

# Perspective

## OPINION

Guest editorial

### Hope for stability in oil prices

By EDWIN FEULNER

Though unusually bitter weather has had much of America in a deep freeze since Thanksgiving, heating fuel continues to be plentiful. It's not as inexpensive as we would like; but it never will be again. That's wishful thinking. The best we can hope for is price stability and plenty, both of which seem assured for the immediate future.

That doesn't mean the U.S. should become complacent. At their most recent meeting, the OPEC oil ministers elected again not to raise prices. But that's not because they're less greedy than a few years ago; it's because there's a lot of excess oil in the world marketplace.

And if the U.S. is smart, it will add to OPEC's problems by putting Alaskan crude oil back on the energy market, lessening the world's dependence on Persian Gulf oil even further.

But this is not so easily done. Federal legislation has been blocking the free commercial export of Alaskan oil and natural gas for the past decade.

Blocking the overseas sale of Alaskan crude oil has resulted in an oil glut in that state. Because of that, half

of Alaska's oil is being shipped to the East and Gulf coasts at considerable cost (ultimately paid by us, the consumers). The East and Gulf coasts can purchase oil more economically, however, from other sources. Moreover, the glut has discouraged additional domestic oil exploration.

A recent study by energy experts Milton Copulos and S. Fred Singer shows that by lifting the restrictions on the export of Alaskan oil and gas, Congress could slice \$1.5 billion from the budget deficit, improve America's balance of trade with Japan - which would be a prime market - and make it unnecessary to build the proposed \$2 billion pipeline from Alaskan oil fields to the Midwest.

By putting more oil and gas on the world market, the analysts say, Alaskan exports "would reduce the need for OPEC oil, and apply downward pressure on the world oil price - to the benefit of the industrialized countries and oil-importing developing nations alike."

Noting that Alaskan oil and gas reserve estimates have grown over the past several years, Singer and Copulos say those who oppose the export of Alaskan gas and oil are at worst bull-headed and at best inconsis-

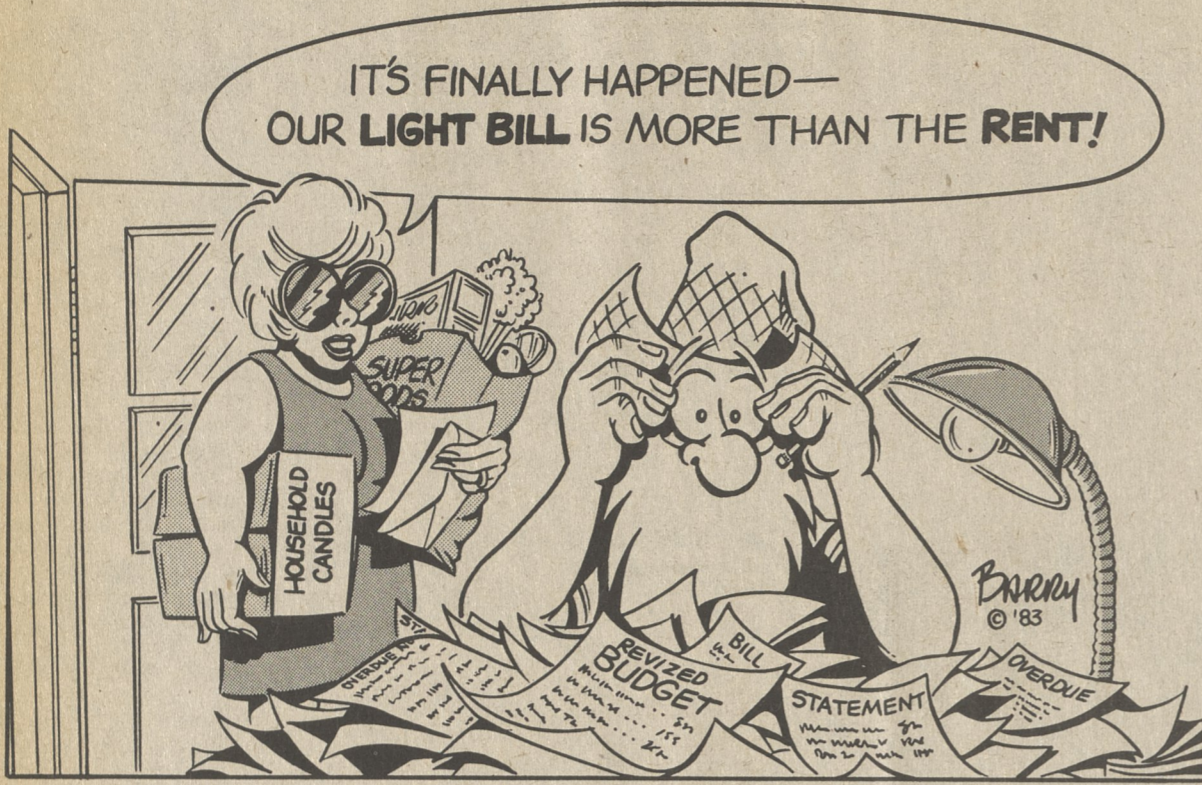
ent. For example, there are no such prohibitions on the export of refined oil products, such as gasoline and fuel oil.

