

U.S. economy recovers, expert says

By Julie Polston
The Battalion

An economics expert said Tuesday the United States is in a recovery - not a recession - following President Bush's goal to slow down the rate of economic growth.

Dr. Jared Hazelton, head of the Center for Business and Economic Forecasting at A&M, explained how the United States is in a recovery period by referring to the early 1980s.

"We started recovering from the last recession in 1983, and the economy then grew from 1983 until 1990," he said.

"But toward the end of the '80s, it became apparent that that growth rate couldn't be sustained."

Hazelton said President Bush's objective was to make the recession

A&M professor plots growth rate by referring to early 80s recession

end with a whimper and not a bang. "The idea was to slow down the rate of growth to a sustainable level to try to keep out of the recession," Hazelton said.

The government needed to let businesses and households pay off some of their debts, and let the economy get a breathing spell, he said.

Hazelton said the plan to slow the economy down was basically left up to the Federal Reserve Board. However, two events occurred in the summer of 1990 to upset the government's plan, he said.

First, the Gulf War last year led to an increase in oil prices and shook the overall confidence in

America. Second, the rising deficit caused Bush to go back on his promise and raise taxes.

Hazelton said economists were predicting a short, mild recession as a result of these two events, despite the general public's fear of a long, drawn out recession. By April of 1991, signs of a recovery began to emerge, he said.

Part of the reason the United States still has slow economic growth is because of the overall pessimism in our country - as well as the role of the media - Hazelton said.

However, there are several reasons why Americans should be optimistic, he said. First, American organizations and businesses are becoming much more compet-

itive. "We hear a lot about the trade deficit with Japan, but we ignore the fact that we have a trade surplus with Western Europe, and they are no slouches in production," he said.

The expansion of retail growth as seen in increased holiday sales last Christmas is another reason for optimism, he said. In addition, Hazelton said the United States has low inflation rates and low interest rates.

Finally, since this is an election year, the Federal Reserve Board is likely to "sit on their thumbs and be invisible," he said.

"The Fed has done all it can do, and it takes months for Fed action to take place," Hazelton said.

"So what you've really got is just patience, and people are not very patient. That's why I think politicians are going to pay a heavy price this year."

Sociologist examines black working women

By Karen Praslicka
The Battalion

Data has shown that health impedes the progress of black women in the workplace, and the level of their education might be an important factor, a Texas A&M University sociologist found.

Dr. Elizabeth Maret, an associate professor in the sociology department, has found from a twenty-year study completed in 1986 that black women in the work force have much poorer health than white women.

Maret's data also indicates that because these black women have lower educations, their health suffers, and therefore their jobs suffer.

"It's my feeling the health of black women should receive more attention as an area of national priority," she said. "Health in general should be a matter of national priority."

Maret said there is a general relationship between education in health: the less education a person has, the lower her health.

Maret looked at data on the health status of black women over a 20 year period beginning in 1967. Her research indicates that not only were their past and present health conditions influenced by education, but the occupation of the women's mothers had an influence.

"What I found to be important is that the mother's occupation has a direct influence on the number of years of school completed by respondents (of the study)," she said. "It has a direct and indirect effect on health. It's indirect through their previous health status, and a direct effect on their health status now."

"It affects their health origins as well as their health des-

tinations," she said. "The mother's occupation was a variable I found to be very important."

Maret has been invited by the United States Department of Labor to present her research at a conference in 1993.

"Possibly at the conference I'll be able to establish linkages between race, health and labor force attachment through time," she said.

In general, her findings indicate that when their mother had a white or blue collar position, respondents' health was generally higher. Respondents whose mothers had low-paid service positions usually had a lower health status.

Maret's present research stems from work she completed during the early 1980's about women in the work force.

Her research was longitudinal, considering patterns over time. It covered the number of hours worked per week, the amount of work per year, and the number of years worked since the women left school.

"This tells you how long and to what extent you've participated in the work force," Maret said.

Maret said through this research she realized health is important for looking at labor force attachment of women, and specifically to labor force attachment of black women.

Maret said in a paper she wrote in 1990, which is pending publication, she took a more in-depth look at the health of black women.

"That's where I found the importance of schooling and the importance of the mother's education," she said.

However, the implications of all of Maret's research still remain to be seen.

"I haven't taken all that I put it into one model," she said.

Workers reinforce Rayburn Reservoir spillway

JASPER (AP) - Emergency workers on Tuesday were placing sandbags and reinforcing concrete barriers with steel brackets to shore up a potentially unstable spillway on the Sam Rayburn Reservoir, which is at record high levels because of heavy rains.

The 2,200-foot-wide spillway is next to the reservoir dam and is designed to allow water to flow over it before it reaches the top.

The water on Tuesday was at a record 175 feet above sea level, about a foot below the spillway. That topped the 172.2 feet recorded in 1974.

Army Corps of Engineers officials worry that more rain could send water levels over the top of the spillway and erode the structure. Heavy rains in recent weeks have swollen the Angelina River watershed, which drains into the reservoir. Tyler County has received about 18 inches of rain so far this year, more than twice the normal amount.

The area forecast called for no additional rain in the next few days.

A Corps of Engineers study in 1986 found that sandy soil at the base of the spillway was unstable and could erode in a flood. A \$40 mil-

lion project to renovate the spillway is slated for 1994. The spillway and dam went into operation in 1965.

John Yearwood, emergency management coordinator for Tyler County, said failure of the spillway would endanger a wide area of southeast Texas, including Beaumont.

The high water has left about 100 homes flooded downstream from the dam, with water up to 5 feet deep reported in some places. A shelter was opened at a school in Spurger, but most residents forced from their homes chose to stay with friends or family.

Judge sentences ex-vice squad leader

AUSTIN (AP) - A former vice squad head convicted of using excessive force has been sentenced to 16 months in prison, only about a quarter of the term recommended by prosecutors.

Byron "Bubba" Cates received the sentence Monday, after prosecutors had recommended a 70- to 87-month term. The former Austin police sergeant was convicted in

November.

U.S. District Judge James Nowlin sentenced Cates, 39, to 16 months in prison, two years' supervised probation and a \$5,000 fine for using interstate commerce to promote prostitution or to distribute the proceeds of prostitution and use of excessive force as a police officer.

Cates also was assessed a fed-

erally required \$50 fine for each of the counts.

"I always thought Judge Nowlin was a fair judge. I have no complaints," Cates said after leaving the courtroom.

Cates was free on bail bond until federal officials determine when and where he will report to serve his sentence, said Nowlin.

"I'm struck by the fact that

during the time (of the crimes), you were abusing alcohol," Nowlin said before sentencing Cates.

Prosecutor Jim Blankinship, who recommended the 70- to 87-month sentence, declined comment after the sentencing.

Cates became head of the vice squad in January 1990, after 13 years as a police officer.

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