Opinion

Guest editorial

Oil stagflation

By Anthony Harrigan

In a recent column, I cited the disastrous effect of frequent price hikes by the OPEC oil cartel. If the United States fails to get assured access to oil at stable prices, the result will be a permanent recession or worse.

The October issue of **World Report** published by the First National Bank of Chicago presents the grim statistics on the oil import situation. It notes that "The world economic outlook has worsened considerably during 1979."

According to **World Report**, the "total oil bills will increase by about $50 billion over 1978 and by about $80 billion from the end of 1978 to the end of this year." By September, oil prices had risen 60 percent above their level at the end of 1978.

The overall oil import bill of the free world in 1978 amounted to about $145 billion. Price hikes announced before September would increase the oil bill to $190 billion in 1979 and $230 billion in 1980. Additional price hikes have been announced in recent weeks.

The peril in this price spiral is rampant inflation and recession throughout the industrialized world — or stagflation. With colossal sums going to the OPEC cartel, the Western nations will have little money available for industrial expansion. This means that the standard of living in the free world will be seriously eroded by the exorbitant demands of the oil-producing nations.

The West is paying for its pell-mell retreat from oil-producing regions. How different the world situation would be today if France had retained control of Algeria and Britain had remained in Nigeria and the Middle East. The emotional de-colonization movement has left Europe and, indirectly, the United States in an enormously vulnerable position.

Hasty decolonization is the spilt milk of history, however. We can be sorry about the mistaken policies of the 1950s and the 1960s, but being sorry won't help us solve the problems of today and tomorrow.

Greater awareness of the crushing impact of prices imposed by the OPEC oil cartel ought to make the American people appreciate the necessity of the following actions:

1. Encouraging domestic exploration for oil and gas with adequate financial incentives;

2. Overcoming the emotional anti-nuclear movement and acceleration of nuclear power plant construction and licensing;

3. A moratorium on environmental protection laws that inhibit the rapid development of new surface coal mines and stepped up utilization of coal by utilities and factories.

4. New cooperative programs with Canada and Mexico to permit an increased flow of oil and gas from our neighbors at affordable prices.

If the U.S. government fails to take these steps, the purchasing power of the American people will be transferred to the oil-exporting countries at a rapid rate. The result will be depression in the United States.

Agree or Not

Road fund needs $

By S. C. Van Curon

FRANKFORT — One of the most crucial problems the 1980 General Assembly will face is finding more money for the road fund.

There's really only one place to look and that is the gasoline tax. Presently it stands at 9 cents per gallon after former Gov. Wendell Ford increased it from 7 cents.

Gov. John Young Brown Jr. has the ideal situation to change the method of taxing gasoline from a fixed rate per gallon to a percentage and make it a growth tax truly to keep up with inflation.

The governor can bite the bullet and set the tax at 10 percent of the sale price without too much of an increase in the beginning. Gasoline is ranging in price from around 96 cents to $1.12 per gallon, depending on where in the state it is purchased.

There has been an argument that fractions would be hard to figure, but a strike-off balance could easily be planned. For example, if the percentage came out to three tenths of one percent, the tax could be calculated at a half percent. Anything under that would go back to the even figure.

Similarly, if it came out at eight tenths of a percent, the tax could go to the next highest full percentage point. If it is figured out at seven tenths of a percent or below, the tax could drop back to the half percentage point.

A highway research organization recently made a study of the state's roads which revealed that an estimated 6,669 miles of roads are deficient and need upgrading at an estimated cost of $24.6 million annually. The study included all paved primary roads which account for only one-third of Kentucky's nearly 70,000 miles of public roads which handle 88 percent of the state's average daily traffic.

In a separate report released several weeks ago, a governor's task force has estimated that $30 million a year will be needed for the next 10 years to maintain all state roads adequately.

*Please turn to page 5

Ginkgo trees believed to be more than 1,000 years old still grow in some Chinese temple gardens.

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Jeff G. Kerr ..... Editor
(Mrs. Katherine T. Fisher ..... Managing Editor
(Mrs.) Janie Duncan ..... Assistant to the Publisher
(Mrs.) Libby J. Moss ..... CompuWriter Operator

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Down Memory Lane

Blue Licks Lodge elects officers; 2 of 7 escapees still loose

Thursday, January 7, 1909

Blue Licks Lodge No. 695 F&AM elected the following officers last week: W.M., Clyde Hamm; S.W., Wavell Frymire; J.W., Rex Jones; secretary, Luther Hollar; treasurer, Osborne Anderson; S.D., William Dollins; J.D., Bobbie Jones; S.S., Estill Anderson; J.S., Toney Dotson; tiler, Milton Frymire.