"It seems strange, therefore, that there should be a prohibition against exporting crude oil."

In the event of an oil embargo, even an embargo coupled with production cutbacks, "the market could take over and adjust the available supply...to the demand," they say. A production cutback would result in higher prices for all oil. "This redistribution of oil would be entirely automatic, acting in response to the normal market forces, not government policies," Singer and Copulos say.

Let's hope Congress learned something when President Reagan lifted oil price controls: that without government interference the energy market works more efficiently and benefits American consumers more than when government bureaucrats try to manage the world's energy supplies from their grey-hole offices in Washington. If they did, they will give OPEC another well-deserved nudge by lifting the lid on Alaskan oil.

(Edwin Feulner is president of The Heritage Foundation, a Washington-based public policy research institute.)



J.P. Doodles

#### Not so funny

This cartoon may not be so funny anymore. Seems that along with increases in everything else, now light bills are becoming unbearable, too.

#### Only yesterday

### Sub-zero weather sent mercury far below area's average marks

50 YEARS AGO - MARCH 2, 1934  
Riding on the white winds of the winter's deepest snowfall, sub-zero weather swooped suddenly down on the area, bringing temperatures which sent the mercury far below the low marks already recorded that winter.

The body of Mrs. Elizabeth Metcavage, 60, of RD 1 Alderson, was found dead in deep snow near her home, about four miles west of Harveys Lake. Her husband, Daniel Metcavage, 60, was arrested by State Police and detained in Wyoming County jail at Tunkhannock until an autopsy revealed the cause of her death.

Thwarted in his attempt to locate permanently in Caldwell, N.J. where he purchased a gasoline filling station with a check issued on First National Bank of Dallas, Wilson Thompson, former resident of Noxen, was arrested by New Jersey state police bringing to culmination a long series of escapades involving the issuance of fraudulent checks.

You could get - Peaches, 2 cans, 29c; bartlett pears, can, 15c; salmon, 2 cans, 23c; pickles, 2 qt. jars, 29c; vinegar, 2 24-oz. bottles, 15c; Chase and Sanborn coffee, 28c lb. can.

40 YEARS AGO - MARCH 3, 1944  
Women of Dallas and surrounding communities had the opportunity to learn more of the functions and work of the Women's Army Corps when Lieutenant Phyllis Whittingham of the Wilkes-Barre recruiting office opened a part-time information and recruiting booth in Dallas.

The Annual Red Cross Drive was launched in the Back Mountain region under the direction of Mrs. Charles Wheaton Lee of Dallas.

John Place, 23, of Mehoopany, was fatally injured when he fell from a barn on the Renard farm in Ruggles Hollow.

Deaths - Arden Husted, Idetown.  
You could get - Bread, 2 lbs., 17c; marmalade, 2 lb. jar, 25c; hams, 37c lb.; spaghetti, 3 lbs. 20c; pancake flour, 30 oz. pkg., 7c; margarine, lb. pkg. 24c.

30 YEARS AGO - MARCH 5, 1954  
With the appointment of Mrs. Charles Eberle to Kingston Town-

ship School Board, an unwritten law was set aside. Mrs. Mary Lou Eberle was the first woman to serve as school director in Kingston Township.

"What is a Lutheran?" was the question answered in a five-page illuminating article in an issue of Look Magazine by Rev. Dr. G. Elson Ruff, former pastor of St. Paul's Church, Shavertown.

One of the largest beavers ever taken in this area was trapped at Lake Catalpa by Ferris Roberts, Red Rock, deputy game warden who had caught his limit every season since beaver trapping became legal in Pennsylvania.

Deaths - Mrs. Goldie Gregory, Trucksville; Mrs. Anna M. Lewin, Dallas; Mrs. Elizabeth Culp, Hunklock Creek; L.E. Beisel, Idetown; Charles Lech, Roushey Plot.

You could get - Smoked hams, 59c lb.; fryers, 43c lb.; Beltsville turkeys, 59c lb.; tuna, 3 7-oz. cans, \$1; oleo, 2 lbs., 39c; salmon, 1 lb. can, 37c.

