

# VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION  
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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## Tax cuts to figure in Texan surplus use

By ROLAND LINDSEY  
UPI Capitol Reporter

AUSTIN, Texas — Money and the manner in which it is spent or not spent will be the dominant issue of the 1979 Legislature which convenes Tuesday for its 140-day biennial session, the state's top two legislative leaders agree.

"The top issue is always the appropriations bill," said Lt. Gov. William P. Hobby.

"That's where the state's priorities are set, so that's number one and the other things are going to be behind that."

How the state's money is spent always has been a major issue in Texas legislative sessions. But with election of the state's first Republican governor in a century and the nationwide movement to reduce taxes, the prospect of reducing taxes will be a key factor in determining how a projected \$2.8-billion budget surplus will be used.

Tax relief proposals already approved by the Legislature and voters could return about \$1 billion of that projected surplus to voters. Outgoing Gov. Dolph Briscoe and incoming Gov. Bill Clements have indicated they will recommend additional tax reductions of up to another \$1 billion.

Public school finance, one of the more costly of the state's programs and the major issue in the past few legislative sessions, again will provoke significant debate, although there are differences of opinion on just how important the bill will be.

"School finance is not as big an issue as it has been in the past two sessions," said Speaker Bill Clayton. He contends the school finance issue still will be important,

but said studies by legislative committees, coupled with provisions of the tax relief amendment to the state constitution adopted by voters in November, resolve some of the major financial will make the school finance question easier to resolve this year.

Hobby estimates the state will increase its spending on public school finance by about \$1 billion in 1979, just as it did in 1977.

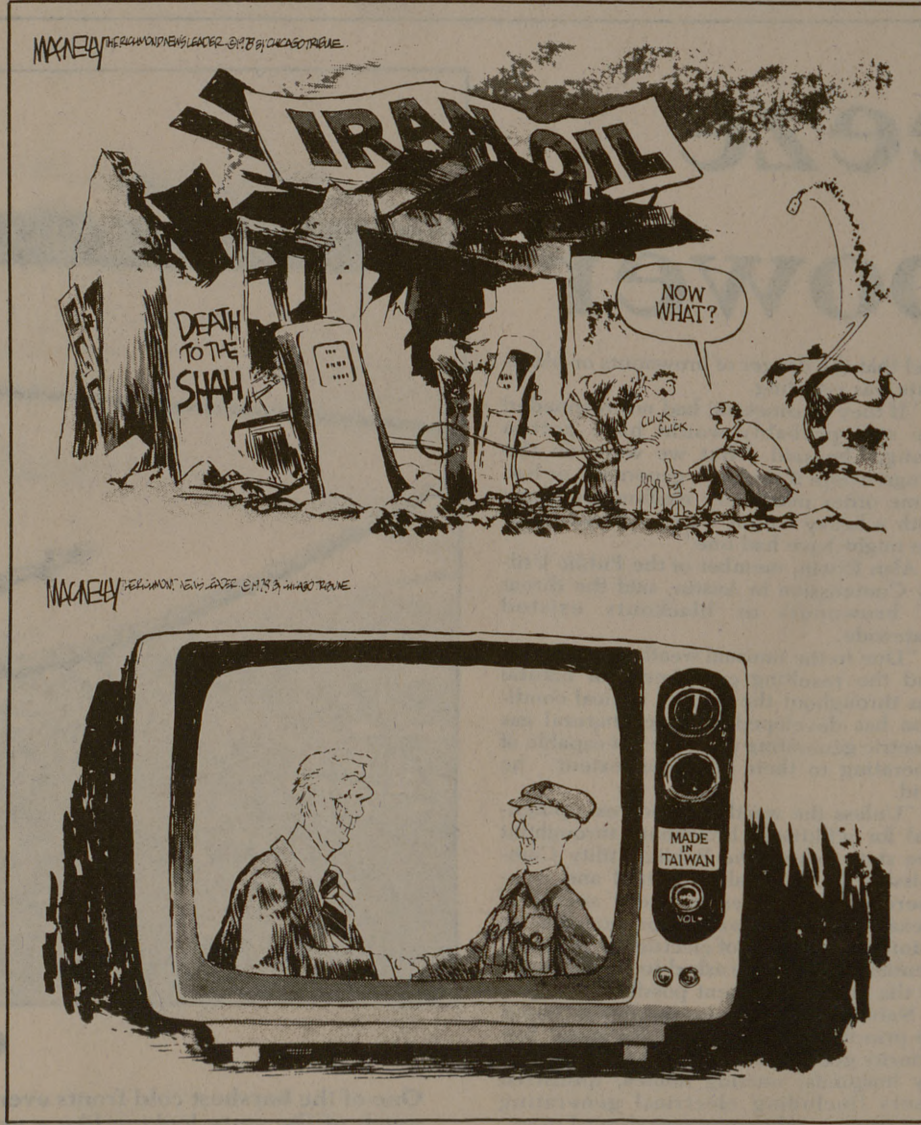
He predicted about one-third of that \$1 billion would go toward reducing the share of school costs paid by local districts, one-third to increasing state aid for maintenance and operation and transportation in the districts, and one-third for an increase in teacher salaries.

