

Service Station Owners Predict Dreary Future

Long lines at gas stations or no gas at all have begun to bother regional motorists in Northeastern Pennsylvania. But the general consensus of most station managers is that things are going to get a lot worse before they get better.

Most gas station operators polled by Greenstreet News this week agree on one specific: February is going to be a short month gas-wise. Most agree that some form of rationing must be initiated, even if the burden falls on them. Of the 20 or more station managers interviewed, most said they have learned the hard way

they they must not over sell, or they will be forced to close down completely before the March gasoline allotment is delivered.

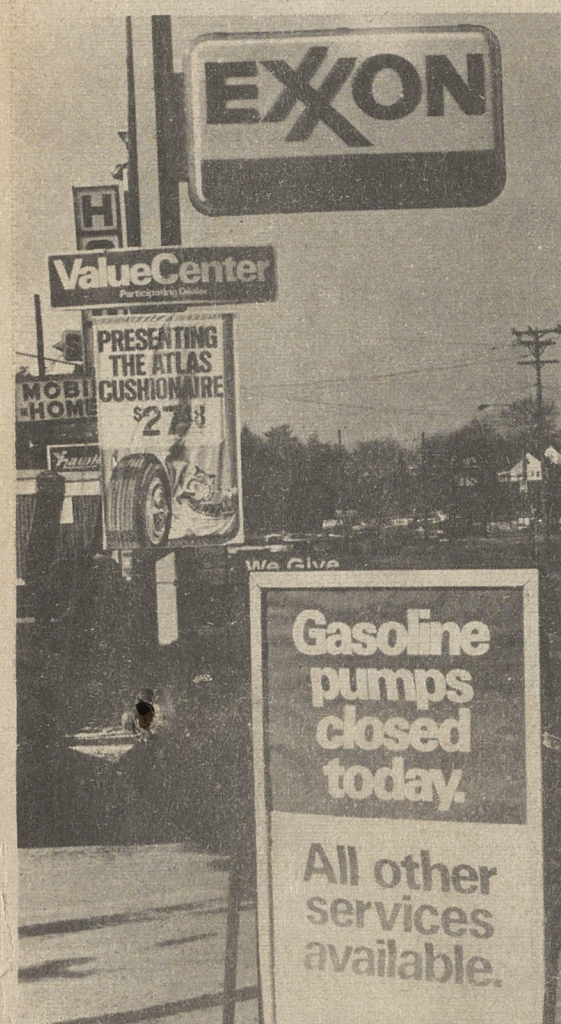
Many stations throughout the region ran out of gas last Thursday before the February allotment was delivered Friday. Some in the outlying areas such as Nuangola didn't receive their month's share until Saturday, forcing their regular customers to sustain almost three dry days. Others began closing their pumps at noon, even Friday after their February quota was delivered, realizing that while their tanks were full, it wasn't going to last long.

Of the 11 major brands polled, none had escaped a shortage including Texaco, Mobil, American, Sunoco, Arco, BP, Gulf, Kayo, Citgo, Exxon, and Phillips.

In addition to the shortage, motorists also began noticing the price increases which generally went into effect Friday. New prices ranged from a high of 55.9 cents a gallon for high test at some major-brand stations, to a low of about 40.9 cents. But it was anything but a bargain hunter's market. The average motorist was more concerned with the quantity that he could buy, if he could find a station open at all, rather than the price. And station managers were quick to point out that when prices go up it doesn't help them. Most conceded quickly that the price increases are ordered by their distributors with the added revenue going to the company.

Outside the region things didn't appear much different. From Texas the Dallas Morning News, in a copyrighted story, reported that the Federal Energy Office plans late next week to order major oil companies to share gasoline and other fuels with competitors in short supply. The News quoted a "high official" in the fuel policy division of the Federal Government as saying that the "goal is to make everybody run out of gas at the same time in February, if we do our job right," by spreading available supplies equally to all areas.

(continued on PAGE B SIX)



As anyone who drives an automobile knows, the gasoline shortage got worse this week. Signs such as this were commonplace at service stations throughout the area. Other photos on Page B6.

Dallas Announces Plans For New Traffic Lights

A new system of traffic lights should be installed within the next year to 18 months at the intersection in the center of Dallas Borough. Ralph Garris, secretary and road foreman for the borough, said the state has been advising the borough for many months that their old system is antiquated and substandard.

