

Plain Talk

By Tim Jones

For the first time since Vietnam, the United States stands poised on the brink of a major war in a far away land. Thousands of young Americans man desert feebly and fly planes across vast, arid, rocky stretches.

Oil!

That's right. Oil! But let's not get carried away and call The Mercury off. There's a lot to oil, more than meets the eyes of most of the cynics who say the United States is involved because it is in the interest of Exxon and Unifac Oil, right or wrong. First, this nation and if the present administration had allowed or even tentatively, does allow a nonmilitarized Iraq of questionable moral competence and undoubted brutality to restrict its flow, the amount of suffering we will bear will be greater than any war would impose on us.

I know pacifists are already pulling their hair and yelling and cursing viciously. But if one looks closely at the products in this nation made of oil and oil derivatives and considers the effects of major price increases on the economy, the impact is obvious.

First, consider the cost of gasoline. Gas is somewhere in the \$1.20 range in larger cities and headed upwards. Gas prices affect the cost of transportation and cut the money families have to spend on perishable items, like food. The poorer the family, the greater the impact.

Secondly, the gas price drives up the price of food by making transportation (mainly performed by the trucking industry) more expensive and makes the actual cost of raising food more expensive.

Nearly everything the farmer uses to work his crop or put in his crop uses petroleum in one form or another. Tractors burn diesel and gas and the entire petrochemical industry is based on the fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides used by farmers.

The increased cost in these items is passed on to the consumer with a few additional dollars to pay for the fuel and the light bill which has gone up at the Piggly Wiggly because the oil powered electric plant has to pay more.

Wealthy Americans can afford these increases. The middle class and some lower financial burdens for a government program which helps everyone but the truly needy, picks up the bill more and it will be forced to pick up the bill because the working poor will be swamped with debt and our government will be forced to help.

And where will they get the money? Some will question the validity of this argument and while it is not airtight, it has an irrefutable quality called truth. Tremendously high gas and oil fuel prices, which are locking up a certain matched dollar with a fondness for foreign gas as allowed to control Kuwait and threaten Saudi Arabia, will mean hungry children, more homeless, more taxes for the middle class and more financial burdens for a government already struggling in debt. All of these things will be made worse by the Western European and Japanese economies, more dependent on oil than our own, also entering depression.

So what are our options? Do we go to war? Americans we should go to war in the next year. We should first do as President Bush has done. Cripple, bully, get others to help bully and try to make Hussein love Kuwait peacefully.

If this fails, we should fight Iraq and not necessarily war for them to attack us. The military buildup grows every day and everyday we get closer to being able to go on the offensive. Perhaps, we are already able to attack. When we are ready, Iraq should have to answer for the consequences.

I do not call for war lightly and I hope it never comes to be. I was an infantry officer in the Marine Corps before I became a newspaperman and I understand better than most the amount of killing and pain modern weapons can produce. The high-tech battlefield of today will not be a glorious spectacle of waving flags but a depressing, terrifying place of sudden and hideous death. But it is a place Americans must be prepared to go.

Americans must be prepared because our way of life is tied to the black liquid taken from under hot sand and rocks. We must be prepared because conservation and alternate forms of energy won't work fast enough to save us. We must be prepared because we cannot allow one man, especially a man like Hussein, to control the world's supply of energy and threaten friend and foe alike with nerve gas and possibly nuclear war. We should only go to war and only consider war for the gravest of reasons. In oil, unfortunately, we have a reason.

MERCURY MEMORIES

5 Years Ago

Thursday, September 19, 1985
The Nicholas County Blue-Grass was defeated in their first home game by the Fairview Eagles, 24-0.

For the first time, travelers to Kentucky this fall will be able to get up-to-date information on the state's beautiful fall foliage. Tourism Secretary Wendell Combs announced Thursday a cabinet program called "Colorful Kentucky," a visitor will be able to call a toll-free phone number to obtain a region-by-region summary of foliage conditions.

Christmas packages and personal greetings are being prepared for servicemen in Vietnam who are graduates of Nicholas County High School. One of the names submitted will be selected to receive a phone call from his parents on Christmas Day, at Concerned Citizens Committee expense.

BORN: Tony Ashby Jr., August 29, 1970.
MARRIED: Miss Nancy Ann Lamb to Kent Mann, August 22, 1970.

DIED: Mrs. Ethel McCall, 78, August 31, 1970. Grandmother of Nicholas County High School students.

MARRIED: Miss Paula Leona Williams to Thomas Patrick Bailingier, July 1, 1970. Mrs. Bailingier is the daughter of Nicholas County High School graduate.

DIED: Mrs. Rebecca Wadgill, 88, Wednesday, September 11, 1985. Mrs. Wadgill was the wife of Nicholas County High School graduate.

DIED: Mrs. Oletta Ritchie Miller, 87, Wednesday, September 11, 1985. Mrs. Miller was the wife of Nicholas County High School graduate.

