

Opinion/Commentary/Letters

# Democratic fight may come

WASHINGTON — A strange reversal of moods has taken place in the congressional cloakrooms. The Republicans are surprisingly cheerful, and not just because of last week's special election victory for the Minnesota House seat vacated by Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland. They are finding unity in their opposition role and enjoying, in a certain sense, their respite from power.



David S. Broder

Meantime, the muttering is getting louder among congressional Democrats about alleged incidents of neglect and abuse from the White House.

A House Republican leader, rubbing salt in the wounds, told a Democratic colleague who was complaining about some slight, "Well, you guys are learning what we went through for six years with Nixon."

This would be no more than a bit of Washington gossip were it not for the fact that the developing tensions between President Carter and the Democrats in Congress threaten to deny the country one of the major

benefits people thought they would get from the last election. By ending the division of responsibility between a Republican President and a Democratic Congress, the voters clearly hoped to break the stalemate that had prevented effective action on the country's problems.

But increasingly, there's a sense that Carter and the congressional Democrats are lining up for a fight — even though they don't have much yet to fight about. The emotions are getting ahead of the issues, and the issues will suffer unless things get straightened out pretty fast.

Carter's first major proposal to Congress was the economic

stimulus package. There's nothing tough about asking a Democratic Congress to cut taxes and increase spending simultaneously.

Matters get less comfortable next month, when Carter's energy proposal goes to Congress. That will require lawmakers to vote for things that hurt: higher prices and tighter restrictions on fuel use. But instead of smoothing relations in anticipation of that inevitable tussle, there has been a lot of sniping from both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue, none of it very edifying.

The congressmen's gripes can be fairly petty, including that hardy Washington perennial — the length of time it takes to get a phone call returned from the White House. But the underlying attitudes are serious. On Carter's side, the impression he has conveyed is that he still believes what he said early in the 1976 primaries, that "Congress is inherently incapable of leadership."

He sees Congress, as he saw the Georgia legislature, as a body overly influenced by narrow parochial concerns, a playground for the special interests.

The Democrats in Congress tend to see Carter as a fellow who is just waiting to mobilize the public against them, as he did with the legislature in Georgia. They remember that last year Carter ran successfully against the "Washington establishment" and the presidential candidates from Congress. They expect him to take on Congress again.

Congressional anxieties were given official voice two weeks ago in a highly unusual speech by Speaker of the House Thomas P. (Tip)

O'Neill, D-Mass. O'Neill said a repetition of the Georgia tactic "would be a glaring mistake."

As quoted by The New York Times' Hedrick Smith, the Speaker said, "It upsets me when they say, 'We'll bring it to the people.' That's the biggest mistake Mr. Carter could ever make."

O'Neill was echoing the advice given the Carter legislative liaison team, in advance, by that other Massachusetts Irishman, Lawrence F. O'Brien. He was the acknowledged master of congressional relations during his White House service in the 1960s. O'Brien counseled caution, on the basis of the political risks for a President in challenging members of Congress in their home districts.

But only two days after O'Neill's speech was reported, the President's close friend, Atlanta lawyer Charles Kirbo, told me that he believed that "in some instances," at least, Carter will have to do exactly what O'Neill and O'Brien opposed, because "That's the only way he'll get his program passed."

Anticipating what he called "a continuing problem" with Congress, Kirbo said that President will have "to get into it himself — just the way he did in the Georgia legislature."

The bitterness that characterized Carter's last two years as governor is not what the country anticipated when it entrusted Democrats with control of both Congress and the White House. But at the moment, avoiding a collision between Carter and Congress looks a little like stepping between the immovable object and the irresistible force.

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## Slouch

by Jim Earle



EARLE MAR 4-77

"NOT ONLY DOES IT VIOLATE MY RIGHT TO PRIVACY FOR THEM TO SEND MY GRADE REPORT HOME, IT VIOLATES MY RIGHT TO SAFETY!"