Borough council decided to use part of their 1974 revenue sharing funds to purchase the new system, which should cost somewhere in the vicinity of \$14,000. Council decided to put the project in the 1974 revenue sharing budget, following months of concern over the possibility of a breakdown of the system now in use.

Several months ago, following a minor break-down of the traffic system, mayor Steve Hartman told council that the repairman had advised him that several parts of the mechanism could no longer be obtained.

"I used to have nightmares about it," Mayor Hartman told the Post recently. "If that timer broke, I thought, we'd have to have a cop at that intersection 24 hours a day, for months. You take your life in your hands directing at that intersection. I learned that during the flood."

The mayor noted, however, that the engineering firm contacted to do a study of the intersection, has indicated that they could get the borough a timer, in the event that the old one should fail, "to get us out of a jam."

The Interstate Safety Service Inc., an engineering firm in Clarks Summit, has promised that they will survey the borough's lighting needs as soon as the weather gets a little better, according to Mr. Garris.

The firm will survey the intersection, make recommendations about what type unit and how many lights are required, at no fee, in the hope that they will win the contract for the system. The firm will also make arrangements for the necessary state approval.

Mr. Garris noted that the borough is not obligated to make use of the Clarks Summit firm. They will advertise project specifications, based on the firm's recommendations, advertise for bids, and accept the lowest satisfactory offer, he said.

Mr. Garris noted that it is really very difficult to pinpoint how much the project will cost. He said that a representative of the engineering firm told him that a similar project in another community cost "12 to 14 thousand, but that was three or four months ago. If we get a low bid of \$12,000 we'll be very happy."

Explaining why it would probably be another year before the new system is totally installed, Mr. Garris said that "these traffic engineering people are backed way up because of the 1972 flood. The flooded communities had to replace a lot of lights."

(continued on PAGE B SIX)

THE DALLAS POST

VOL. 85 NO. 6

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 1974

DALLAS, PA. FIFTEEN CENTS

Northeastern Pa. Truckers Back Nationwide Shutdown

by Larry Hertz

While Gov. Milton Shapp and other state and national officials met in Washington to discuss a solution, independent truckers in Northeastern Pennsylvania joined a nationwide shutdown and vowed to keep their rigs off the road until the government and oil companies meet their demands for a fuel price ceiling.

Gov. Shapp Monday night declared a state of emergency in the Commonwealth, but there were indications Tuesday that negotiations between truckers and government officials were progressing slowly but steadily.

Michael Naro, president of the Independent Truckers' Association of Northeastern Pennsylvania (ITANP), and Edward Cherkoski, Clarks Summit, leader of a dissident group of owner-operators, both rejected Gov. Shapp's plea for a 45-day moratorium and vowed to stay off the highways "for as long as it takes."

Sporadic violence broke out on several area highways as truckers still on the road were harrassed with rocks and bullets. Naro and Cherkoski both issued statements deploring the violence. (For a report on National Guard activities related to the truck stoppage, see another story on this page.)

At a meeting last Wednesday in Dunmore, more than 200 members of the ITANP voted unanimously to join the planned nationwide shutdown. The organization is seeking to have the government set a ceiling of 32.9 to 34.9 cents per gallon of deisel fuel. The ITANP and Cherkoski's dissident group both rejected

an offer from the federal government to allow independents to pass on increased costs to the consumer, calling the plan inflationary. Cherkoski's group further maintained they will settle for nothing less than a flat 32.9-cent ceiling on deisel fuel.

While noting that they are receiving no "strike benefits" or other income during the stoppage, the truckers were quietly confident that their absence will be keenly felt in supermarkets and other stores throughout the country by the end of the week. Independents, who comprise about 55 percent of the trucks on the road, haul more than 90 percent of the perishable produce (meat, dairy products, vegetables and other goods) and nearly 99 percent of the steel in the country. A stop-

page of any duration, they feel, will affect almost every consumer and will force the government to take action on their demands.

Naro said he did not believe the National Guard would be able to provide transportation for the goods independents carry, since it does not have the necessary specialized equipment. He added, however, that his organization would be willing to transport food and other necessities to local hospitals and other institutions.

Cherkoski emphasized, however, that the independents do not wish to cause any hardships and said the stoppage is being undertaken for the benefit of the average citizen.

(continued on PAGE B SIX)

Highway Resurfacing Remains Controversial

by Russ Williams

As potholes on state-maintained roads become more numerous and deeper, state legislators remain cemented in a controversy over how to fund \$100 million for road resurfacing. Although both sides in this political question agree that the money is desperately needed, the funds remain lacking. Fund-providing bills submitted from both sides have met with defeat because of solid opposition and politicians wary of voting for any bill that would lead to a tax increase.