The following persons have been named to a two-year membership on the executive committee of the Carlisle-Nicholas County Chamber of Commerce: Warren R. Fisher, Morris Whiteley, Jack Morrison, James Gill, Dan Rich and Robert Coatney.

The program for the Carlisle P.T.A. meeting Jan. 13 will be Safety Measures in the Home. Mrs. Paul Donovan, Mrs. William Straw and Mrs. Jimmy Galbraith are in charge.

The Limestone National Farm Loan Association, the 43-year-old organization, changed its name effective Dec. 31, 1908 to Federal Land Bank Association of Maysville. Roy Pritz's title has been changed from secretary-treasurer to manager.

BORN — To Mr. and Mrs. M.H. Ruddle, Jr., a son, Joe Darrell, Jan. 5. — To Mr. and Mrs. Roger Bowles, a daughter, Angela Ruth, Dec. 19.

MARRIED — Miss Dorothy King, Ellisville, to Clarence Alexander, Carlisle, Dec. 22 at the Christian Church parsonage. — Mrs. Virginia McGlinchey and Walter Flora, Dec. 31 at the Christian Church parsonage. — Miss Linda Earlywine, Barterville, to Pvt. Stanley Morris, Paris, Dec. 28.

DIED — J.W. (Will) Workman, 75, Jan. 1. — Speed F. Howell, Jan. 2 at his home in Parkersburg, W. Va. — Thomas Henry McCord, 83, Paris, Dec. 26. — Richard Wilson, 76, Dec. 30 at his home in Mt. Sterling.

Thursday, January 4, 1940

$62,316,000 is the state's budget for the next two years as recommended by Gov. Keen Johnson and the Legislative Council.

Two more of the seven prisoners who escaped from the Nicholas County Jail on the night of Dec. 24 are back in jail, leaving but two of the number still at liberty.

Lacy Barnett takes office as Nicholas County Circuit Court Clerk.

Cold weather and the condition of the roads provides school children with another week's vacation.

A total of 118 marriage licenses were issued during 1939.

Miss Helen Blake, daughter of Senator and Mrs. H. Stanley Blake, has been appointed a page in the state senate.

Beverly Bishop of the Concord section recently suffered a broken arm and leg injuries when he fell from a ladder in his barn.

E.R. Kendall was injured when his automobile skidded and overturned on ice near his home at Saltwell.

BORN — To Mr. and Mrs. R.C. McIlvaine, a daughter, Dec. 29. — To Mr. and Mrs. M.G. McCormick of Seaman, Ohio, a daughter, Dec. 25.

MARRIED — Miss Louise Alexander and Reynolds Feeback, both of the county, at Maysville, Dec. 31. — Mrs. Josephine Singleton and William Pence at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Grimes in Millersburg, Jan. 3.

DIED — Joseph Smith, 84, native of Nicholas, at Paris on Sunday. — Charles C. Skeen, Monday night at his home near East Union. — Miss Lucie Glenn Parks, native of Carlisle, at her home in Los Angeles, Calif., Dec. 23. — John M. Clark at the home of his son, J.A. Clark on Wednesday. — Mrs. Jennie Mae Alexander Bringear, Wednesday morning at her home on the Upper Lick Road.

Mercury vapors

by Warren R. Fisher

The following news item caught my eye the other day, "The Buick V-8 engine, once the mainstay of a popular car line, is being phased out in favor of the more fuel-efficient V-6.

"The Buick Division of General Motors Corporation said its Flint foundry has cast its last V-8 engine block.

"The final 5.7-liter, 350-cubic-inch displacement block was presented to the Sloan Museum as a milestone in the auto industry's changeover to smaller, lighter, lower-powered, more fuel-stingy cars."

—MV—

My desk has the year-end blahs! I really don't know at which end to begin with the clean-up chore. If I throw it away today, tomorrow I'll probably want it, not that I will need it.

There are letters from this organization and that asking for donations, all tax deductible, so they say.

Yesterday I was plagued by telephone calls from outfits offering help with **accounts receivable** or buy a **case** of five-year light bulbs we've sold several accounts in your city—to all of which I replied, thank you, I'm not interested!

That remark it seems is almost as bad as if I had slapped them in the face with a wet dish rag. But I'd be willing to bet they caught a good many business people off guard, the day after Christmas. Maybe I'd better takeshe phone off the hook the day after New Year's Day!

1979 Gas mileage guide, I can now do without. The Pinto station wagon uses less gasoline, but it doesn't like to pass up the oil.

