

Viewpoint

The Battalion
Texas A&M University

Monday
June 27, 1977

Keeping fireworks & our health too

By LEE ROY LESCHPER JR.
Battalion Editor

Just one week separates us from another 4th of July and the signs are already appearing. We have robins to herald spring, geese for fall and fireworks stands for July 4.

You may have not even noticed the stands opening up like summer-blooming cactus, in all sizes and colors, some boasting screaming signs and 24-hour lights and others like shabby boxes little bigger than packing crates. But all with the same bold sign. "FIREWORKS."

And almost surely, if you have noticed them, you've seen several or maybe several dozen kids in all sizes crowded around in front, eyeing the multi-colored rockets, bombs and sparklers. Each one trying to stretch his money for all it'll buy.

Maybe, although it's still early, you've seen or heard the first outbursts in the noise war that will reach its peak in another week. Rapid bursts of firecrackers, sizzling skyrockets, maybe a smoke bomb's colored cloud.

That's the 4th of July as we've known it, probably as our parents knew it too. It's a part of America that means a lot to most of us. But most of us have been lucky.

Most of us haven't had a mis-directed bottle rocket burn out an eye. Most of

us that shot firecrackers and invariably threw lighted ones into the air didn't have one burn or deaden or blow away fingers.

Fireworks, be they tremendous bomb-like firecrackers or tiny smoke bombs, are as safe or as dangerous as the people using them. Here, as in so many other potentially hazardous areas today, the outcry rises against the object, the machine, the mechanical tool, rather than against the real culprit — the person using them.

"But that's the way people are" some may argue. Bullfeathers. That's just an easy way to excuse unnecessary carelessness.

We can be careful. We can keep fireworks away from children too young to be responsible. We can impress older kids and adults that fireworks are a responsibility, not just a toy.

Fireworks producers and distributors can police their own ranks, for their own sake. They can cut out fireworks retailers that sell to children too young, that fail to warn customers about the devices they're buying, that often employ kids that are themselves too young to be responsible. If the industry doesn't, the federal government will close them all down.

The 4th of July without fireworks would be a sad sight. A child without eyes is even sadder. We don't need to lose either.

Lifestyles may be issue of 1984

By DAVID S. BRODER

SAN FRANCISCO — As a political event, the Fritz Mondale-Jerry Brown breakfast here weekend before last was an anticlimax rivaled only by the next day's non-historic visit between Vice President and Rep. Morris K. Udall. Any reporter who had convinced his paper to spend several hundred dollars to watch President Carter's chief partner test the political tempers of Carter's last two challengers in the 1976 primaries had to feel a bit guilty about submitting his expense account.

Mondale's meeting with the governor of California and his fund-raiser for the congressman from Tucson were smothered in politicians' clichés about unprecedented cooperation and good fellowship. Whatever thoughts Brown, Udall and Mondale entertained about the President with whom their political lives are now intertwined went unexpressed.

But during the weekend, there was a coincidence that illuminated the gap in style — if not in philosophy — between the rather conventional politicians now running Washington and the highly unconventional politician running what is, in effect, a rival regime in California.

On his first evening in San Francisco, Mondale was scheduled to be the main attraction at a reception for Democratic party contributors at the Hall of Flowers in Golden Gate Park.

Unbeknownst to him, the event was successfully infiltrated by "gay rights" demonstrators. They were seeking to extract a statement from Mondale on civil rights for homosexuals that might put the Carter administration clear on the gay side of that burgeoning issue.

A few minutes into Mondale's remarks, the demonstrators began to chant for "gay rights." Abruptly, Mondale stopped talk-

ing and walked to the side of the stage. When the mayor of San Francisco and the Democratic party chairman succeeded in quieting several dozen "gays" for a moment, Mondale returned to the microphone. But when the chanting began a second time, he left — this time for good.

No one who knows him thinks the Vice President is intimidated by a relative handful of hecklers. Indeed, two days later, when he and Udall ran into a group of pickets in Tucson who were angry about an economic issue — proposed new mining regulations — they crossed the street to engage their critics in nose-to-nose debate.

But as Mondale conceded, he was unprepared, politically or personally, to deal with the homosexuals' protest. It made

him distinctly uncomfortable, just as another "life-style" issue, that of abortion and women's rights, proved so vexatious to Carter in the 1976 campaign.

The "life-style" issues, as every parent knows, tend to divide people on generational lines. Carter and Mondale — with their religious backgrounds — plainly have some problems with the precepts of the permissive society.

