

Viewpoint

The Battalion
Texas A&M University

Friday,
September 2, 1977

Another Aggie joke

What happens when tens of thousands of people, bicycles and automobiles are crammed into a very small area, with each one headed in a different direction? The kind of traffic chaos, confusion and occasional collisions that have appeared at and around the Texas A&M campus this week.

Local police have reported a marked increase in traffic accidents, beginning last weekend with the main wave of returning students. Yesterday a student was injured, luckily only slightly, when he was struck by a car just off the University campus. There doesn't seem much hope the situation will improve in the near future.

Much of the problem seems to come from drivers who are either in too big a hurry or are too reckless to notice pedestrians and other drivers. Being late for class, in a hurry to get home or just "off in another world" — whatever the reason, the result is the same.

One of the least funny Aggie jokes in recent years has been the way most Aggies drive like that famous bat with the devil on his tail. The streets around this campus are hardly safe for man or beast on football weekends, and the situation doesn't improve that much during the week.

So it's up to your choice every time you climb into the driver's seat. But remember: the Aggie life you save may be your own. L. R. L.

A grain of salt?

The federal government's "economic indicators" have been released and — as usual — you can use them to prove just about anything you want.

For openers, the Consumer Price Index for July rose only four-tenths of 1 per cent, the smallest monthly increase since last December. That, obviously, is good.

But industrial production rose only five-tenths of 1 per cent during the month, the smallest increase this year. That, just as obviously is bad.

Meanwhile, new housing starts leaped 8.1 per cent last month, another encouraging sign that housing construction will set a record this year.

However, personal income during July showed an increase of only eight-tenths of 1 per cent, with \$5 billion of the \$11.7 billion hike said due to a one-time increase in Social Security payments.

As George Bernard Shaw once said, "If all the world's economists were laid end to end, they still wouldn't reach a conclusion."

Considering the July economic report, it's easy to see why. Huntington W. Va. Herald-Dispatch

On selling energy and canals

Uncle Jimmy's latest deal for you

By DICK WEST
United Press International

WASHINGTON — Experts are saying President Carter will have to do a tremendous "selling job" to get the Panama Canal treaty approved.

If that sounds familiar, there's reason for it. Not very long ago they were saying the same thing about Carter's energy program.

Since it's pretty hard to run two selling jobs at once, I got to thinking that maybe Carter should combine the canal issue with the energy crisis.

Certainly some of the arguments and admonitions used to promote energy conservation could be applied with equal force to the Panama issue.

The lighter side

Everyone agrees the main thing wrong with the Panama Canal is that it is located in a foreign country. Critics of the proposed treaty point out that if the United States relinquishes operating rights, we will then be almost totally dependent on foreign canals.

Oh, sure, we would still have a token capacity — the New York State Barge Canal, the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal,

etc. But even some of our domestic canals, such as those in the Great Lakes area, involve Canadian interests.

Should there be a foreign embargo, America would be up the creek canal-wise. So Carter's course is clear.

His campaign to win approval of the

Panama treaty should be coupled with a drive to make the United States self-sufficient in canals.

At one time, U.S. canal production was booming. Canal digging in the eastern part of the country was well advanced and the diggers were steadily pushing west.



"Do you really think it's wise to get out in a hurricane just to go to class?"

Slouch

by Jim Earle



Top of the News

Campus

Senate, Judicial Board open

An election will be held during the first meeting of the Texas A&M University Student Senate to fill the position of Speaker of the Senate. The Senate will meet Sept. 7 at 7:30 in room 204, Harrington Center. Senators and non-senators are eligible for the position.

Applications for positions on the Student Government Judicial Board will be accepted through Monday, Sept. 5. Two seats are open for each of the following: sophomore, junior, senior and graduate student.

Applications will be accepted through Monday, Sept. 5 for the position of Director of Information for Student Government. The director will be responsible for all aspects of public relations for Student Government.

A meeting for anyone interested in becoming a Student Government aide will be held on Monday, Sept. 5 at 7:30 p.m. in room 410 Rudder Tower.

State

Massage parlor law barred

A federal judge yesterday temporarily barred Harris County from enforcing a new ordinance restricting massage parlor from massaging persons of the opposite sex. The judge said enforcement of the ordinance would cause irreparable harm to the operators of 18 massage parlors who filed suit. The plaintiffs contend the ordinance would require them to violate federal sex discrimination laws.

Court vetoes Yarborough plan

The Texas Supreme Court yesterday rejected an attempt by former Associate Justice Donald B. Yarborough to block the opening of his disbarment trial next week. Yarborough resigned from the Supreme Court July 15 in the face of legislative proceedings to remove him from office. In addition to the disbarment suit, he also faces criminal charges of forgery and perjury in Travis County.

Nation

No change in Social Security

The Carter Administration is trying to dispel fears that the retirement age for full Social Security benefits may be changed. Juanita Kreps, who advanced the idea of raising the retirement age for full benefits from 65 to 68 as a possibility to help the Social Security System's financial pinch, said the administration is not actively considering any proposal to alter the present system with full benefits at 65.

Wizard says IWY attended

The Ku Klux Klan imperial wizard was quoted in yesterday's Detroit News as saying the Klan has been infiltrating the women's movement for the last three or four years. He said hundreds of members of the Klan's Ladies Auxiliary have attended most of the state International Women's Year meetings "opposing the women's libbers" and will attend the Nov. 18-21 National Women's Conference in Houston to "oppose what's going on."