20 YEARS AGO - MARCH 5, 1964  
Dale Oney, of Laketon, Harveys Lake, gave in to court ruling of his guilt on four counts of game law violation, resulting in \$600 fines and costs. But Richard Mark Burnat, 134 W. River St., Wilkes-Barre, announced he might appeal his conviction on six counts of deer offenses to the Superior Court.

Back Mountain Protective Association went on record as opposed to unsightly billboards and signs along the new highway.

Married - Grace E. Belles, Beaumont, to Irvin C. Barber, Fairfax, Va.

You could get - Boneless chuck, 57c lb.; rib roast, 59c lb.; black pepper, 4 oz. can, 39c; hair spray, 89c; grape jelly, 12-oz. jar, 23c; Bufferin, bottle of 36, 45c.

10 YEARS AGO - FEBRUARY 28, 1974

Luzerne County Planning Commission approved a resolution to alter its master sewage plan to conform with the Dallas Area Municipal Authority Plan.

Long lines of motorists at the few gasoline stations remaining open for any length of time had been ordinary in Northeastern Pennsylvania and particularly so for a month or

more in Lackawanna, Luzerne and Wyoming Counties.

Deaths - Wilma Romanowski, Shavertown; Wilda Luft, Sweet Valley; Aloysius Zakjowski, Shavertown; Charles Fehlinger, Dallas.

Married - Patricia D. Rood, Dallas, to Erich Heusing, West Germany.

You could get - Eggs, 66c doz.; ice cream, 1/2 gal. 58c; tuna, 6 1/2 oz. can, 28c; Kraft dinner, 3 7 1/2 oz. pkgs., 68c; oranges, 10 for 89c.

### Library receives grant

By NANCY KOZEMCHAK  
Library Correspondent

The Back Mountain Memorial Library has been informed that the application for a Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) Title I grant for Collection Management has been approved for \$5,000.00.

The grant will be used to initiate a specialized weekly story time for two year olds and their parents and select and acquire materials and equipment to expand the current story hour for three to five year olds. The contracts from the state will be written in late winter of 1984 and projects should be able to start by July.

Local funds equal to 10 percent of the total grant must be used for the project in addition to the \$5,000. These monies are kept in a separate account which require an audit at the end of the project.

Elliot Shelkrot of the State Library in Harrisburg informed the library of the grant approval. The application for the grant and the paper work involved was initiated by Marilyn Rudolph, children's librarian.

A very good friend of the library, Attorney Merton E. Jones, has passed away and the library will miss his valuable services and those of us who were fortunate to know him as a personal friend will miss him also.

Mert served on the library Board of Directors since January 23, 1971 and had been a continuing source of help to the library on legal matters. We have received a considerable amount of memorial donations on his behalf and have purchased a series of handsome and durable volumes on the writings of notable American novelists, historians, poets, philosophers and essayists.

The library of America is publishing these books which is supported by grants from the Ford Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Each compact, elegant book includes several unabridged works, and some volumes run to as many as 1500 pages.

America, like other nations, can now offer every reader the collected works of its major authors in authoritative editions. An authoritative version assures the reader that only after thorough research and study is a text selected for this series.

The series include the works of: Harriet Beecher Stowe, Herman Melville, Henry James, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Walt Whitman, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Jack London, Mark Twain, William Dean Howells, Washington Irving and Henry Adams. For each volume, a distinguished scholar has prepared a succinct chronology of the author's life and career and an essay on the choice of texts.

### STATE CAPITOL ROUNDUP

Here is a summary of important events that occurred on Capitol Hill last week from Rep. Frank Coslett, 120th Legislative District:

PENNSYLVANIA VOTERS will be asked in the April primary election to approve or reject a proposed \$190 million economic development bond issue. The House and Senate approved the referendum proposal after Gov. Dick Thornburgh announced the plan with the support of a bipartisan coalition of legislative leaders. If the issue wins voter approval, the funds will be allocated to nine separate programs. The largest single item would be \$50 million for loans and grants to local economic development agencies.

Other programs include updating equipment at vo-tech schools and community colleges, aid to small businesses, youth conservation corps programs and minority economic development.

TOUGHER CURRICULUM standards in Pennsylvania's public schools, including competency testing, would be mandated under a bill passed by the House and sent to the Senate this week. The legislation

specifies basic courses students must take. It also establishes competency tests for second, fifth, eighth and eleventh graders. A competency test must be passed in the 11th grade in order to graduate, the measure stipulates.