Robert Brader, area maintenance supervisor for PennDOT, working out of the Bear Creek office, told Greenstreet News that he favors "immediate money", indicating that he would like to see the Democrats' implement their bond issue plan for funding road repair. 120th District state representative Frank O'Connell Jr. (R) favors his party's one-cent gas tax raise.

Referring to the bond issue idea, Luzerne County Rep. Frank O'Connell told Greenstreet News, "Shapp's way is bankruptcy. The whole Commonwealth debt situation scares the life out of me."

Speaking to the claimed "immediacy" of the bond plan, Rep. O'Connell reasoned that "it will take three months before they can implement the bond...the finance company has to review it, bonds

have to be bought and so on. It will be well into spring before they can do anything."

He noted, however, that if the one-cent tax is passed, the state can "immediately" borrow needed funds, at low interest, based on tax anticipation.

Citing the fact that paving can not begin before April due to weather conditions and PennDOT rules, Rep. O'Connell claimed that "monies from the tax would be in by that time."

He said that a big advantage of the one-cent tax is its selectivity. It taxes in direct proportion to usage. Heavy users of vehicular fuels will pay a much greater tax than occasional and non-users. Extra heavy users, like trucking firms, and out-of-state users of the state highways will also be taxed proportionately, he noted.

Rep. O'Connell berated Gov. Shapp for making a commitment not to raise taxes, calling it a promise that "no governor should make." The representative indicated that he felt that it was this commitment which resulted in Gov. Shapp and the Democrats favoring a bond, rather than a fuel tax raise.

Rep. O'Connell said that a bond now will mean at least a one-and-one-half cent fuel tax raise, or some other equivalent tax raise, in the future, because of interest charges.

(continued on PAGE B SIX)

Truck Shutdown-Guardman's View

by Kurt Weidner

The men of Support Company, Mechanized First Battalion, 109th Infantry turned out at the armory on Adams Ave., Scranton, at 7 a.m. Saturday. It was a regularly scheduled drill and the men had been preparing for the annual division command inspection by Maj. Gen. Nicholas Kafkalas, 28th Infantry Division commander.

By lunch time, some of the men would be patrolling in Jeeps, bundled up in wool shirts and field pants against the sub-freezing cold, checking out overpasses for angry independent truckers intent on doing violence to the big haulers who have not cooperated with the independents nationwide strike.

At 10 a.m. Support Company's commander, Capt. Eugene Klimash told the 35-man detail what he expected them to do. They were to report to the company any trouble they observed and the company would in turn inform the State Police. The men were to avoid confrontations, and conduct themselves in a military manner at all times. He said they could probably expect to be doing the same thing Sunday and there was always the possibility they could be activated.

Driving around in an unheated Jeep is a cold way to spend the weekend. Standing guard on a bridge is even worse. And it is sad to think that the National Guard should have to be used to keep citizens of the state from seriously injuring people with stupid pranks like dropping cinder blocks from bridges. The National Guard has been put to more constructive tasks, like helping people during the flood.

Sunday the roads got slippery and driving more dangerous. Visibility was poor. Drivers constantly stopped their Jeeps to clean off their windows. There was also an increase in the truck traffic over Saturday. Drivers for the large haulers

(continued on PAGE B SIX)



Cascading waters framed by rugged rock ledges near Huntsville Reservoir paint an interesting picture.—Photo by Mazar Photography.

A Note To Readers

The increased cost and scarcity of newsprint, another postal rate increase in the immediate future, and generally rising production costs necessitates an increase in the subscription and newsstand price of Greenstreet News Company publications including the *Dallas Post*.

The new subscription rate will be \$9.00 per year for 52 issues and the newsstand price will be 20 cents per copy. A year's subscription thus represents a savings of \$1.40 per year over the newsstand cost.

Subscribers who wish to renew their subscription at the current rate may do so until March 1st regardless of the month in which their subscription expires. Just call or write *The Dallas Post*, 41 Lehman Ave., Dallas, Pa. 18612. The telephone number is 675-5211.

The staff and management of the *Dallas Post* appreciates the continued patronage of the Back Mountain and Wyoming Valley community. For the price of one medium-sized sirloin roast, or a quart of scotch whiskey, we will continue to bring to the public a full year's worth of timely and informative news and opinion on local, state, regional, and national issues.