Brown, though a former Jesuit and self-proclaimed ascetic, is personally much more comfortable with practitioners of alternative life-styles.

A few hours after Mondale had fled from his confrontation with "the gays," the governor of California emerged from a restaurant in the middle of one of the

gaudier blocks of strip shows, massage parlors and "adult" entertainments in this city. For 15 minutes or so, Brown led members of his staff on a slow stroll past bookstores of the sort your old English teacher never recommended. He savored the experience of having the "barkers" of the show bars stop their spels in mid-syllable, when they realized the group they were trying to lure inside included the Governor.

It was decidedly not the sort of scene where the average politician would want to be spotted by his constituents, but Brown greeted the voters who were sampling its supposed delights with unfeigned nonchalance, seeming to enjoy their surprise at his presence.

One should not make too much of this. But the "life-style" issues are coming to the forefront, pushed to prominence by the Anita Bryants and Phyllis Schlaflys who organize a cultural counterattack that provokes the militance of those pushing for cultural change.

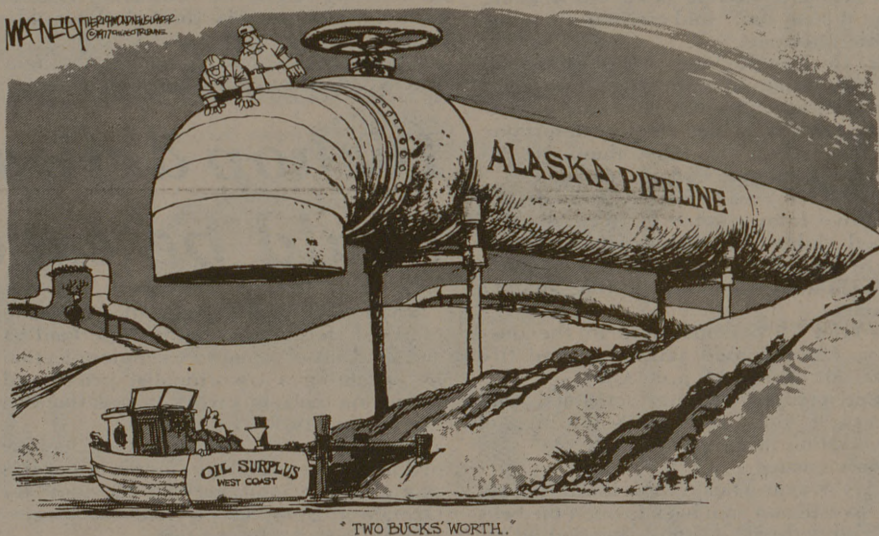
If the "life-style" issues challenge the traditional economic and foreign-policy concerns for prominence in our politics, they likely will divide the electorate on generational lines. It will be a battle between "the uptight and the laid-back."

And in that kind of division, Mondale and Carter are on one side, Brown on the other.

Many politicians — including Udall — agree with pollster Pat Caddell's thesis that Brown is the biggest threat to Carter's renomination in 1980. If not, he is very plausibly Mondale's opponent in the 1984 Democratic primaries.

Either way, the coincidences of that weekend may have a greater message for the future than the news they created in the present.

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"TWO BUCKS' WORTH."

ESP power — newest Soviet weapon

By DICK WEST
United Press International

WASHINGTON — Get set, everybody. It's coming next from the friendly folks who brought you the bomber gap, the missile gap and, most recently, the military satellite gap.

It's the ESP gap. Any day now we'll be hearing warnings that the Soviets are ahead of the United States in extra-sensory perception. Such a development became predictable in the aftermath of the Toth affair.

When American journalist Robert Toth was detained in Moscow after being given a document on parapsychology, the incident was viewed another trumped-up case of Soviets harassing the foreign press.

But later reports indicated the Soviets may have been playing it straight. Scien-

tific sources in Paris said they believed the Soviet secret police really did regard parapsychology experiments as state secrets.

In that light, the assumption must be

The lighter side

that the Soviets have achieved some sort of breakthrough in this field.

Parapsychologists long have claimed there is such a thing as psychic energy. Although the whole subject is still pretty murky, this type of energy supposedly exists in four forms: telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition and psychokinesis.

Any one of these phenomena, if harnes-

sed, would have obvious military applications. But I think the greatest potential would be in some sort of powerful thought wave.

Attempts already have been made to utilize this force commercially, most notably by ski resorts that distribute bumperstickers reading "Think Snow."

