

Viewpoint

The Battalion
Texas A&M University

Monday
August 29, 1977

Taking it easy

Life with 29,500 sardines

They're back. Welcomed with open arms by merchants, with determination by local police, with resignation by residents, but ignored by no one. The Aggies are back.

Today, something over 29,500 students are trying to begin another memorable year of learning experience at Texas A&M University. Thousands of professors, staff members and assorted University employes are trying to survive the first onslaught of that learning experience.

Let's face it. Texas A&M has become one awfully big, awfully crowded university. We've enjoyed the fruits of super fast growth

"firsts" and "bests" and "most" to satisfy the bragginiest Aggie anywhere. We have arrived.

But to most students this morning it probably look like all of humanity had arrived, on his shuttle bus or in his parking place or ahead of him in line, just five minutes before he did.

The books he needs are sold out, his choices for parking are Snook and Hearne, meals seem totally insufficient to replace the energy necessary to obtain them. There are just too many people.

That's the way Texas A&M is and will remain and there's nothing we can do to change that.

But we can do something about the way we cope with the crowds that have become a way of

life here. We can't make the problems go away, but we can make them easier to bear. We can r-e-l-a-x.

One of the most common farewells you probably hear today is "Take it easy." But how often do we take it easy?

When you're waiting in line, or stuck in traffic that doesn't seem to be moving at all, or cursing those blankety-blank pedestrians that keep getting in the way, do you ever wonder why you're in such a hurry? Is saving a minute worth giving yourself high blood pressure or running down some bicyclist?

For better or worse, in sickness and in health, we're stuck with each other. So let's make the best of it. And take it easy.

L. R. L.

Losing a good man

Far too often, a good man is appreciated only when he's leaving. This is unfortunately the case with Dr. Richard E. Wainerdi.

Dr. Wainerdi is a creator. He takes ideas, or dreams, or turns them into programs and buildings and people doing jobs that truly seem out of a dream.

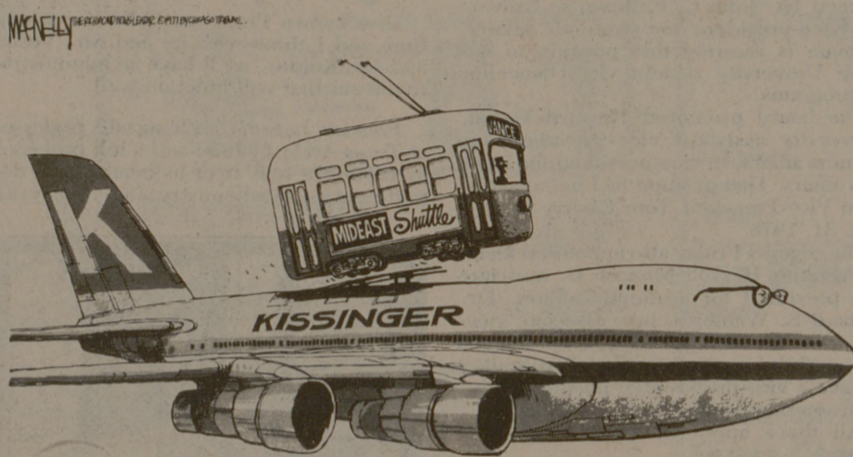
His "creations" at Texas A&M include many of the major new programs that have been developed at this University in recent years. He has either engineered or helped establish the College of Medicine, which opens this fall; the Center for Energy and Mineral Resources; the Center for Trace Characterization; the Nuclear Science Center; the Cyclotron Institute; the biomedical engineering program; and construction of the Olin Teague Research Center.

His rise at Texas A&M was meteoric. He became a full professor of chemical engineering at 28, the youngest full professor ever at Texas A&M. He became assistant vice-president for academic affairs in 1971 and then associate vice-president for academic affairs in 1974.

Dr. Wainerdi announced last week that he is resigning that associate vice-presidency Sept. 1 to take "an extraordinary opportunity" with a Houston engineering firm.

It seems a shame that we appreciate the contributions of a man like Dr. Wainerdi only when he's leaving. Good men are too hard to find these days.

L.R.L.



Jimmy's buddies an endangered species?

By DAVID S. BRODER

WASHINGTON — Washington can be a two-faced town, and Bert Lance, who has enjoyed more than his share of its cordiality, is now experiencing some of its capacity for cruelty.

No stranger can imagine how desperate the embattled budget director is for relief from the continued controversy over his private finances. But a measure of that desperation can be gained by the pitiable eagerness with which Lance embraced as "very favorable" a report on his banking practices by the Comptroller of the Currency. That report was in most respects embarrassing, and in some, downright damning. Lance swallowed his pride and accepted the judgment of no proven criminality as if it were an accolade, so eager was he to put the issue to rest.

But that hope has already been shattered in a wave of critical press comment. Further congressional hearings and official investigations are certain.