DIED: Mrs. Helen White, 85, Monday, September 9, 1985. Mrs. White was the wife of Nicholas County High School graduate.

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20 Years Ago

Thursday, September 17, 1970
Harold B. Letton Jr. of Carlisle, a senior at Morehead State University, has been promoted from Cadet Major to Cadet Lieutenant Colonel by the MSU Department of Military Science.

Mrs. David Zachary entertained with a bridge luncheon on Wednesday at her home on Cliffway Drive.

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Law receives degree

BARBOURVILLE, KY — Nearly 600 students watched the presentation of an honorary doctorate and a presidential honor last night during Nicholas County College's annual fall convocation ceremony.

Millsboro Mayor Charles M. Law received an honorary doctorate in appreciation of his service to the community and his leadership in the construction of the new Nicholas County Hospital was performed by President Jack C. Phillips Jr. on Monday.

The first major operation at the new Nicholas County Hospital was performed by Dr. Woodford Barrows when Chief Fisher underwent an appendectomy.

Miss Ella Conway presented Sunday in honor of Miss Cameron's 70th birthday.

BORN: To Mr. and Mrs. Charles Mann, a daughter, September 8, 1985. To Dr. and Mrs. M. Evans, a daughter, Monday.

DIED: Granville Barnett, 85, Sunday, Richard Reynolds, 85, Sunday, September 17, 1985. Mrs. O'Neal, 30, Monday; Mrs. Rebecca Letton, 79, Friday; Charles Griffith (Buck) Letton, 70, Saturday; Mrs. Penne Martin Willoughby, 68, Thursday; Loftus W. Reed, 64, Friday; Mrs. Grace Roberts, 64, Tuesday.

DIED: Mrs. Marjorie Hopkin Francis, 82, September 19, 1985.

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Tourism Talk

The Commonwealth of Kentucky will be celebrating its 200th anniversary in 1992 and Nicholas County will be taking part in the festivities. The chair of the Kentucky Bicentennial Commission has declared Nicholas County an official Bicentennial County. The state Bicentennial Commission wants to involve every Kentuckian in the celebration. All sectors of the community can play a vital role in this historic undertaking.

A Nicholas County Bicentennial Committee has been formed under Tourism, Inc. Twenty seven local residents are serving on the Bicentennial Committee. The committee will play a competitive and historical preservation objective. Grants are awarded on a competitive basis and will be matched 2:1 by the Bicentennial Commission. The first filing date for this grant was September 1, 1990 with award notifications being made by early October.

The Nicholas County Bicentennial Project meets all of the criteria set forth by the state. The building project meets all of the criteria set forth by the state. The building project meets all of the criteria set forth by the state.

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Court hears

Continued From Page 1

The court also heard from the McFarland of the Real Conservation Office. McFarland was before the court to ask the magistrates if they were interested in becoming members of the Licking Valley Resource Conservation and Development Association.

The RCD Area is funded by the Department of Agriculture and attempts to implement programs to enhance and develop rural areas.

The court voted to be part of the RCD Area if the Licking Valley district is approved by the USDA.

In other business the court moved \$10,000 from the general fund to the Parks and Recreation Department.

County Science Hill citizens fund.

Transferred a motion to amend the transfer of \$30,000 from the general fund to the county checking account.

Approved the 1990 county treasurer's financial report.

Approved a motion authorizing county attorney John Conley to investigate the aspects of placing more markers on the water board.

Appointed Daley Earlywine, Ray Boyer and Dennis Gallagher to the Board of Directors for Nicholas County Sanitation District No. 2.

Voted to pay for landfill.

Belonged to Science Hill, a small, independent system in Pulaski County. Science Hill spent \$277 per pupil in the 1989-90 school year.

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Figures show Nicholas spending more per pupil

By Tim Jones
NICHOLAS — Figures released by the Kentucky State Board of Education Wednesday show Nicholas County spending more per pupil than other counties in the state.

Under the new law passed in the 1990 session, school systems must increase their funding and so as to the reform act included a \$1.1 billion tax increase, only half of which went to education. The legislature acted under court order because the Kentucky Supreme Court had ruled the traditional method of funding schools in Kentucky was unconstitutional and did not guarantee all children equal opportunity.

In order to qualify for state funds, local districts must come up with money on their own. The reform act allowed school boards to set tax rates at a higher level than before and school boards to no longer holding referendums seeking voter approval.

So far, over one-half the school districts in the state have set tax rates as high as \$1.00 per pupil this year.

The lowest per pupil total belonged to Science Hill, a small, independent system in Pulaski County. Science Hill spent \$277 per pupil in the 1989-90 school year.

Science Hill spent \$277 per pupil in the 1989-90 school year. Nicholas County spent \$400 per pupil in the 1989-90 school year.

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