The problem has been that thought waves are widely diffused. Despite the millions of people on earth, you rarely find two people thinking snow at the same time. Thus the thought waves remain relatively feeble. Now suppose Soviet parapsychologists managed to concentrate thought waves. In other words, they train masses of people to synchronize their thoughts.

Now you've got a potential for turning psychic energy into an instrument of de-

struction. An entire army thinking snow in unison probably could create a thought wave strong enough to level a city the size of Aspen, Colo.

Let me make it clear I have no hard information that this is the state secret the Soviets are trying to protect. I'm relying strictly on my own extrasensory impressions.

And I'm getting strong flashes of precognition that we'll be hearing more about this soon through leaks from the CIA.

Then we'll see Pentagon officials dashing up to Capitol Hill with requests for several billion dollars to launch a big ESP crash program.

But with luck our disarmament negotiators can persuade the Soviets to include ESP in the SALT talks.

Slouch

by Jim Earle

Letters to the editor

Bus reduction hurts

Editor:

The following is a letter to the editor concerning the shuttle bus for the summer:

I do not understand Col. Oates' (chairman of the shuttle bus committee) current decision to reduce the shuttle bus service. I can accept the fact that someone is going "in-the-hole" and hours could be cut down and routes combined. What I cannot understand is why the last bus leaves campus at 4:45 p.m.?

I have had a class this summer session till 5 p.m. and will have next summer session, also. I will not be able to get home by bus unless I walk! Is that a student service? I am suggesting that the last bus leave campus at 5:15 p.m. I do not think that the extra run will increase the cost that much. Because if not some people, including me, may be resorting to parking permits and driving to class and forgetting about the shuttle bus service for the second summer session.

It seems to me that more money would be lost if the runs were not extended just 30 minutes. I do not feel that as it stands now, the shuttle bus service, which is a student service, is going to be adequately

serving the students for the second summer session.

— Susan Cochran

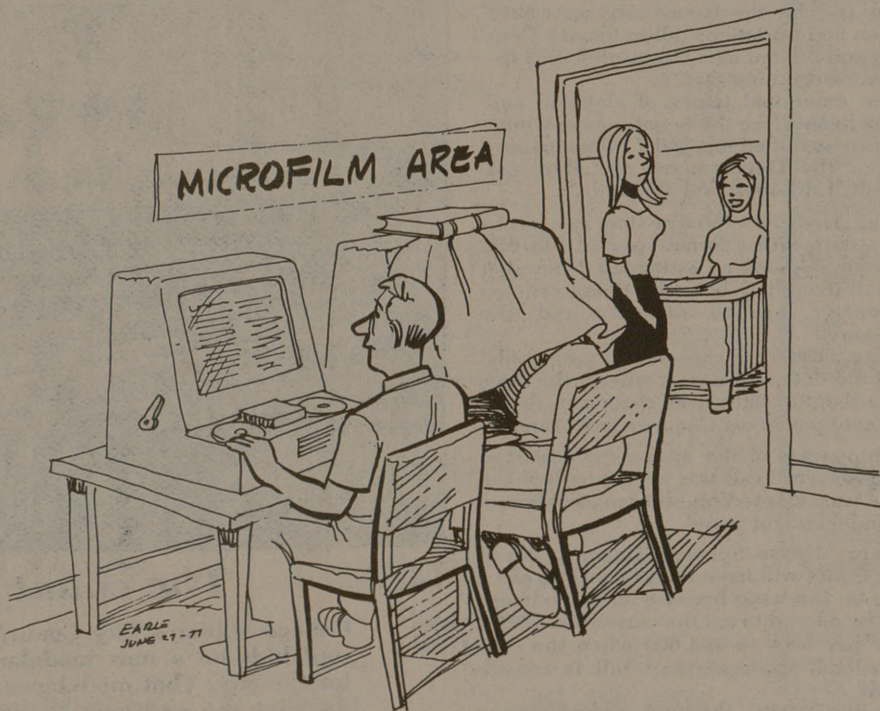
Editor's note: We presented your questions to Col. Oates and he explained the shuttle bus schedule changes as follows:

Some cutback was necessary because running the buses both summer sessions as they have been, the service would have lost over \$30,000, he said. By cutting service to 10 hours per day and cutting the routes from five to four that loss will be reduced.

But the contract with the company providing bus service requires that service be for 10 consecutive hours each day. With the first bus run at 7 a.m., that means the final run must leave the campus at 4:45 p.m. to finish its run by 5 p.m. as the contract requires, Oates said.