LEGISLATION REVISING the procedure for selecting Public Utility Commission members, as well as shortening the length of their terms, passed the House by a 134-61 margin. Before its passage, however, the bill was stripped of an amendment to place commissioners up for retention election at the end of their term. The bill mandates that PUC terms be shortened from 10 to five years and that a PUC nominating council recommend nominees to the governor for appointment. Rep. Jeffrey Piccola (R-Dauphin) opposed retention elections, saying the commissioners would employ "people who can...get them re-elected, not people who know anything about utility rates."

### LETTERS

#### Reader questions advertising

DEAR EDITOR:  
Your acceptance of advertising for "Pregnancy Termination" up to 3 1/2 months for a fee (of course) is reprehensible. Surely, it has no place in a family newspaper.

In my opinion this is nothing more than soliciting to kill by cruel means a tiny, helpless human being.

"Electrical brain waves (electroencephalograph) have been recorded as early as forty days," H. Hamlin, Life or Death by E.E.G. J.A.M.A., Oct. 12, 1964.

Dr. Liley, the "Father of Fetology" who developed fetal blood transfusion has said that seven days after fertilization "the young individual, in command of his environment and destiny with a tenacious purpose, implants in the spongy

lining and with a display of physiological power suppresses his mother's menstrual period. This is his home for the next 270 days and to make it habitable the embryo develops a placenta and a protective capsule of fluid for himself. He also solves, single-handed, the home-egraft problem, that dazzling feat by which foetus and mother, although immunological foreigners who could not exchange skin grafts nor safely receive blood from each other, nevertheless tolerate each other in parabiosis for nine months.

"We know that he moves with a delightful easy grace in his buoyant world, that foetal comfort determines foetal position. He is responsive to pain and touch and cold and sound and light. He drinks his amniotic fluid, more if it is arti-

ficially sweetened, less if it is given an unpleasant taste. He gets hiccups and sucks his thumb. He wakes and sleeps. He gets bored with repetitive signals but can be taught to be alerted by a first signal for a second different one. And finally he determines his birthday, for unquestionably the onset of labour is a unilateral decision of the foetus."

"This then is the foetus we know and indeed we each once were. This is the foetus we look after in modern obstetrics, the same baby we are caring for before and after birth, who before birth can be ill and need diagnosis and treatment just like any other patient." Liberal Studies, "A Case Against Abortion," Whitcombe and Tombs, Ltd. 1971.

F. PATRICIA BALOGA  
SHAVERTOWN

### Support of House Bill necessary

DEAR EDITOR:  
During the past three months, the Chemical People Project in concert with both the national and local media have done a marvelous job of heightening community awareness of the insidious effects of alcohol and other drug abuse.

Task forces have sprung up across our own Luzerne-Wyoming Counties community, and interested and concerned citizens are "putting their heads together" in the earnest hopes of doing something about the drug and alcohol abuse problem in our locale.

I know that many parents, law enforcement officials, and educators, along with other individuals from all walks of life are searching for ways in which they might be part of a community solution. I would like to take this opportunity to offer one specific suggestion - consider lobbying for increased financial support to sustain publicly funded substance abuse treatment programs.

On December 1, 1983, Representative Peter Wambach (Dauphin County) introduced H.B. 1740, which raised the Pennsylvania tax on alcohol from 18 percent to 20 percent. Such legislation would generate nearly 12 million dollars to fund treatment and rehabilitation, prevention, education, and early intervention, as well as research on addiction. Does such a proposed increase seem "hefty?" In actuality, funding for drug and alcohol programming has been consistently reduced as a result of both inflation and Federal Block Grant cuts. Therefore, 12 million dollars will simply restore the level of funding for drug and alcohol to where it was in 1977!

As an individual professionally trained in human services, I certainly support increased funding to assorted health and human services. However, not all health and human service programs have been plagued with budgetary crises to the extent faced by the Drug and Alco-

hol Sector. By way of illustrations, I have enclosed a graph depicting program funding during the period 1977-1984. You will note that community mental health services were funded at a 112 percent increase, child welfare at 106 percent, corrections at 86 percent and D&A at only 25 percent. During 1977-1983, the Consumer Price Index rose 64 percent!

House Bill 1740 is an important piece of legislation which will assure the viability of the publicly funded Drug and Alcohol Treatment Service network. I urge members of our community to mobilize around this issue by contacting local State legislators in order to solicit their support. Alcohol and other chemicals are killing people. Those of us who provide services need your assistance, NOW.

THOMAS E. DI MATTEO, ED.D.,  
C.R.C.  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
LUZERNE-WYOMING COUNTY  
DRUG AND ALCOHOL PROGRAM

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