# wednesday, april 27, 1977

## daily nebraskan

## By Mary Jo Pitzl

One of the positive side effects of rising Arab oil prices is that it will curb energy use in the United States, a representative of the Saudi Arabian ministry said Tuesday.

Tarek Shawaf told an informal gathering of UNL business students that his country welcomes President Carter's energy policy and is happy with Carter's conservation plans.

The Saudi Arabian consultant-engineer was in Lincoln several hours Tuesday as part of a mission directed by the Saudi Arabian king and prime minister, according to Ron Alexander, coordinator of Shawaf's visit.

Saudi Arabian businessmen, university professors and government officials are touring the United States to increase American awareness of Saudi Arabia and to encourage business and personal contacts with the Arab world. Shawaf is founder of the largest construction engineering firm in Saudi Arabia, employing about 200 Arabs.

Shawaf said Saudi Arabia would prefer to conserve its oil supply, keeping as much oil as possible underground for use in the 1980s.

#### Twelve million a day

"We are producing 12 million barrels of oil a day, which we do not need," the former member of the Saudi 



Ministry of Agriculture and Water said. "Three and one-half million barrels a day is enough to carry out our development plan, but we are overproducing to meet Western demands," Shawaf said. "We really don't need the money."

Shawaf described Saudi Arabia's \$150 billion, five-year development plan, financed largely through oil-producing revenue.

The major thrust of the development plan is educational improvement, Shawaf said, with 14 per cent of the plan's budget earmarked for education.

The urgency to build schools is so much that we have to build from prefabricated elements," he said, estimating about one school is constructed every two or three days. "Eventually these will be replaced with permanent structures.'

University campuses Part of the education budget will finance construction of five university campuses, Shawaf said.

"Naturally we cannot staff our university from Saudi Arabia," Shawaf said, explaining the country recruits internationally for faculty members.

"There are 5,500 Saudi Arabian students in the U.S.," he said. "From these people we will eventually get the faculty for our universities.

Another important sector of the development plan is devoted to the Ministry of Agriculture and Water, Shawaf said. He joined the Saudi Arabian government in 1965 as a technical adviser to this ministry.

"We have one of the most ambitious desalinization (taking the salt from ocean water) programs in the world today," he said. The desalinization plants produce water

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for industrial complexes, as well as providing water for power, cheap electricity and commercial use, he added.

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Shawaf said Midwestern American concern over dwindling water supplies can be compared to the situation in Saudi Arabia. He said rainfall has been scarce, and the country relies heavily on the ocean water processed by the desalinization plants.

In a question and answer period after his talk, Shawaf discussed U.S.-Arab oil policy.

The Arab oil embargo has been distorted in the United States, he said.

"We believe this is strictly an internal matter for the U.S. to look into," he said, stressing the issue has no racial or religious ties.

"It is up to the American people and businessmen to take issue on the matter (oil prices) with their senators," Shawaf said.

Shawaf explained that rising oil prices are caused by worldwide price increases.

"As the inflation index rises in the West, we have to pay more and more for service," he said. "The Shah of Iran says oil prices should continue to

rise as long as inflation continues to rise," Shawaf said, adding he thinks this creates a vicious circle which the media distorts.

During his Lincoln visit, Shawaf met with Gov. J. James Exon and state planning directors. He was made an honorary citizen "with the privilege of paying taxes if L want to," he said.

After a noon banquet with members of the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce, Shawaf met with Lincoln Mayor Halan Boosti

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