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Crisis to cause re-evaluations

By John Minnick

Social changes because of the energy crisis are inevitable but will take awhile to come about, according to three members of the UNL Sociology Dept.

Prof. Richard Meile said Americans have developed a society that is based on energy, and changes are needed because of energy shortages.

Joseph Julian, associate professor of sociology, said a major force in social change is the industrialization and urbanization of society.

"One of the major elements in industry is technology and we must look at how American values and technology have created energy problems," Julian said.

He said society must realize that big is not necessarily best and must redefine material values.

David Johnson, associate professor of sociology, said that in the next 30 to 50 years, America will undergo radical changes in our lifestyle and consumption.

A full life

"As energy becomes more expensive," Johnson said, "we will have to redetermine what is necessary for a full life, and businesses offering services to people will boom."

Meile said the United States, with 5 per cent of the world's population, is consuming 40 per cent of the world's energy, and alterations in lifestyles are inevitable.

"We are living a lifestyle and have a standard of living at the expense of someone else in other societies and ours," Meile said.

Johnson said the United States will be in trouble in the future because its standard of living compared to other areas will be much better and the U.S. will be forced to take the defensive or an isolationist position in world affairs.

"As energy becomes scarce, we won't be hurt nearly as bad as the developing Third World countries," Johnson said. "We'll run into many problems and can expect an increase in terrorism around the world."

Johnson said Americans will be forced to change their lifestyles because of major world catastrophes.

Terrorism increase

"There will be a significant event that will have a world effect and will cause us to become isolationist and defensive," Johnson said. "Terrorism will definitely increase in the next decade."

Julian said one basic change will be the idea that man controls his earth. He said Americans must consider them-

selves as part of the environment and have respect for it. "For years we've had the idea that technology will solve all of our problems and this time it will not," Julian said.

He said decisions must be made regarding energy, environment and employment, considering different solutions for each. Julian said solutions to these problems could generate other problems.

Meile said he expects large cities to stabilize or decrease in population because of the energy crisis.

Unlivable city

"The larger cities are unlivable and today there seems to be no way to make them livable," he said.

Meile said public skepticism of the energy crisis is caused by developments over the last 10 to 15 years, and America's basic institutions are far from perfect.

"We have been misled and exploited in political, religious and economic issues and this experience has made the American public skeptical," Meile said.

Skepticism results because in the last 20 years, he said, the number of college educated persons who have had contact with the outside world has increased. He said there is a larger segment today of the population that is informed and can question and inquire into matters.

Julian said that when people say there are shortages, they are reluctant to become less wasteful because of the personal inconvenience. There is skepticism because of the Arab oil embargo of 1973-74, he said.

Skepticism about crisis

"When the oil companies said they didn't have any gas and people found out there were incidents of gas being withheld on the market and saw gas prices go up and oil companies profits increase, it caused great skepticism over the energy crisis," Julian said. "These sort of things undermine the faith people have in government."

Meile said the costs of social change with the energy crisis involve many varied interests and it is necessary to balance all of these interests.

"Individually, we are all going to have to change and give up something," Meile said. "It will mean crimping our lifestyles."

Meile said he expects the social changes because of the energy crisis to take 10 years to occur.

"Where there is not a tremendous amount of personal cost, we can change quickly," he said. "We went from a no-airplane society to an airplane society very quickly. The incentives for decreasing consumption in President Carter's energy program will help encourage social change."

news digest

By The Associated Press

Press freedom

San Francisco—Press freedom in the United States and in Third World nations was a major topic as the 91st annual convention of the American Newspaper Publishers Association entered its second day Tuesday. ANPA president Joe D. Smith Jr. said in his keynote speech Monday that potential government regulation of newspaper ownership conflicts with constitutional guarantees of a free press in the United States. At a later ANPA session, editor Clayton Kirkpatrick of the *Chicago Tribune* announced formation of a new World Free Press Development committee intended to launch "a missionary effort" in Third World nations which deny press freedom. Smith, president and publisher of the *Alexandria, La., Daily Town Talk*, said American newspapers should share the concern recently voiced by some elected officials about multiple or group newspaper ownership.

Hospital costs

Washington—President Carter asked Congress Monday to impose a government ceiling on rapidly rising hospital costs. He said his plan could save consumers, the government and health insurance companies \$2 billion the first year and \$5.5 billion in 1980. The legislation sent to Capitol Hill by Carter would limit the overall increase in hospital bills at most facilities to 9 per cent in the fiscal year beginning Oct. 1. However, Health, Education and Welfare secretary Joseph A. Califano Jr. admitted that loopholes and exceptions for some hospitals could mean

cost increases nationally will run as high as 10 per cent but "certainly not more than that." Health care costs have been rising 15 per cent a year, twice the national inflation rate. At that rate, hospital costs, which currently total \$55 billion a year, would double in five years. Hospital costs represent 40 per cent of annual health care costs, which are expected to total \$160 billion this year.

GM settlement

Detroit—General Motors Corp., swamped by consumer complaints and mounting legal actions over the use of Chevrolet engines in other GM cars, has worked out a settlement to appease disgruntled owners. But the attorney general for Illinois, the state where the whole engine flap started, said GM's offer does not go far enough. Under the GM plan, an owner of a new 1977 Buick, Oldsmobile or Pontiac with a Chevy engine may trade that car for a new 1977 model, but must pay eight cents for each mile he drove the original car. Or, the owner may keep the car and get a 36,000 mile, 36-month engine warranty. Elliott M. Estes, president of the No. 1 automaker, said Monday that GM was making the offer to "assure customer satisfaction."

No painless way

San Francisco—President Carter's budget director says solutions to the nation's inflation and energy problems are tied together, and there is no simple, cheap or painless way to deal with energy demands. Bert Lance told the annual meeting of The Associated Press Monday that "the success that we finally enjoy in regard to energy will have a direct impact on the success that we enjoy in regard to inflation. The two are tied together because one is basic to the other." Lance did not discuss specifics in Carter's complex plan of penalties and incentives aimed at reducing energy consumption, but he predicted success once the plan is understood.

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