

Natural Gas Hike Price Anticipated

HELENA (AP) — George O'Connor, president of the Montana Power Co., predicted Tuesday night that natural gas rates will rise sharply in the future as a result of policies pending in Canada, a major source of the fuel consumed in Montana.

He said all utility rates are going to increase in the case of natural gas, "I think they are going to go up dramatically."

O'Connor spoke before several hundred persons in the second of a series of public meetings planned by the firm to discuss energy-related matters.

O'Connor said there is speculation that Canada plans to force its export prices on natural gas upward to a rate where the price will be equal to that of other fuels in terms of energy. At current oil prices, he said, this would mean a cost at the Canadian border of about \$1.25 per thousand cubic feet.

He said Montana Power has budgeted \$5 million to explore for natural gas in the state next year.

O'Connor said his company has adequate supplies of natural gas and, barring a major breakdown of generating facilities, enough electrical resources to see the state through the winter.

Joseph McElwain, executive vice president, said coal will play a major part of the company's long-range ability to meet the state's

needs for both electricity and natural gas. The firm has vast holdings of stripable coal reserves in eastern Montana and is constructing two 350-megawatt generating plants near Colstrip. In addition, the firm is part of a combine of Pacific Northwest Utilities planning construction of two 700-megawatt generating plants in the Colstrip area.

McElwain said the company's short-range supply of natural gas is tied closely to Canada, while the future supply will come from coal, depending on the development of coal-gasification technology.

"We do not anticipate any shortage of gas on our system this winter," he said.

Much of O'Connor's presentation dealt with what he said was a need for the firm to remain financially strong. He said the company estimates it will have to invest \$385 million during the next five years for construction and resource development. The company, he said, must maintain its financial integrity to borrow the money. He said any loss of financial standing would be reflected in higher interest costs on borrowed money and that this in turn would be reflected in higher utility rates.

In answer to a question from Robert McTaggart, a member of the Montana Public Service Commission, O'Connor acknowledged that energy-conservation efforts could possibly result in increased utility rates.

He said some utilities are finding that reduced earnings caused by lower power consumption result in a need for higher rates, since the expenses of utilities do not decrease as consumption decreases.

Smokey Says:



Please... don't you be responsible!

Jayceen Newsletter

Adele Taylor

By ADELE TAYLOR

The November meeting was preceded by a dinner at the Episcopal Guild Hall. Joyce Baker from the Hobby Shop gave a very interesting demonstration on making decorations. President Verna Cleverley called the meeting to order. Kay Davis, District vice-president, was special guest speaker. Other guests were Karen Snell, Butte Jayceen president, Joan Jackson, DeeDee Jensen, and Lyla Weberg. Marlene Stone lake reported that rosebushes had been sent to Verna Cleverley and her baby daughter and Adele Taylor and her baby son. Constitution revisions were voted on and approved.

Connie Delaney said that she and Lillian Hegstad served punch and cookies at the Rest Home for the October Birthday Party.

Bobbie Blake reminded everyone to bring jelly for the Childrens Center to the December meeting.

Marlene said that pictures from the Halloween Window Painting Contest were placed in various business windows. Sheila Peterson said that eight girls are signed up to run for Junior Miss. The pageant is to be held Dec. 3.

Sheri Coad passed out dolls to be dressed for the Toys for Tots project.

A donation was given to the "Doctor for Dillon" Project.

Connie Delaney is chairman of the Santa Suit Rental.

Linda Gilbert will put up the Hospital Nativity Scene and Adele Taylor will do the Rest Home

News Briefs

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — A Ludington, Mich., youth sent the Tampa Chamber of Commerce \$5 to settle a stolen grapefruit debt. "I was there visiting with five other boys," the youth said in a letter enclosed with a check from his parents. "We were low on funds to get back home and we took some grapefruit from an orchard there in Florida."

The boy guessed that perhaps two or three dozen grapefruits had been pilfered. Without mentioning exactly where or when the raid took place, he asked, "Please forgive me of this wrong as I am sending some money to pay for the grapefruit."

The chamber is giving the money to a Christmas toy charity drive.