Take a subscription to our news service, just $40 per year for 12 issues.

One short span of time **saved**...
One workable idea **sparked**...
One solution **nearer**...
One valuable contact **made**...
Sorry sister, that stuff will have to go into file 13.

Footnotes. This must have been left over from some other typist. [1]Marion Steinmann, "Depression: Our Common Curse", **Saturday Evening Post**, 247, (Dec. 1975), p. 54.

Executive speed reading — How to understand more in less time, only $395.00 for a two-day session.

Here's my order for type! Are they kidding. I have more type fonts now than we seemingly know how to use.

New game means cash for carriers. We don't use 'em yet!

Forms design seminar, just $135.

Maybe if there were three or four of me, one could write the column, the other do the book work and t'other do the job work, of which I do less and less simply because there are not enough hours in the day.

Then there's the postal presort **discount** which if I understand my mail correctly is optional now, but come Feb. 3, 1980 it will be mandatory.

Oh, John, where are you? And he may well end up sending Gene!

Well that just about wraps up the desk cleaning task for this year —the 30-gallon trash can is half full or half empty. The column is better than half baked and I'd better go and check on the better-half.

* * *

About 2 a.m. Thursday, Kay

*Please turn to page 5

Potpourri

Editor's notes

Countin' my shoes

Me and Bug were sitting around the other day with our feet up on his desk admiring our Christmas shoes. His are black, low-cut and with a sole on 'em that looks like it was ripped from the hull of Old Ironsides. Mine are boots, brown, plain and with a heel that makes me as tall as John Travolta — almost.

We got to talking about how folks never look as spiffy as they do the day or two past Christmas when they're wearing all their new goodies, and about how hard it is to buy clothes for someone at Christmas.

For example, Pap got my pants measurements a week before Christmas but before I had a chance to try them on I'd gained five pounds and the safety margin was approaching zero.

We figured out the best thing to buy for somebody at Christmas is shoes. It takes months of good eatin' to gain enough poundage to change your shoe size. That means you can put 'em on Christmas morning, sit down an go different jurkey tables and still have 'em fit when you finally get up.

If they fit in the first place (ouch!).

Save those Mercurys!

Mercury subscribers might want to hang on to the last two issues (including this one) for a while.

Last week's paper had the 1979 roundup, a condensed version of what the Mercury reported on last year. It also had the Nicholas County Fiscal Court financial statement, a yearly feature.

This week's paper has the annual Babson Report, another yearly feature of the **Mercury** for more than 30 years. There's a lot of words in those two issues but they might be worth keeping for a while.

Return of the Bug

Last Tuesday night or Wednesday morning I woke up in the middle of the night soaking wet. My throat felt like somebody had been driving up and down it all night on studded snow tires. My nose felt like two guys were inside with hammers trying to pound their way out. My head felt like it was stuffed with cotton and my eyes were redder than a Kentucky highway map. The Bug was back.

The Bug doesn't come around too often and never stays long enough to warrant two or three days in bed, which ranks up there with a Caribbean cruise as one of my favorite fantasies. The Bug usually keeps me down for a day or so, or half whatever size Bufferin bottle I happened to have around the house at the time.

When the Bug does arrive, I lose all craving for food and cigarettes are tasteless. It would be a good time to quit (smoking, not eating) but sometimes I feel the very act of pulling that smoke in and then pushing it out is all that keeps me going.

The Bug is almost gone at this writing. I guess it just wanted to give me one more visit before the Seventies turn into the Eighties.

Dear Santa...

Thanks for the boots and the tool chest. I haven't found the $1,000,000 yet but the IRS must have read my letter to you because my tax forms got here almost the same time you did. Everything else fit well, was the right color and worked. The Muppet lunchbox was a real surprise but I'm afraid I'll have to leave it at home. Whenever I take it to work I sit all day and stare at Miss Piggy's picture and the Dallas Cowboy cheerleaders are getting miffed. Hope you made it home all right. Sincerely, Jeff.

P.S. What's this stuff about a fuel surcharge you left under the tree? I didn't know you were under ICC regulations.

Remember gas rationing? It began 38 years ago

Blue Grass AAA

As Congress and the motoring public contemplate gasoline rationing to cope with a supply crisis, it may be useful, and certainly interesting, to look back at how gasoline rationing worked during World War II.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt's hurried speech to a joint session of Congress reflected the country's sense of urgency, triggering America's official recognition that it no longer could isolate itself from the catastrophic swirl of events engulfing the world: "Yesterday, December 7, 1941 — a date which will live in infamy — the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan." America declared war against Japan on December 8 and on Hitler's Nazi Germany on December 11.