As always in matters of this sort, the man in the middle is in part the source of his own predicament and in part the victim of circumstance. Lance's overdrafts, his many failures to file required reports, his generosity with the company plane, his willingness to throw business to banks that gave him personal loans — all bespeak the entrepreneur who had trouble making the distinction in his own mind between his private affairs and his official responsibilities.

But Lance has been ill served by some who thought they were helping him. With characteristic eagerness, Jimmy Carter recruited him for his administration at a time when Lance's personal finances were anything but in order.

People in the Comptroller's office conveniently failed to send some of the Lance records to the Senate committee holding

confirmation hearings. The committee whisked him through on a bipartisan wave of goodwill, despite the fact that staff members tried to alert some of the senators to the problems that were all too visible in Lance's own financial disclosure statement.

None of this has turned out to Lance's benefit. Rather, it has helped to prolong his personal ordeal. That same boomerang effect is predictably the consequence of the President's dramatic descent from Camp David last week to embrace the budget director on national television and declare, "Bert, I'm proud of you."

At that moment, the Lance affair became the Carter affair, and took on vastly

larger dimensions. To understand why, it is helpful to contrast the President's response to this case with his handling of the Sorensen affair.

Theodore Sorensen, Carter's first choice to head the Central Intelligence Agency, came under criticism for various actions he had taken as a private citizen: his draft classification, his deposition in the Ellsberg case, his tax deduction on a gift of historical papers.

Like Lance, Sorensen was charged with no illegality. But when serious questions were raised about whether his pattern of behavior matched the standards Carter had set for his administration, the President stepped back from his appointee and allowed him to withdraw.

Not so with Lance, and one must ask why. No one can doubt that Jimmy Carter is smart enough to know that the public record of Lance's financial transactions conflicts with the standard of disinterested behavior which Carter has proclaimed as his own moral code. This is, after all, the same man who said he would fire the FBI director for accepting a window valance made in the FBI carpentry shop!

But Carter is reluctant to fire Lance, or allow him to withdraw as Sorensen did. Lance is a friend — one of the very few men his own age with whom Jimmy Carter feels at ease. Walking together, relaxing after tennis, eating lunch off trays, Lance is that precious thing — a political contemporary with whom this President can talk openly and frankly, unburden himself, share the decisions he must make.

Whatever he has been with other people, Lance has been unselfish without fail in his dealings with Carter, and the President has come to depend on him. But that dependency, now dramatized in the Lance affair, is of fateful consequence for Carter. He has shown his enemies where he is vulnerable.

He has a limitless supply of energy and ideas, a plentitude of principles, but very few friends on whom he can lean. That dependence could be Jimmy Carter's Achilles' heel, especially since some of those friends — like Charles Kirbo, the Atlanta lawyer, and Patrick Caddell, the political pollster — are even now engaged in the tricky maneuver of trying to keep their prosperous private businesses separate from their role as presidential consultants.

To borrow the Comptroller's phrase and apply it, not to Lance but to Carter, it is "unsafe and unsound" for a President to find himself in such a position.

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"DON'T YOU GUYS HAVE SOMETHING BETTER TO DO?"

Germans fighting unemployment 'flexitime'

By HEINZ MURMANN
International Writers Service

BONN, WEST GERMANY — Germans are supposed to be stiff, disciplined, industrious and addicted to rigid schedules. But despite this image, West Germany is currently experimenting with new ways to make working hours more tractable.

One system, known as "flexitime," is designed to allow employees to adapt their arrival and departure hours to their particular needs or tastes. The system is being copied elsewhere in Europe as well as in the United States.

Meanwhile, studies are going on to determine whether the work week, which runs 40 hours over five days, can somehow be shortened to accommodate economic and social changes in West Germany.

There are difficulties in these ideas. But the fact that innovations have been introduced or are being contemplated indicates that traditional concepts of work have to be reformed to contemporary conditions.

As "flexitime" now functions here, employees can show up at their places of work at any time between seven and nine o'clock in the morning, and leave after completing eight hours of work.

About four million men and women, or roughly 16 per cent of the labor force, operate under this arrangement. It has two main advantages.

It helps to ease commuting during the morning and evening rush hours, which have become horrible in the major cities. And elastic hours permit workers to fulfill other duties. A mother, for example, can see her children off to school before going to her job, and a father can quit his office early in order to shop for dinner.

The "flexitime" scheme was conceived in 1965 by Christel Kaemmerer, a woman economist, as a device to alleviate the labor shortage that then existed by bringing mothers into the work force.

It was pioneered by Messerschmitt-Boelkow-Blohm, the aviation giant, as a method of decongesting traffic. Other companies copied it. Some found, as a result, a drop in absenteeism and a rise in productivity.

The notion has since been taken up in other European countries, such as Britain, France, Switzerland and Sweden, and also by several American firms, like Bristol-Myers, Exxon and the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company.

Successful as it is, "flexitime" does not solve the problems of families in which a working couple must assure the full care of their children. This problem has inspired the idea of a husband and wife each working half-time, so that one can be at home while the other is on the job.

