

A personalized meeting with President Carter

By DEE McILHENNY
Facts Staff Writer

O.D. Kenemore, local labor leader, spent Tuesday in Washington, D.C., getting a personalized, first-hand look at some of the problems of the country from President Jimmy Carter and key members of Carter's staff and cabinet.

Kenemore, county Democratic Party leader and member of the State Democratic Committee, was one of about 200 Texas chosen to attend one of the first state-group briefings to be held by Carter.

The Texans, Kenemore said, were the ninth — and largest — state group to be invited to the day-long session.

Carter, Kenemore said, plans to have groups from each of the 50 states briefed in order to carry some

of the president's program "back to the grass roots."

The group of Texans included members of the state legislature, Lt. Gov. Bill Hobby, John Hill, Democratic Party leaders, representatives of business and of labor, he said.

"There was quite a cross section of political thought," Kenemore said. "I saw people I knew to be extreme conservatives and people I knew to be extreme liberals and people from all directions in between."

Former state Rep. Sarah Weddington, now a member of Carter's senior staff, was the chief host for the Texans, Kenemore said.

The session, which began about 9 a.m. Tuesday in the old Executive Office Building, was extremely informal, Kenemore said.

"There was no head table, just an

informal type of meeting," he said.

The group heard first from Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski, assistant to the president for national affairs. Brzezinski talked about "a number of key issues," Kenemore said, "but he mostly discussed Salt II."

Kenemore said the president's assistant stressed the need for the treaty with the Soviets.

"One point which impressed me most," Kenemore said, "was that he said the treaty was a business agreement between the two countries."

"It's not a matter of trusting the Soviets," Kenemore said the group was told, "but simply a working agreement. He said the Soviets could cheat a little, but it would be impossible for them to cheat a lot without us knowing it."

"He told us they would know if we

cheated and we would know if they cheated," Kenemore said.

Brzezinski also outlined some of the accomplishments of the Carter administration, Kenemore said, such as the Panama Canal Treaty, the Israel-Egypt Treaty, normalization of relations with China and improved relations with Japan. The president's assistant told the group that relations with foreign countries were more stable than they had been in many years.

Kenemore said they were told Salt II will help make the arms race more stable.

Secretary of Treasury William Miller talked next, Kenemore said. Miller told the group inflation is the main issue facing the country and is the hardest issue to deal with, Kenemore said.

"He said inflation had become built into the system and was part of

the structure, which is why it is hard to combat," Kenemore said.

Kenemore said Miller told them that, by the time this year's college graduates retire, the U.S. dollar will be worth about 5 cents unless something is done about inflation.

Miller told them the Carter administration is trying to hold spending down and the national debt has been reduced, under Carter, from \$800 billion to \$375 billion.

Miller also said the president believes his 7 percent wage-price guidelines are working.

Miller said attempts to cool off the economy have to be cautious so that "certain elements of the economy aren't destroyed."

"He didn't give us a lot of bright lights to look at," Kenemore said.

Miller told them there would be no immediate relief in the gas shortage (Please turn to P. 13, Col. 1)



O.D. KENEMORE