PANAMA (AP) — Seven persons have died in landslides caused by torrential rains in central Panama in the past three days, the government says.

Approximately 1,000 persons were reported displaced by floods in southern Veraguas Province, and damage to plantations was heavy.

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — H. Rap Brown, who was convicted earlier this year in New York City of armed robbery, has been admitted to Meyer Memorial Hospital with "a slight case of pneumonia."

Brown, former head of the Student Non-violent Coordination Committee (SNCC) was transferred Tuesday to the county hospital from the state prison at Attica, where he was sent after his conviction.

ATTICA, N.Y. (AP) — Inmates and guards at the Attica prison farm risked their lives to save 30 head of cattle from fire, according to prison superintendent Harold Smith.

About 30 inmates and four guards dashed into the barn and led all but three of the cattle to safety, Smith said Tuesday. Some of the men suffered smoke inhalation and minor burns, but none required hospitalization.

Wall Street

NEW YORK (AP) — The stock market mounted a sharp but short-lived rally today in an attempt to bounce back from its severe recent losses.

The Dow Jones average of 30 industrials bounced ahead 15 points in the first half hour of trading, then fell back by 11:30 a.m. to 845.42, up only 0.52 for the day.

Analysts said the brief buying surge apparently stemmed from bargain-hunting by investors attracted by depressed prices of many issues. Brokers said investor concern about the economic implications of energy shortages seemed to reassert itself rapidly.

On Tuesday the Dow and another major indicator, the New York Stock Exchange's index of some 1,500 common stocks, hit their lowest levels since Nov. 20, 1971, continuing their dramatic losses of Monday.

Deaths

Allen Sherman
LOS ANGELES (AP) — Allen Sherman, 49, who rocketed to fame as a comedian in the early 1960s, died Tuesday of respiratory failure. A producer-writer, Sherman rose to prominence with his first recording, "Hello Muddah," in which he portrayed the mythical experiences of a youth at summer camp.

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Preliminary Agreement Over Coal

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — Texas Gas Transmission Corp., and Burlington Northern Inc., have reached a preliminary agreement for a major coal transportation venture that includes construction of a terminal to handle 25 millions tons of coal annually.

The companies said Tuesday the project, expected to be operating in 1976, calls for Burlington to transport low-sulphur coal unit on Burlington trains from the North Dakota, Montana and Wyoming area to a terminal on the Mississippi River.

The Burlington tracks follow the Mississippi River much of the way from St. Paul to St. Louis and it would be possible for the terminal to be built anywhere between those two cities.

One Burlington official said he believes the terminal will be in the St. Louis area. A U.S. Interior Department report critical of one proposal for a terminal at Big Eye Lake in St. Paul could delay early issuance of a permit to construct it in St. Paul.

The company said the terminal at full capacity would require 2,500 100-car units of coal a year.

"It will mean quite a parade of unit trains," one Burlington official said, "and will be a significant addition to the company's business."

The official said the coal would be transferred to river barges owned by Texas Gas and moved to major electric utilities in the South and East that have plants accessible to waterways.

Bus Crash Kills 15

SAN NICOLAS, Mexico (AP) — A bus overloaded with religious pilgrims hurtled 141 feet down a mountain ravine, killing 15 persons and injuring 43 others. A Red Cross spokesman said many of the survivors reported that the bus driver was drunk.

The driver and an infant girl were among those killed. The injured included 25 youngsters, officials said.

Ten of the pilgrims were missing after the Tuesday night accident.

Red Cross spokesman Jose Angel Guerrero said, "Many of the survivors said the driver was drunk."

Agustin Montes de Oca, one of the passengers, told the Red Cross, "The driver was drunk... we told him not to drive but he took over anyway. He tried to pass a truck and that's all I can remember."

He said the driver got drunk Tuesday night at religious celebrations in Chalma, about 50 miles southwest of Mexico City, and then wanted to drive back to the capital.

The pilgrims kept the driver away from the wheel so one of them could drive, but he soon became hostile and seized the wheel, Montes de Oca said.

Guerrero said the bus had room for 41 passengers but was carrying more than 70.

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