Other issues cited by Hobby or Clayton as major ones for the upcoming session include:

— Products liability legislation, which will prompt a major battle for the second consecutive session between insurance companies and trial lawyers. A medical malpractice insurance dispute involving the same parties was not resolved until the closing hours of the 1977 session.

— A proposal to raise the interest ceiling for home mortgage loans in Texas from 10 percent to 12 percent. The bill is being pushed by the savings and loan industry, which contends home loans could decline by 60 to 70 percent if the state ceiling on interest rates is not raised.

— Debate on Clements' proposals to give Texans the right of initiative and referendum, and to require a two-thirds majority vote in the House and Senate to enact of tax bills.



## What Carter promoted least, he did best

By DAVID S. BRODER

WASHINGTON - The old year ended as it began, with President Carter expressing optimism about the prospects for peace in the Middle East and the early conclusion of a strategic arms limitation treaty with Russia. That note, sounded repeatedly through the year, gave a tone of consistency to the 1978 Carter dispatches, which were otherwise most notable for their surprises.

If you doubt that much unexpected developed during the past 12 months, recall that last new year's eve, Jimmy Carter was being entertained by the Shah of Iran, whose throne seemed as stable and enduring as George Wallace's reign in Alabama or the dominance of Hubert Humphrey's Democratic Farmer-Labor party in Minnesota.

As a matter of fact, the upheavals in Alabama and Minnesota were somewhat accurately anticipated in this space. But, for the most part, rereading a year's accumulation of journalistic scribbling is the same exercise in self-humiliation for

1978 as for most years. The only excuse for ignoring Satchel Paige's sage advice to "never look back; somebody may be gaining on you" is the occasional discovery of a point you really hadn't noticed before.

Jimmy Carter was, naturally enough, the subject of more columns and news stories than anyone else. But it had not occurred to me, before I reviewed the year's observations on his presidency, that there had been an almost perfect inverse correlation between the advance build-up for an event in which he was involved and the substantive results.

His three most important announcements of the year came as surprises to the nation; the Camp David accords; the decision to make full-scale defense of the dollar; and the recognition of China.

By contrast, the most elaborately promoted events almost invariably turned to dust. That was true of the new urban policy, born after almost endless labors, and the several versions of an anti-inflation policy he unveiled during the year. It was true of the President's overseas travels and

conferences. And it was emphatically true of almost every Carter speech scheduled more than a week in advance.

There were, to be sure, some exceptions. The Panama treaties and civil service reform were heavily lobbied and eagerly publicized before they were approved, and both belong on the list of substantial Carter achievements.

But the main point remains, as a puzzling footnote to 1978. What Carter publicized and politicized least was that he did best. It is puzzling because the most significant visible changes in the administration's second year were the addition of two top political-promotional talents to the White House staff in the persons of Anne Wexler and Jerry Rafshoon.

Wexler's and Rafshoon's skills lie precisely in the area of packaging programs and policies in ways that are palatable to power-brokers and the public. They are external operators with a subtlety of touch that was notably missing in Carter's first year, and he is lucky to have them around.