"The kids say they've got to leave at 7 a.m.," Oates said. "And we need a cushion to get started in the morning. We have more breakdowns in the morning." Starting service later in the morning, say 7:30 a.m., would increase the chance that students will miss an 8 a.m. class because of such breakdown, he said.

"We feel for these people, but with the 4:45 p.m. final run we feel we're hurting the fewest number of people," he said.



"GUESS WHO HAS TH' MICROFILM OF PLAYBOY MAGAZINE?"

Top of the News Campus

Centers give energy information

Gulf States Utilities and Texas A&M University have teamed up to educate the public on energy conservation. A team of professors from the College of Architecture and Environmental Design have trained Gulf States employees to staff "energy information center in Beaumont, Port Arthur and Conroe. Dean Raymond Reed of the Architectural College will serve as co-chairman of a board of advisors for the information program.

Holman speaks Wednesday

The national president of the Young Democrats, Dwayne Holman, will speak Wednesday at 12:30 p.m. in 206 MSC. Admission is free. Holman has served as executive director of the Texas Democratic Party.

Communications workshop held this week

The editor of the Pulitzer Prize winning Lufkin News, Joe Murray, will speak on investigative reporting during Texas A&M University's High School Communications Workshop held this week. About 450 students from 60 schools will attend the workshop which began yesterday and will end Friday. They will study topics in newspaper, newsmagazine, yearbook and photography. Murray will speak at 9 a.m. Thursday in 601 Rudder Tower.

State Up and up

The average price of regular gasoline across the state has passed 60 cents, according to the Texas Division of the American Automobile Association. The agency said average state gasoline prices per gallon were 60.2 cents for regular, 63 cents for unleaded and 64.6 for premium. The averages were based on a survey of 231 Texas service stations.

Putting it to work

Farmer Frank Gray of Lubbock has a renewable resource that is depletable only if his fellow citizens stop taking showers or flushing their toilets. Through a contract with the city, Gray has plugged his irrigation system into a waste treatment plant. So after the water is treated, it flows to his land on which he grows cotton, grain sorghum, wheat and alfalfa. Gray said he has had problems getting workers because they are afraid of catching communicable disease. He insists there is no danger. "There is some odor," Gray said, but not real much.

Nation

Energy costs may put us in the hole

A return to living in caves may be the answer to the energy problem, says Rep. Bruce Vento, D-Minn. He believes it so strongly he has attached an amendment to energy legislation requiring the Department of Housing and Urban Development to study underground housing. He claims pioneers built houses of sod and the Indians built homes in hills and riverbanks. "Those were among the most weathered and energy-efficient houses in history," Vento says.

Gay human rights attacked, says Hay

Gay liberation activist Henry Hay said there is a nation-wide campaign to "obliterate the gay human rights" and members of Congress are helping it. He named Sen. S. I. Hayakawa, R-Calif., as one of the anti-gay congressmen. "He speaks for the voices of the new reactionary forces from the right," Hay said. "He does not speak from strength, but from uncertainty." Hay, 65, spoke to a group of 75 persons taking part in a march and rally Saturday in Albuquerque, N.M.

They'd rather cough than listen

Crying babies are more likely to irritate airline passengers than cigarette smokers, according to a survey taken by the Airline Passengers Association. "A majority of the respondents favor segregation of infants," the study said. Only 10 people suggested outright prohibition of infants on airplanes. Of the 10,000 travelers questioned, most opposed additional restriction on cigarette smokers.

The catch isn't him

To stay out of a Miami jail, Mercedes Brenner must stop forcing her romantic attentions on Rolando Duvalion, who says the 47-year-old woman broke into his apartment to get a picture of him. Miss Brenner was released Saturday after serving 35 days of a 90-day contempt of court sentence. But there is a catch: She must leave the 53-year-old widower alone. "Please stay away from that man," Judge Wilkie Ferguson Jr. pleaded. "Don't even walk past his office." Duvalion has filed 58 complaints against Miss Brenner. She still faces charges of burglary and forgery, after signing Duvalion's name to several checks.

World Mice stop train

A hermetically sealed railroad car was sent back to Germany yesterday after the Munich-to-Rome express was delayed for several hours — by mice. The train was halted at Verona, Italy after passengers spotted the mice aboard the car. The passengers insisted they would not continue their trip unless the coach was detached from the train. So, Italian railway workers sealed the doors of the car and sent the "rodent special" back to Germany.

The Battalion

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