid back many times with the prosperity they create."

Another issue the Legislature will address is prison reform, Hobby said.

Although Texas legislators have appropriated \$275 million to build more than 13,000 prison beds, he said the causes of crime must be further attacked.

"When we make our 10-year prison population projections, we are planning

on the incarceration of people who are now seven, eight or nine years of age," he said. "We are telling them in effect, 'We do not have the resources for you today, but we are reserving a \$30,000 per year space for you when you become an adult.'"

Hobby said efforts to curtail alcohol and drug abuse and to stop child abuse must be intensified.

Efforts to develop the economy will fail, he said, if a solid framework of highways, water and other services are not provided.

"Highways and airports are key to economic development," Hobby said. "No CEO will locate his headquarters in a place that lacks a first-class transporta-

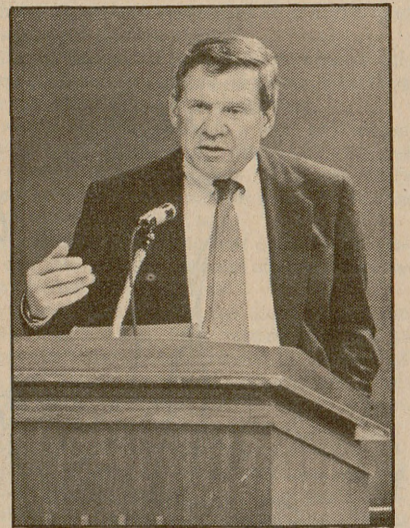
tion network."

Tax reform should remain a top priority of the Legislature, Hobby said.

"Our tax system hinders economic growth," he said. "It burdens most of the industries hit hardest by international competition. The franchise tax is a tax on capital. Raising it as we did last year hampers growth."

Hobby urged people to vote in the upcoming presidential election.

"There is no more important decision than who will lead this country for the next four years," he said. "Do your part, or don't complain about what you get."



Lt. Gov. Bill Hobby

Center provides counseling, information about drinking

By Denise Thompson
Staff Writer

Faculty and students who are concerned about their drinking habits or those of someone they care about can get suggestions and help at the Texas A&M Center for Drug Prevention and Education.

"Our center is to be used as a resource for faculty, staff and students to come in and find out about alcohol," Ann Coombes, director of the Center, said. "We provide information about abuse, physiological effects and other facts about certain aspects of alcohol and other drugs."

Several alcohol and drug-related organizations are sponsored through the Center.

BACCHUS, or Boost Alcohol Consciousness Concerning the Health of University Students, is a national student organization whose purpose is to promote responsible drinking decisions among college students.

The campus chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous, a fellowship of people who help one another achieve and maintain sobriety, is sponsored through the Center.

Narcotics Anonymous, which is based on the AA approach, is a support group for people with a drug addiction.

For individuals who suffer confusion associated with an alcoholic parent, Adult Children of Alcoholics also offers support through the Center.

If a student thinks that he needs more serious attention, Coombes said, the

Center provides counseling and referrals.

"We do individual one-on-one work with students if we think they might have a problem," she said. "If a student thinks he might have a problem, he could come in, and we would sit down and talk about it and do a preliminary assessment. If we do find out he has a serious problem, we refer him out to agencies such as Greenleaf."

Besides providing counseling and referrals, the Center also sponsors information seminars for various groups.

"We do presentations to classes, student organizations, Fish Camp, mothers' clubs, fraternities and sororities," Coombes said. "We also put out lots of brochures about different alcohol-related subjects such as alcohol and liability or alcohol and the law."

Coombes said that alcohol abuse is not so much a problem of ignorance of the facts of alcoholism as much as it is a disregard for the facts.

"The more I go out and do programs for students, the more they're knowing what the actual facts are," she said. "So getting the facts across to people is not a problem — they're learning most of the facts."

"The reason we still have so much of a problem is not because people don't know the facts, but because they don't change their attitudes. They don't care that to drink to get drunk is an irresponsible use of alcohol. They have the attitude that drinking is a phase that they'll get through, and then everything will be OK. That attitude's bad, because it's a

proven fact that one out of ten people will have a problem with alcohol."

Coombes said that the cost of a DWI conviction is making some people realize the seriousness of alcohol abuse.

"Probably the thing most people still do not know is the average cost of a DWI in Brazos County," she said. "On average, it's \$4,500. The fine itself is very minimal, but a lot of people don't realize that you have many little things that go into the overall cost of a DWI. For instance, few people know that you have to pay \$40 a month just to be on probation."

Besides the cost of DWIs, Coombes said that alcohol-related liability is chan-

ging the attitudes about having and attending parties.

"If you are having a party at your apartment, and an intoxicated person leaves your party and has an accident, you can be held just as liable for that accident as any student organization such as a fraternity," Coombes said. "A lot of people know that fraternities can be hauled into court, but they don't realize the same things can happen to students."

For information concerning any of the programs or counseling services, contact the Center at 845-0280 or go to the second floor of the A.P. Beutel Health Center.

Group lists signs that mark possible drinking problems

BACCHUS lists nine signals that may indicate a drinking problem. A person may have a drinking problem if he or she:

- Frequently drinks to a state of intoxication.
- Relies on a drink to start the day.
- Consistently skips classes because of hangovers.
- Has blackouts and loss of memory from drinking.
- Frequently drinks alone to escape from reality, boredom and loneliness.

- Suffers from chronic hangovers and wants a drink to relieve the hangover.
- Does something he or she ordinarily would not do if he or she were not under the influence of alcohol.