America was not completely unprepared for war. Roosevelt had used his emergency powers to dictate the course of the economy even before Pear Harbor.

OPA established

On April 11, 1941, Roosevelt had set up the Office of Price Administration and Civilian Supply, which later became the Office of Price Administration (OPA). The agency's powers touched almost every consumer base in the economy, including transportation.

Even before Pearl Harbor, Japan intimidated America by cutting off natural rubber imports from the East Indies, where the U.S. bought 93 percent of its supply. Rubber was vital in making ships, tanks, transport vehicles and planes needed to fight the Axis powers.

A synthetic rubber program was underway, but it would take time before it could adequately supply the country's fledgling war industry. OPA moved quickly: tire rationing went into effect December 30, 1941.

The OPA governing committee knew tire rationing was not enough and discussed gas rationing to save rubber. German submarines found the huge tankers bound with oil from Southwestern oil fields easy targets as they made their way up the Atlantic coast. At the same time, tankers were being diverted to carry oil for the war machines in Europe and Africa.

Easterners grumble

Other transportation (trucks and railroads) could only deliver one-half of the Eastern seaboard's daily needs of 1.3 million barrels. Easterners grumbled at the announcement that gasoline rationing was coming May 15, 1942.

OPA's tight-fisted control over tires and then sugar had established the mechanism of rationing. Motorists in 17 states from Maine to Florida lined up at neighborhood schools to register for yet another rationing program. The area's 9 million motor vehicle and motorboat owners asked for rations corresponding to their legitimate needs. Based on an honor system, those classified as "pleasure drivers" received A-cards worth seven units, each good for three gallons of gas. More needy drivers filled out a request form supplied by their rationing board for B-1, B-3, or B-5 cards, allowing 11, 15, and 19 units, respectively. Commercial vehicles such as taxis, trucks, and doctor's vehicles, received X-cards, allowing them unlimited purchases without the inconvenience of ration stamps. Station owners' supplies were cut 50 percent.

Patriotism soon took a back seat to motorists who "chiseled" to get the higher rationing cards. Only 10 percent of the drivers in some areas accepted the sacrifice of the A-card. Overall, fewer than 25 percent ended up with A-cards, far below the anticipated 38 percent.

On street corners and in taverns, harried talk focused on rumors of more proposed rubber conservation measures — banning of all travel, seizing cars of those who exceeded the 40 mph speed limit, and rationing of space on buses and railroads by the end of the summer.

"Ration everybody"

Senator Edwin C. Johnson of Colorado commented that it would be difficult to "convince people in oil-producing states that they can't have all the gasoline." Sen. Burnet R. Maybank of South Carolina countered: "If there is a shortage of gas on the East Coast and there is not one on the West Coast, we still had better ration everybody."

Federal officials 'only muddled the mess with conflicting and vague answers. Harold L. Ickes, secretary of the interior and petroleum coordinator, said institution of nationwide rationing depended on the government's outlook on the rubber shortage, but added that it was not needed "from a petroleum point of view."

The squabbling did little good. OPA officials designed a permanent plan for East Coast rationing to be effective July 1, 1942. Analyzing the temporary plan's mistakes, OPA head Leon Henderson was convinced that rationing "for the duration" eventually could work, if its flaws were corrected.

First of all, the East's 74,000 service station owners, some of whom filled the tanks of favored customers, now had to register to receive certificates allowing them enough gasoline to fill their storage tanks. They then received gasoline supplies in return for the number of coupons collected from ration books.

Motorists who had beat the rationing system by traveling past the 50-mile

*Please turn to page 8

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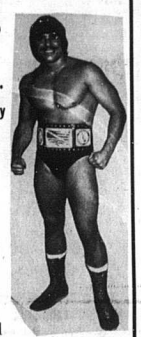

Leaping Lanny

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ROCK TRACKS

FOREIGNER will be touring until May, but don't look for them in America. They'll be playing to sold-out houses in Japan, Australia, England and Europe ... LED ZEPPELIN's "Fool in the Rain," has been released as a single; their first in almost four years ... Look for the

KRIS KRISTOFFERSON-RITA COOLIDGE split to result in one of the messiest divorce cases ever...JEAN-LUC PONTY, who single-handedly brought the violin into the mainstream of modern music, just completed a hugely successful U.S. tour, selling out major halls where some highly touted rock groups failed to draw ... KEITH RICHARDS of THE STONES and ANITA PALLENBERG are back together. Former beauty Anita seems to have aged 10 years in the last two and is shocking people with her blowsy appearance ...

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