A case in point is that of a young couple in the city of Hannover. They are both judges. She goes to court in the morning and he in the afternoon, and they take turns caring for their baby daughter. They each work for half-pay, which of course adds up to the equivalent of a fulltime salary for one.

This approach has been especially applauded by women who want to share the role of breadwinner without disregarding their children. But the Hannover example is too unique to be applied widely.

The Minister of Interior, who believes that the federal bureaucracy is inflated, has proposed that civil servants work half-time and perform other jobs for the rest of the day. Another senior government official has actually put this idea into practice by hiring part-time speechwriters.

The notion of cutting down the working hours of bureaucrats has aroused opposi-

tion, however, both from their professional associations and from local governments. Their opposition is based on costs.

They argue that while salaries of officials, schoolteachers and other public employees can be halved, it is not so easy to reduce their health insurance, family allowances and pensions, which are guaranteed by law. In addition, they contend, the civil service cannot run efficiently at a two-shift cadence.

... summer's end

Readers,

With this issue the 1977 summer staff bids you farewell. Beginning with tomorrow's Battalion Editor Jamie Aitken and his fall staff take over.

The 64-page newspaper in your hands is the result of six weeks of intensive work. We hope you enjoy it.

It's been a good summer. Let's see what the fall brings.

L. R. L.

Top of the News

Campus

Student aide positions open

Thirty positions for Student Government executive assistants are now open. For information and applications phone 845-3051 or come by the Student Government office, 216C MSC. Interviews will be held Aug. 29-Sept. 2 by appointment only.

State

Labor Day deaths predicted

The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) says it fears traffic accidents during the Labor Day weekend will claim 44 lives. Fifty persons were killed in traffic accidents during the 1976 Labor Day weekend. The number of traffic deaths this year are running 5 to 6 per cent higher than during the same period in 1976, the DPS said. "Holiday drivers seem to be exercising more restraint this year, however, and we hope this trend continues," a DPS spokesman said.

Nation

Governors to discuss policies

The annual Southern Governor's Conference begins in San Antonio Monday with Gov. Dolph Briscoe acting as chairman. The southern governors generally agree that President Carter has performed well in his first seven months as president, but they are expected to present resolutions to suggest Carter change his stand on energy and the Panama Canal. Deregulation of natural gas and opposition to any reduction in U.S. control of the Panama Canal are items to be discussed during the session.

Military union voted down

The Senate Armed Services Committee has unanimously approved legislation that would prohibit members of the armed forces from joining a union and would also forbid labor organizations from trying to recruit military personnel. The committee cited experiences in unionized European armies as evidence military readiness might be impaired by the unions. The action came in a previously unpublished session on Aug. 18, after Congress had started its summer recess.

Vance trip 'major step'

Secretary of State Cyrus Vance was greeted Saturday after his "highly successful" trip to China by President Carter. Carter said the trip was a major step forward in normalizing relations with the Peking government. Vance said the objectives were deliberately limited and exploratory, but very successful.

Miners contract talks to begin

Officials of the mine workers union and the coal industry will meet in Pittsburgh Tuesday to prepare for negotiations on a new contract to replace a three-year agreement that expires Dec. 6. A Bituminous Coal Operators Association spokesman said the contract talks wouldn't take up the key issue of benefit cuts — the cause of a two-month-old wildcat walkout.

New York's finances kept secret

Federal investigators have discovered New York City officials misled the public for years about the city's true financial condition. Sources said the city's financial records were based on two systems of accounting — an accrual basis for income and a cash basis for expenses. The mixed system misled the public about the true size of the city's debt.

World

Travel unaffected by strike

Air traffic out of Britain seemed undisturbed this weekend despite a four-day assistant air traffic controller strike which began Friday. Major airlines said they cancelled 30 to 40 per cent of their flights, but an official at London's Heathrow Airport said, "We seem to be operating more smoothly now that the assistants have gone on strike than we did during their work slow-down." The assistants are striking for a pay hike approved in 1975 but never granted because the government said it infringed its pay policy.

Embassy fire threatens security

The U.S. Embassy in Moscow was damaged by a fire that broke out Friday and Soviet firemen tried to enter the top-secret military attaché's office. U.S. security agents refused to allow the Soviets to enter the secret quarters on the top floor of the embassy. Ambassador Malcolm Toon said he saw no reason to suspect "a sinister Soviet backdrop" to the fire and blamed the 18-hour blaze on an "electrical fault."

Quebec goes French

The Parti Quebecois government of Quebec took its first formal step toward creating an independent French state out of mainly English-speaking Canada. A hotly contested bill was voted into law which made Quebec officially unilingually French-speaking. During the debate on the legislation, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau said the federal government would not rule on whether the bill contravened the constitution until after it was passed into law.

The Battalion

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LETTERS POLICY

Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words and are subject to being cut to that length or less if longer. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit such letters and does not guarantee to publish any letter. Each letter must be signed, show the address of the writer and list a telephone number for verification.

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