But it strikes me now, at year-end, that as much as the politics and public relations

of the administration improved, the major breakthrough for Carter came in quite a different area. It came in big-issue decision-making, when he and his colleagues kept their mouths shut until they had what they thought had to be done.

It also strikes me that this is a sign of growth, and even of maturity, for the Carter presidency. It represents a transition from the mentality of campaigning to the consciousness of governing, from striking a pose to taking a stand.

Candidly, there is no record of consistency in Carter's performance, and there is much that is worrisome about the mix of key players and the decision-making mechanisms in several major policy fields, most notably economics. But, at least on occasion, in 1978, Carter was able to override those handicaps and make decisions that were clearly presidential in character.

And that may be as hopeful a note as one can find as we enter another year of uncertainty for him and this country.

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## 'Acu-pincer' used for barnyard surgery

By ALAIN RAYMOND

PARIS - Few people on earth are as interested in good food as are the French. Thus scientists here devote tremendous energy to improving the quality of meat and poultry, and they have recently come up with a example of innovations that may be copied elsewhere in the world.

Much of this research is being done by experts at France's National Institute of Agronomy, whose various stations around the country focus on making agriculture and livestock-breeding better and more economical.

Specialists at the institute had searched for years for ways to perform such minor operations as tattooing, castration and

horn-cutting on cattle, sheep and other animals without using tranquilizers or analgesics, which do not take effect immediately and from which the beasts recuperate slowly.

One specialist in the city of Toulouse considered acupuncture as a method for anesthetizing animals, and that notion led him to explore other ways of dulling their nerves.

He and his team experimented for months on cats, immobilizing them by pinching their nerve centers through the skin in precise spots. When this worked, they went on to experiment with sheep, goats, lambs and calves. They found that they could induce a sort of sleep hypnosis in the animals.

The experts first place pincers on the spinal column area of the animal, then on the flanks and the thoracic cage. The animal gradually stops moving, stumbles, and collapses to sleep.

The hypnotic state lasts from 20 to 40 minutes, usually enough time for the veterinarian to perform an operation. The pincers are removed after the operation, and the young animal slowly gets to its feet and shakes itself as if awakening from a bad dream.

During their experiment, the researchers used regular surgical pincers. But these proved to be impractical. So they invented and patented a new instrument, a wide jaw pincer with protective rubber disks that adhere to the skin of the animal readily.

This anesthetic approach is already being used widely on young animals, but tests are underway with adult cattle, and the prospects of success appear promising.

Meanwhile, French scientists working at a poultry research station at Tours, in the Loire Valley, have perfected a method for controlling sperm production in roosters by varying the amount of light they

receive in their coops. This is a derivation of a method that has long been used to improve egg production in chickens. It has two economic advantages.

In the first place it makes it possible for poultry producers to reduce the intervals between generations and breed roosters that are fertile in 18 weeks instead of the normal 26.

This in turn affords poultry producers a longer time span in which to obtain fertile eggs for use in commercial breeding.

The researchers at Tours discovered that by lighting coops for eight hours per day, the productivity of the roosters increased. The lighting program also makes possible an earlier identification of differences precocity and fertility of roosters of the same stock.

One disadvantage in having prolific roosters, however, is that they must be kept separate from hens, since there are periods during which it is uneconomical to produce unlimited numbers of fertile eggs.

French scientists are further studying the impact of different degrees of light on roosters. They have already learned that electric bulbs of various voltages affect roosters differently depending among other things on the age of the fowl.

A question being faced at the moment is whether the same methods can be applied to other species, such as guinea fowl and turkey cocks.

The ultimate aim of all these experiments, of course, is to satisfy the taste buds of French gastronomists and to swell the pocketbooks of French breeders. Thus scientific research here has a practical purpose -and that, too, is very French.

(Raymond writes on science and technology for the Agence France-Presse, the French News Agency.)