Photo by Phelan M. Ebenbach

The Crane Gang

Four workers from H.B. Zachry Constructin Co. prepare to hoist the counterweight of a crane off of a trailer in front of Sbisa Dining Hall Monday afternoon. The crane will be used in the construction of a new residence hall near Sbisa.

World Food Day draws local, international issues into view

By Alan Sembera
Senior Staff Writer

Higher educational institutes in underdeveloped nations are not producing enough experts in agriculture for the private sector, Dr. H.O. Kunkel, former dean of the Texas A&M College of Agriculture, said Monday.

Kunkel told about a dozen people who gathered to participate in World Food Day at A&M that most agriculture institutes are designed to fill government jobs.

But most government jobs in the area of agriculture are filled in these countries, said Kunkel, who is now a professor of life sciences.

Now, he said, the question asked around the world is: "How does the farmer benefit from the resources of our higher educational systems?"

Because these agriculture institutes are now in place, Kunkel said, the United States will have to deal with them from a different point of view.

"We are collaborators and colleagues rather than going in and telling them what to do," he said.

As they exist, he said, these agriculture institutes are just mechanisms for employment.

He said many graduates of these systems don't contribute anything to the farmers of the countries because they have no knowledge of farming.

He said this is because a large number of the students who go to schools of higher education for agriculture in these underdeveloped nations come from large cities.

They want to be guaranteed the government job that goes with a higher education, and they can't get into more prestigious fields such as law or medicine, he said.

The participants in World Food Day also watched a live teleconference linking universities and communities

throughout the United States and Canada with an international panel of experts to discuss Africa's food problems and solutions.

During the teleconference, the panel discussed both African and American perspectives in areas such as food production and distribution, agricultural trade, international aid, African debt and the causes and effects of famine.

The panelists said nearly one-third of all Africans depend on food imports.

They blamed this on several things, including drought conditions, continued regional conflicts, lack of scientists and insufficient technology to cultivate the land.

Legislature may allow corporal punishment

AUSTIN (AP) — A special committee agreed Monday to ask the state Legislature to review a law allowing corporal punishment by educators and others.

"The whole idea of corporal punishment is to cause bodily injury," Steve Chaney, a Fort Worth prosecutor and member of the House Select Committee on Child Abuse and Pornography, said.

"I don't think we ought to ever have a statute that says a parent can't spank their child if done appropriately, but I don't know why we need to move it outside the home and allow a school to do it," he said. "You have other sanctions that you can use with

children in a school."

Chaney said he believes there are problems statewide in the use of corporal punishment by caretakers of children.

The committee, which includes lawmakers and others, voted unanimously for the review.

A section of the penal code under the "Educator-Student" heading says the use of force, but not deadly force, is justified if the person taking action is "entrusted with the care, supervision or administration of the person for a special purpose," and "when and to the degree the actor believes the force is necessary to further the

special purpose or to maintain discipline in a group."

Chaney said he thinks the law originally was meant to address only school districts and educators, but is being applied to anybody who has temporary supervision of a child.

If corporal punishment is not eliminated, Chaney said, limitations should be put into the law.

Two Austin parents told the committee Monday that their children were physically harmed, one by a worker at a summer activity program, and the other by a private school principal.

World Food Day was created by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, and is observed by more than 140 countries.

Its purpose is to get the people of the world more directly involved in eliminating hunger and creating a secure food supply for the world.

The observance is sponsored by the United Nations, individual national governments and private volunteer organizations.

More than 400 organizations sponsor World Food Day in the United States.

Texas flag law will be reviewed by High Court

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court, agreeing to decide how far states may go to limit some forms of political protest, said Monday it will review a Texas law that makes it a crime to burn the American flag.

The justices, setting the stage for a politically and emotionally charged ruling, will consider reinstating a conviction against a man who burned a flag at a demonstration during the 1984 Republican National Convention in Dallas.

A decision is expected by next July. The court will review a ruling that the Texas law improperly abridged symbolic expression protected by the Constitution.

The Texas branch of the American Civil Liberties Union urged the justices not to review a ruling that permitted the flag burning. The ACLU said state officials were trying to create a sense of legal uncertainty where none exists.

While flag-burning generally has not been a hot issue since the days of the Vietnam War protests, the case may attract considerable attention because of the interest focused on patriotic values by the current presidential campaign.

Vice President George Bush, the Republican nominee, has attacked his Democratic opponent, Gov. Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts, for vetoing a law requiring teachers to lead the Pledge of Allegiance in that state's public schools.

The justices agreed Monday to review a ruling by the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals last April that threw out the flag-burning conviction of Gregory Lee Johnson, who had been sentenced to one year in jail and fined \$2,000.

Johnson was arrested on Aug. 22, 1984, while participating in a demonstration against the Reagan administration and the Republicans.

The protest culminated with a rally in

front of Dallas City Hall that included political chants and the flag burning.

Johnson was convicted by a jury of violating a state law banning the desecration of a venerated object.

The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals said, "Given the context of an organized demonstration, speeches, slogans and the distribution of literature, anyone who observed (Johnson's) act would have understood the message that (he) intended to convey. The act for which (he) was convicted was clearly 'speech' contemplated by the First Amendment."

The state court said the Texas law against flag desecration is too broad because it seeks to curb expression likely to cause serious offense.

Police officers who arrested Johnson said they were seriously offended by the flag burning. There also had been considerable vandalism during the demonstration, but Johnson was not charged with that offense.

There was also testimony that the charred fragments of the flag were collected by an employee of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers who was so upset that he later buried the flag's remains in his backyard.

But the state court said seriously offending someone is not the same as inciting to riot — an activity that permits restraints on free speech.

The state court also rejected arguments by law enforcement officials that the anti-desecration statute legitimately preserves the flag as a symbol of unity.