

THE "TIMES" PRIZE-WINNING COLUMN

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Adult Learning Center Announces Winter Term Registration, Program

The Adult Learning Center announces the Winter Quarter Registration with a larger than ever selection of courses.

Choose from five Foreign Languages, a larger selection of Business courses including Power Typing and Personal Shorthand, brush up on a college course or prepare for the High School Equivalency Examination and much more.

The Adult Center is sponsored by Blue Ridge Tech in cooperation with Brevard College. The Center is located in the McLarty - Goodson Classroom Building of the college. This is the first building on the right at the main entrance to the campus. Adult students may enter the first side door on the right of the main entrance and proceed to room number 102.

Take advantage of this new E-Z way to learn, phone 883-2520 for an appointment or for further information.

You may set up a study time that is convenient for you as the Adult Center is a study center which offers adults a new way to learn. There are no lectures, no scheduled classes, and no fees. Self-study materials, teaching machines and a director on duty help you learn as you have never learned before." Mr. James continues.



4-H COUNTY WINNERS OF 1973 were named (back row, left to right) Robert Holden, Anthony Tinsley, John Summey, Ken Scroggs and Steve Scroggs. All were declared county winners in their various projects for 1973.

As I wrote a few weeks ago, it makes no difference how or why our present "energy crisis" came about if your gasoline tank and home fuel oil tank are empty, and you need to go somewhere or it's bitter cold outside and you need heat.

That's all I think they bought. The President's major blame lies in the fact that he did not intervene with his executive powers sooner, for the handwriting of our present situation was on the wall more than a year ago.

We can vent our spleen blaming the oil companies, the President, the Congress, the environmentalists — whomever we wish. But that won't put a drop of gas in the car nor a gallon of fuel oil in the oil tank. What will help is doing as we've been advised to do: turn back the thermostat, drive less, and use less electric power.

Next to blame, we have the Congress. The President, instead of invoking executive powers, presented the problem to the Congress and asked for remedial legislation over a year ago. He got nothing. The Democrat majority in Congress was wallowing in Watergate; it had no time to consider the well being of the country. It was far more politically profitable to mug TV cameras and piously deplore a very minor political shenanigan, than to tend to the country's business.

That's for the time being, or the longer run, we might be well advised to put political biases and wishful thinking aside and place our influence and our ballots to correct the faults that have brought the situation about, where they lie — in all of the places mentioned above and finally on ourselves. For a dispassionate analysis will show that our energy shortage is the result of action and inaction in all these areas.

It was better politics for legal-laundered Senators to ride a publicity-drawn chariot to the crucifixion of a few small, opposite-party plebians; and to preside at the Roman Circus trial of a few Patricians — most of whom have not been punished at all and likely will not be — than to concern themselves with matters which would shortly smack the "populi" in the face.

The oil companies, for example. There is a large share of the blame. I'm convinced that our present, short term oil and gasoline shortage, is largely manipulated. It started out as a grab for higher profits, which all businesses have done or will do when the economic climate is right; combined with an effort to get a bunch of idealistic and short-sighted "environmentalists" off their backs. The latest middle east war and the Arab oil boycott, played right into the companies' hands. Then, I think, matters kind of got out of control.

Then there's the environmentalists. I'm also a believer in preserving our environment, but not in the impractical, moonshine extremes which have deprived the country of badly needed nuclear power and oil in order to protect a few fish in a stream or caribou in Alaska. I'd rather see the people of my country warm in their homes, and businesses and industry provided with the energy to operate so the people can make a living, than to keep all the streams cool enough for trout and preserve every caribou in Alaska. I place food and warmth for a human child before the preservation of a nesting bird.

Sensationalized television and news media publicity blew the whole thing out of proportion, publicity-seeking politicians climbed on the bandwagon; and special interest groups from truck drivers to farmers helped it along. Normally level-headed oil company executives were picked up in the parade and decided to profiteer for their stockholders and themselves.

I know that our technology is to the state where we can cool the water downstream from nuclear plants; and nuclear waste can be safely disposed of. I'm sure we can build a pipeline across Alaska so that heat or oil spills will not ruin the environment. I'm convinced offshore oil drilling can be done without blowouts ruining the tourist business on nearby beaches. Precipitators can be installed at plants so that coal can be burned without polluting the air. Automobile engines can be built that will give reasonable economy and yet not pollute.

The result is the present fiasco. There's plenty of fuel oil and gasoline in the country but it's being hoarded for higher and even higher profits. The consumer and tax payer — you and I — are, as usual, the losers.

Sure, there might be occasional slips in the environmental controls, but realistic technical controls can be legislated and minor accidental pollution repaired. And the legislation requiring these things can be on a reasonable time schedule that will not bankrupt industry. We need only use reason and common sense and refuse the pressures from the extreme idealists and the self-seekers who support them.

Then there's blame for the President, too. I put little faith in the politically inspired claim of a "fix" paid for by heavy oil interest campaign donations. There were big donations, no doubt, but this has been done in national elections for years. By far the most of the donations were legal, despite frantic opposition party efforts to make them seem otherwise; and they should have "bought" at the most, only the political consideration of big business that has been traditional in the past from both parties.

Finally we must blame ourselves. Not only have we been criminally wasteful with our country's natural resources but we are also the people who have carelessly voted into office the selfish and politically motivated politicians who have placed politics above duty. We have not brought the avalanche of public displeasure down on business profiteers. We have elected the liberal judges or elected those who appointed them, who have allowed the legal tricks and delays that have hamstringed our energy development. We have not stood up and been heard, in support of policies that would insure fuel to warm our homes, nearly as loudly as the ideal environmentalist, wintering in the warm Florida sun.

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When it all boils down, we, the people, are to blame. For we are still the final authority in this country. We could do something about the energy shortage, and we aren't doing it.

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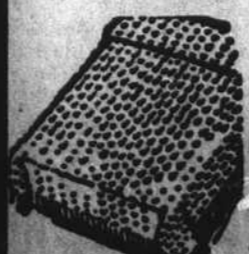
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