## TOP OF THE NEWS CAMPUS

### Silver Taps set for Earley

Silver Taps services have been set for Jan. 17 for Texas A&M University freshman Andrew Sinclair Earley, killed in a local traffic mishap Dec. 13. Earley, 18, was a marine biology major from Ardmore, Pa. Texas A&M officials said Silver Taps, the traditional student memorial, was designated for a Wednesday night, instead of the usual Tuesday night ceremony, to avoid conflicts with other university activities. Earley, son of the Dr. Laurence Earley family of Ardmore, is the fifth student fatality of the current academic year.

### Singing Cadets to go on tour

The Singing Cadets will perform in nine Texas cities during the next week. The annual 10-day chartered bus holiday tour will include nine concerts and a sermon-in-song. Director Robert L. Boone said the cadets will sing in cities ranging from Jasper to Tyler. The 62-member group opens Jan. 5 in Longview and ends Jan. 14 in Lufkin's First Methodist Church. The Cadets performed nine times during the fall semester, mostly on-campus for conferences, and at the Texas Agricultural Extension Service's 75th anniversary meeting in Dallas.

## STATE

### Energy troubles in Dallas

Dallas may face a brown-out if citizens do not voluntarily cut back consumption said a Dallas Power and Light Co. spokesman. Selective blackouts may also be a possibility to supply adequate power for the city of 900,000. Freezing weather has curtailed gas supplies to the company. Recent ice storms also toppled power lines in the Dallas area, leaving 50,000 homes without power. 10,000 homes remain without power. Dallas Power and Light Co. today appealed to residents to voluntarily curtail their use of electricity to assure an adequate supply of power for the city of 900,000. A spokesman for the power company warned that a "brownout" was a possibility over north Texas and that "selective blackouts are an extreme possibility" unless the public complied with all voluntary restraints. The utility said its gas supplies had been totally curtailed because of the frigid weather and that no new supplies were available. DP&L spokesman Ray Ward said other electric companies in the state "are in the same boat. All power companies in north and south Texas are making public appeals for cooperation."

## NATION

### High winds shut highway

A 50-mile section of freeway in San Diego and Imperial counties in California remained barricaded Tuesday after gusty high winds flipped vehicles on Monday. No injuries were reported but the California Highway Patrol said hundreds of motorists returning from the holiday weekends were stranded. The section was officially closed at 5:50 p.m. Monday. The highway patrol said three trailers and nine passenger cars were flipped by 70-to-90 mile an hour gusts along Interstate 8, between Alpine and Ocotillo. Ocotillo Fire Department Chief Burr Seeley said the station remained open throughout the night serving free coffee and providing shelter for some of the motorists.

## WORLD

### Teng hopes to meet senator

Chinese Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-ping wants to "sit down and have a talk" with Sen. Barry Goldwater of Arizona, informed sources said. Teng made his offer during a discussion with Rep. Thomas Ashley, D-Ohio on New Year's Day. Teng's offer was made in response to Goldwater's threat to launch a court case against President Carter for breaking off the U.S. defense pact with Taiwan and normalizing relations with the Communist government on the Chinese mainland. Ashley, chairman of the House subcommittee on banking heads a nine-man congressional delegation currently visiting China. Teng said he hoped to talk with Goldwater on his scheduled official visit to the United States in mid-January — the first by any Chinese official since the Nationalists lost to the Communists and were driven to Taiwan in 1949. Teng, officially the second-ranking Communist Party official after Chairman Hua Kuofeng, is considered the most powerful man in the country.

### German 'vampire' arrested

Police in Frankfurt, West Germany, have arrested a modern-day vampire and said the 22-year-old suspect has admitted he sometimes drank the blood of teen-age girls he lured to his apartment. Police said Tuesday they searched the man's apartment and arrested him after a 15-year-old girl charged he enticed young girls to his apartment, drugged them, abused them sexually and drank their blood. Police, who withheld the man's name pending his formal arraignment, said a search of his apartment revealed marijuana and other drugs and large hypodermic needles bearing smears of dried blood.

## WEATHER

Partly cloudy with a high in the mid 40's and a low in the mid 30's. Winds will be southeasterly at 10-15 mph. 20% chance of rain Thursday.

## THE BATTALION

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