Waylon charged for cocaine

Country singer Waylon Jennings, 40, and an assistant to his business manager have been ordered held for a federal grand jury on charges of conspiring to possess and distribute cocaine. "The prosecutors don't have enough to convict, but they have enough for probable cause," U.S. Magistrate Kent Sandidge III told one of Jennings' attorneys. There was no indication when the grand jury would hear the case.

World

Rhodesian plan suggested

Britain yesterday formally unveiled a joint Anglo-American peace plan for Rhodesia, calling for Prime Minister Ian Smith to step down, both the Rhodesian army and black guerrillas to be disbanded and a U.N. peace-keeping force to be stationed in the African country for six months before transfer of power to a black majority government. The plan was handed to Smith in Salisbury by British Foreign Secretary David Owen and U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young.

The Battalion

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University coming out into the 'open'

Education for the common man

By RUDOLF KLEIN
International Writers Service

LONDON — Turn on your radio or television set early in the morning here, and you are likely to be greeted by a lecture on thermodynamics, medieval history or the social views of 19th century Russian novelists.

This is the Open University, which projects the classroom into the homes of some 60,000 British teachers, engineers, workers, housewives and others eager to improve their knowledge.

Begun by the Labor government a few years ago, the Open University is based on the notion that higher education in Britain, which has been traditionally reserved for a relatively small intellectual or social elite, ought to be available to citizens regardless of age, income or background.

In this sense it is one of the most interesting experiments to be initiated in a decade, and it is being copied in the United States by such institutions as the University of Maryland, the University of Houston and the University of Southern Illinois. An estimated 3,000 American students are enrolled in similar programs in four states.

As it functions in Britain, the Open University is far more complicated than merely broadcasting talks by professors to auditors. On the contrary, a large and complex organization is involved in the operation.

In addition to watching or listening to radio or televised lectures, students can take correspondence courses, arranged with part-time tutors at some 300 special centers throughout the country. They may also attend summer schools.

The Open University has become so popular that nearly half of the 50,000 people who apply for entrance every year are rejected. Since the operation is liberally endowed by the government, however, the tuition is low for those who are accepted. A student, it is estimated, can obtain a degree for no more than \$700.

The real obstacle is time. To win an Open University degree requires about 2,400 hours of study. And even though the curriculum is usually spread out over six years, this requires a good deal of dedication, since the majority of the students are either working at full-time jobs or running homes and caring for children.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the dropout rate is relatively high. Of every five students admitted, two persist long enough to get degrees. A great many other collect course credits.

The founders of the Open University are somewhat disappointed by the students they have attracted. They had hoped to appeal to people with little schooling. But instead, they have gotten rather well-educated candidates whose objective is to raise their qualifications.

Many of those taking Open University courses are schoolteachers, who are automatically eligible for higher salaries if they acquire advanced degrees. The rest of the students include scientist, engineers, housewives and technicians of various kinds. About 20 per cent are above the age of 50.

Clearly, the experiment has broadened educational opportunities in Britain. A larger proportion of students with working-class backgrounds are in the Open University than in conventional institutions of higher learning. Besides, the Open University services prisoners in jails and handicapped confined to their homes.

It is probably still too early to measure how successful the Open University has been in helping its graduates find jobs, especially now, when unemployment is high. From the start, however, the Open University has taken care to keep up its standards so that its degrees would carry weight.

Sir Walter Perry, the head of the Open University, is a distinguished academic figure with doctorates in medicine and sci-

ence from the University of St. Andrew in Scotland. The faculty, which numbers 250, is also of high caliber.

Given the geographical spread of its students and the disparity in their levels, the Open University has had to pioneer a new sort of educational technology. It has developed its own textbooks as well as special kits for science students using their homes as laboratories. It grades examination papers by computer.

This somewhat packaged approach to education has meant that the Open University is designed to cope with the average student rather than encourage of the

kind exceptional ones who attend the great British institutions. So its degree may be lacking in prestige.

But the Open University is here to stay. Testimony to its acceptance lies in that, although it was created by the Labor party as an exercise in egalitarianism, it is supported by the Conservatives, who believe that individuals ought to rise through their own efforts. Thus it has transcended ideology, which is a tribute to its usefulness.

(Klein, a senior fellow at London's Center for Studies in Social Policy, writes on social issues in Britain.)

Letter to the editor

Laundry service defended

Editor:

The University Laundry Service has been a helpful service to the students of Texas A&M University for many years. Texas A&M is unique in that it offers the student a laundry and cleaning service. This past summer an off-campus firm was contracted to prevent tremendous losses to the University. Due to some misunderstanding between students and the Laundry Service, many students dropped their laundry service.

A meeting was held on the first day of classes to discuss these misunderstandings. The following compromises should demonstrate how the laundry plan will serve the student's needs:

1. The 3 shirts and 3 pants allowed each week is intended to include any type of shirt or pants (excluding tux shirts).
2. If the full allowance of 3 shirts and 3 pants is not utilized, the remainder may be substituted for any 4 miscellaneous items (except towels).

There will be no extra charge for miscellaneous items if the items exceeding the allowance do not exceed one pound. The following is an example of approximate weight:

- 8-9 pairs of socks per pound
- 5-6 T-shirts per pound
- 6-8 drawers per pound

Fabric-Care has agreed to make refunds at a later date if this system does not meet your needs. The University has also agreed to let students get back on the laundry plan if they have already resigned. Payment should be made in the Fiscal Office.

Due to the inconvenience of doing one's own laundry, I would recommend that each student consider the advantages of this program. Your suggestions and questions are welcome and should be directed to the University Laundry Board.

—Scott Patton '79
Member, University Laundry Board