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## ERA is a real issue

Editor:

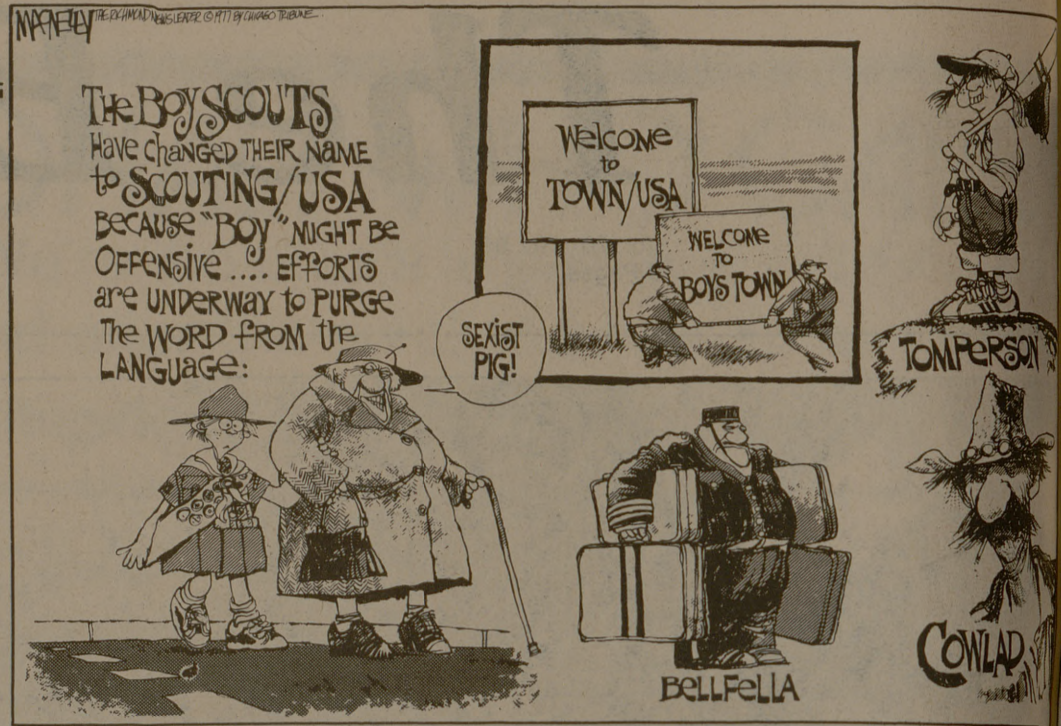
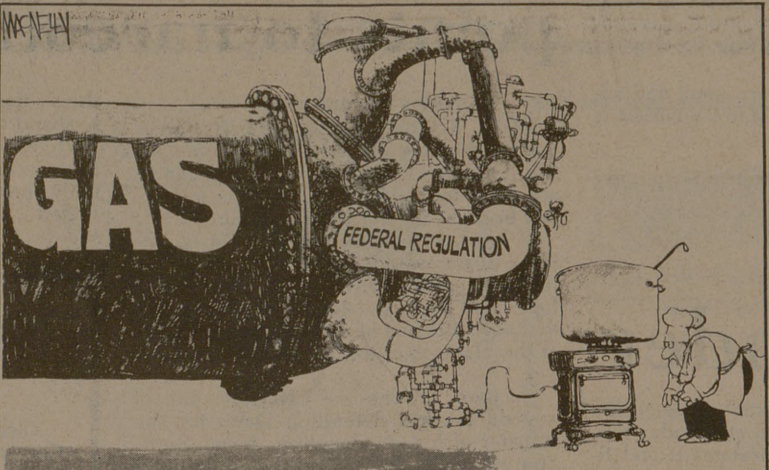
The women of Texas A&M University must use their power of number and diversity to prevent people like Sen. (Walter H.) Mengden of Houston from demeaning their education.

Sen. Mengden is fighting to have the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) repealed in Texas. The Houston attorney and oilman seems to be unaware of the discrimination women still face in job choice and legal matters. He claims the ERA will only bring about homosexual

marriages and unisex toilets. He entertains reporters with his anecdotes about going to the restroom with women in Europe. Somehow, the real issues get pushed to the side. This is understandable — injustice is not funny.

