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Reagan blames unemployment on democratic predecessors

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Pres. Ronald Reagan, on the campaign trail again, declared Monday that inflation is the cause of today's near record unemployment and — once again — he blamed it all on his Democratic predecessors.

He also suggested that the nuclear freeze movement is being manipulated by people who want to weaken the United States.

Reagan said his comments were sparked by the appearance of several hundred demonstrators where he spoke at a meeting organized by five veterans' groups.

"They were demonstrating in behalf of a movement that has swept across our country inspired by not the sincere, honest people who want peace, but by some who want a weakening of America, and so are manipulating many honest and sin-

cere people," he said.

In the prepared portion of his speech, Reagan said various reasons are given for the present joblessness, but "in my own view the cause is one and one only: inflation."

Most economists would argue that rising unemployment has resulted, not from inflation itself, but from government policies designed to fight inflation by slowing economic growth.

Reagan's new chief White House economist, Martin Feldstein, made that point at his Senate confirmation hearing Sept. 22, when he said those "who predicted that inflation would be reduced without raising unemployment have been decisively proven wrong."

Since 1979, unemployment has been rising while inflation has been falling. Inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index, has receded from

13.3 percent in 1979 to 12.4 percent in 1980, 8.9 percent in 1981 and an expected 5 percent to 6 percent this year.

Average unemployment, on the other hand, has been climbing — from 5.8 percent in 1979 to 7.1 percent in 1980, 7.6 percent in 1981 and an estimated 9.5 percent this year.

Reagan said his administration has "brought inflation down, and interest rates are following."

He did not say why unemployment remains high — it was 9.8 percent in August — but has said in the past that unemployment figures are the last to improve when an economy comes out of recession.

Reagan was on a campaign trip for two Republicans who are trailing their Democratic opponents in Ohio's gubernatorial and U.S. Senate races.

Reagan told the veterans, "I'm not here today to campaign," but he made a pitch anyway for Rep. Clarence "Bud" Brown, R-Ohio, who is running for governor against Democrat Richard Celeste.

Prison inmate confesses to murdering 25

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (AP)

— A mannerly, clean-cut prison inmate has confessed to murdering 25 women in Florida, and investigators say they are still trying to piece together evidence that may link him to slayings elsewhere.

Gerald Stano, 31, admitted many of the unsolved killings during two weeks of intensive questioning, said Sgt. Paul Crow of the Daytona Beach Police Department, the chief investigator in the case.

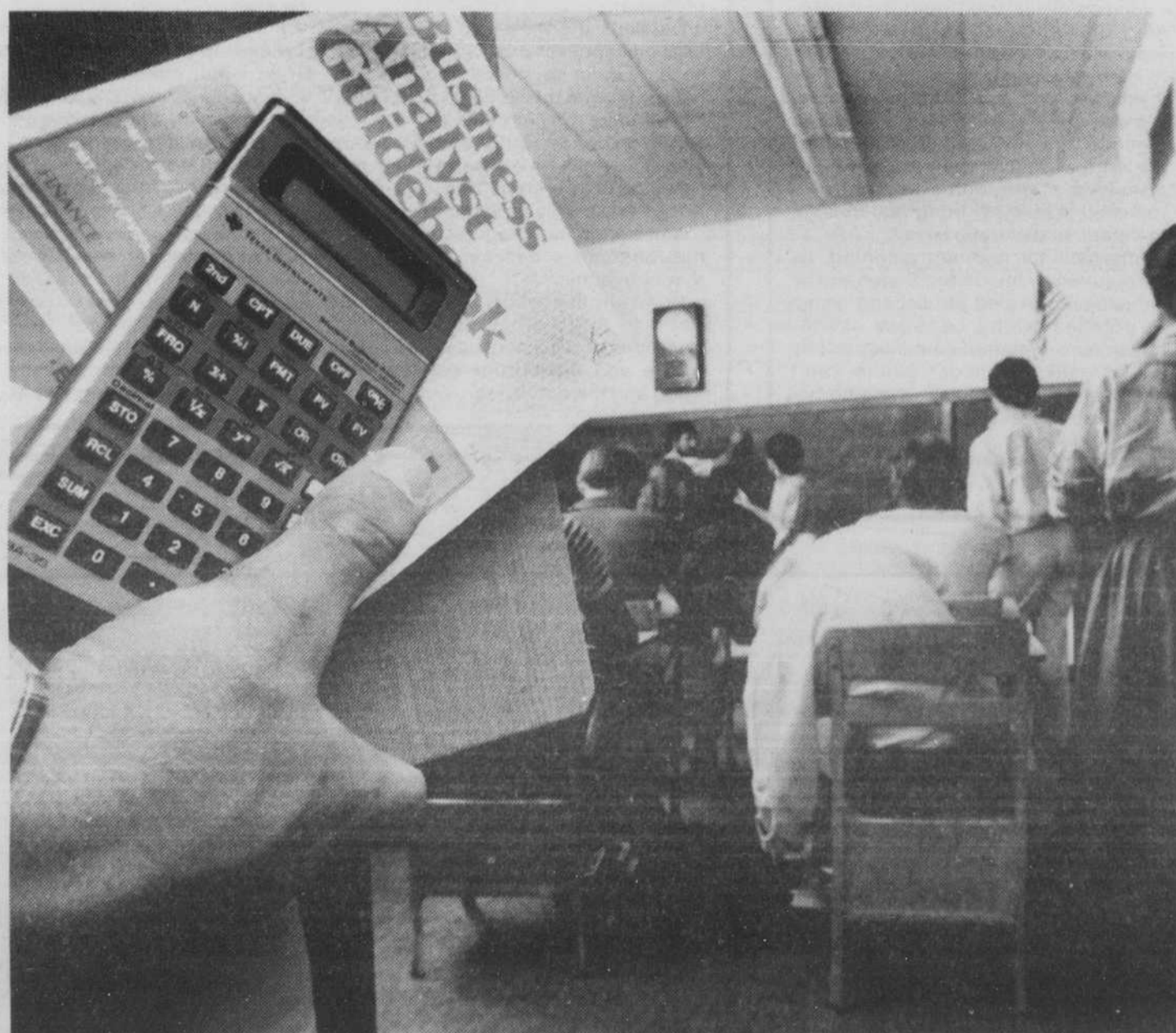
"There will probably be some more," Stano was quoted by the Orlando Sentinel on Monday.

"Ninety-eight percent of the cards are on the table now for Florida," added Stano, who is serving three consecutive life terms for three of the slayings. "I'm hoping that it will all be over within a month to two months."

Stano is said to have given details about locations and causes of death that only the killer would know.

A former motel clerk and cook from nearby Ormond Beach, Stano has also been implicated in 10 to 12 other unsolved murder cases. Police believe he could become the deadliest mass murderer in the country if all of his confessions are verified.

Stano reportedly has told police he killed four to six women a year since 1969. But Crow cautioned that Stano isn't always truthful.



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