Legislators cannot ignore a large number of letters from the various parts of Texas that college students represent. It is important to demand now the tools to control the future.

—Johnnie Hendon, '79



## Money does talk on campus

Editor:

The saying, "highway 6 runs both ways," is a very good slogan, because people who had mouth A&M every way imaginable, and really didn't want to go here, are, in my opinion, welcome to leave any time. However, some people carry this to extremes. They feel that if you say anything against A&M, you should be removed forcibly.

Since this is my third letter to the editor, that should qualify me to be removed, right? Hell no! I love A&M more than anything, and if I say something about it, it's to make Aggieland even better.

I realize that there are some things that one does not take sides against, such as the sports program, the pros, or the Alumni, but that's just who I'm fed up with.

I've been here since last semester, and I have been able to witness the Alumni at the football games, and afterwards, and on weekends when they come for meetings and reunions.

I cannot believe some of the things that the Alumni do. I constantly see them litter the campus when they were only a few feet from a garbage can. In the MSC cafeteria, where everyone is asked to bus their own trays, huge tables of former students, and their wives, eat, talk, and promptly leave all their trash, trays, and whatever, all over the table. Those signs do mean everyone, you know.

Also, they seem to think that only present students should respect the MSC. They have to be asked to remove their hats, and again, they litter worse than the students.

I know that the Alumni is responsible for many of the things on campus, because of their large donations to the school, but I think they should remember that those donations were for the betterment of the school, not so that they could get away with disrespectful and un-aggielike conduct.

When one looks over the campus, it almost seems that some of it was fixed up and renovated for the Alumni, not the students. After all, this university is for the students isn't it? I wish money didn't talk so well on campus.

—Charlie Andrews, '80 and proud of it

## Counseling does need improving

Editor:

I am a May 1976 graduate of Texas A&M and I am writing this letter in response to the "Counseling is Inadequate" letter by Henry Miller '79 in the *Battalion* on Tuesday, Feb. 15, 1977. I feel Mr. Miller made a very important point, essentially that student academic counseling at the University is inadequate and that the situation should be improved. In the four years I attended A&M, enrollment increased from 16,000 to 25,000 and with that phenomenal growth a corresponding worsening of academic counseling occurred, especially in larger departments. Of course this is part of the growing pains that must be borne by all of us but not be ignored. If Texas A&M is going to continue to provide scholastic leadership and attract high quality students positive action must be taken. I am not blaming any one in particular but merely pointing out the fact that there is a lack of professional academic counseling at Texas A&M and stating that the problem needs to be alleviated.

—Robert M. Gomez, '76

## March of Dimes gives thanks

Editor:

On behalf of the Mothers March on Birth Defects, I'd like to say thank you for all the support you gave us last month. The articles printed were of a great help in informing the University community about Mothers March.

The University is very fortunate in having several groups of young ladies and gentlemen on the campus. These are the sororities, fraternities, and the Corps. They were a tremendous help during our March. With the help of the fraternities and sororities we were able to triple the contributions collected from the many apartments in the community.

The Corps was a big help. Don Broach and his company (G-R-1) marched most of one area. Bryan. Without them we would have collected the \$700 that we contributed.

Again, thank you from all the children born and unborn who have a chance to lead better lives because you cared enough to help. —Joanie Wilkins, 1977 Chairman, Mothers March on Birth Defects

## Stereotyping is degrading

Editor:

On our campus we have the GSSO (20 students) claiming their constitutional rights are being stepped on, but what about the rights of the other 28,000 students at Texas A&M University? They may claim that it does bother them to be stereotyped, other people. I for one do care my reputation and the reputation of Texas A&M.

If the GSSO is successful in the suit, in the eyes of our nation it is not only stereotype them, but the whole student body. Despite the GSSO may say, our society condemns homosexuality as immoral and it is illegal in our state. We should the rest of us be exposed such a social downgrade for the tions of this minute minority which some of its members refuse to be recognized?

—Jim Hanrahan

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