

# Viewpoint

The Battalion  
Texas A&M University

Monday  
September 12, 1977

## University on laundry merry-go-round

Things seem to change with great caution in Aggieland, it seems. But when something does change, it almost invariably sets off plenty of fireworks.

Such has been the case this fall with the new laundry service, contracted out for the first time to a local laundry, Fabric Care Service. The University laundry service had been losing \$50,000-60,000 per year before it was discontinued last spring.

Fabric Care took the contract for the laundry service with the understanding that prices would be increased and laundry limits per week lowered to make the service a paying proposition. But most students on the service didn't know, or didn't realize, that change was being made until they came back for fall classes.

They weren't the only ones caught by surprise. Fabric Care wasn't prepared for the first-week crunch of students. While owner Ron Vandiver was adjusting personnel and equipment to handle the rush, students complained of long waiting lines and week-long waits for laundry to be returned.

Several hundred of the almost 2,000 students originally on the service have dropped it since classes started. Many of these may have been students who really weren't sure they wanted the service anyway, Director of Management Services Ed Davis said.

"In the spring when we didn't know what would happen with the service, we told students to sign up for it, and they could drop it later without penalty," Davis said.

Students are complaining that they're not getting their money's worth. Many are ready to drop the service. (see related letter, this page) Vandiver says he can't charge less and stay in business. It seems neither side can win.

The day of the on-campus laundry may be past. The cost of such a service may have exceeded the price students will pay for the service. That's a question for Mr. Vandiver and University officials to answer.

But if the service is going to survive, it needs a fair chance. In another two weeks Fabric Care will have most of its systematic problems solved. Then if the service still isn't working it deserves to die. But it deserves that chance.

L.R.L.



## Carter learning his lessons

By HELEN THOMAS  
UPI White House Reporter

WASHINGTON — President Carter is learning the limits of presidential power and also his possibilities as the preacher in the "bully pulpit."

Carter has said in many interviews that he cannot wave a "magic wand" to solve all problems, particularly those that were around before he assumed the presidency. He also likes to point out the Arab-Israeli problems goes back 2,000 years.

### Washington Window

But that does not lessen the pressure on him to strive for solutions, or to keep his campaign promises to the people. He faces a much tougher Congress, despite its Democratic majority, than his recent predecessors.

His biggest test for the "bully pulpit" as

Teddy Roosevelt called it, will be the selling of the Panama Canal treaty. If he wins the people to his side, he probably will be able to gather enough votes in the Senate for ratification.

A defeat in the Senate will be a severe blow to his own stature as president and to his power to lead in foreign affairs.

Carter has found that congressional leaders are free with their advice, and they go public with it now.

When he went all-out in defense of his friend, budget director Bert Lance and his banking problems, Carter found himself deserted by Senate Majority Leader

Robert Byrd of West Virginia and Sen. Abraham Ribicoff, D-Conn., who called for Lance's resignation.

Carter responded with a brusque expression of his "appreciation" and said he hoped hearings on the allegations against the budget director would begin without delay.

But soon it became clear that Carter was

standing almost alone with Lance on the issue. He could not rally supporters on Capitol Hill to stay with him on a sinking ship.

In the old days of a powerful presidency, President Johnson would have demanded unquestioning loyalty.

Privately, he would have made his compromises and his swaps, but he wanted the world to know that he was in the driver's seat.

On the Panama Canal treaties, Byrd, who should be carrying the ball for Carter, is taking a wait-and-see attitude. In effect, Carter has to go to the people to whip up support from the constituencies before Senate lieutenants will be responsive.

In many ways, Carter finds that he is being forced to lead from a defensive position.

He accused Vernon Jordan, executive secretary of the Urban League, of making "demagogic" statements on the administration's attitude toward the joblessness

and state of blacks in the country.

A few weeks later, through his spokesman, he expressed his "deep concern" over the alarming rise in unemployment among black youths, a problem not only Jordan but others including Coretta King had been warning him about for some time.

Carter is learning the hard way. So far, he has shown the ability to retreat as a better part of valor. Sometimes, he seems to retreat without a fight. Sometimes, he appears resigned to defeat when outside forces come into play.

Such has been his attitude on the Middle East recently when he said in an interview that there would be "great disillusionment" in the world if the parties in the conflict failed to go to the peace table.

In the education of a President, however, Carter also has learned that he can use his position to communicate and to persuade and that the White House is a powerful platform when he chooses to use it.

## Intellectuals rocking French politics

By ADALBERT DE SEGONZAC  
International Writers Service

PARIS — Few countries in the world are more swayed by fresh ideas than France, where intellectuals often attain the prominence of movie stars. Thus the French are currently being exposed to a group known as the "new philosophers," whose theories may have an important impact on the political scene here.

These young intellectuals, who have emerged within the past year, were involved in the student revolt that rocked Paris nearly a decade ago. They have since repudiated leftist thinking on the grounds that it inevitably leads to the totalitarianism depicted by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, the exiled Soviet dissident writer.

The startling popularity of these intellectuals is especially significant now, since it coincides with the campaign building up for the legislative elections scheduled to take place next spring.

The Union of the Left, a coalition of Socialists and Communists, at the moment appears destined to win the elections and overturn the conservatives who have been

in power for the past 18 years.

But the so-called "new philosophers" seem to be exerting a measure of influence on this situation. They have driven a wedge into the coalition to the extent that their warnings have raised doubts among supporters of the Socialists as to the future of an alliance with the Communists.

The Communist media have denounced the young intellectuals as "rightists," a label that bears a particular opprobrium in France. But Francois Mitterand, the Socialist leader, is reserving judgement on them, thereby indicating that he may not completely oppose their views.

Meanwhile, the conservatives who back President Valery Giscard d'Estaing are seeking to exploit the ferment. They are asserting that their disenchantment reflects a profound distrust of the Union of the Left throughout France.

And added to all this in a society that thrives on changing fashions in thought the young intellectuals are being lionized on television and in the newspapers, and that has made them attractive to the public.

Most of these intellectuals are under the

age of 40. One of the most vigorous among them is Bernard-Henri Levy, an author and publisher, who describes himself in his book, "Barbarism With a Human Face," as having been born of that "diabolic couple, Fascism and Stalinism."

Another key figure in the movement is Andre Glucksmann, who argues in his best selling book, "The Master Thinkers," that Communism is a perversion of Marxism. Others involved are Jean-Marie Benoist, the author of "Marx is Dead," and Maurice Clavel, an older journalist who has written several polemical books.

Most of these men, active in the student uprising that swept Paris in 1968, were disappointed by the lack of support they received then from the Communist Party.

Their disappointment peaked with the publication of Solzhenitsyn's "The Gulag Archipelago," with its revelations of the horrors of the Soviet penal system. This led the young intellectuals to the conclusion that a classless society, such as that proposed by the Communists, cannot be established without oppression of the worst sort.

The "new philosophers" were so named to contrast them with the 18th century philosophers, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Voltaire and Diderot, whose Utopian no-

tions were perverted by the terror of the French Revolution.

Basic to the thinking of these present-day intellectuals is a rejection of ideology as a cure for problems. Levy, for example, argues that formulas for promoting progress are an illusion and that the best that can be done are practical efforts that prevent conditions from worsening. His philosophy, in short, is both pragmatic and pessimistic.

These young men claim a degree of success, pointing out that Socialist spokesmen no longer indulge in grandiose abstractions. They deny the Communist charge that they are a plot against the leftist coalition, saying that they will probably vote against the conservatives in next year's election.

Whatever the "new philosophers" actually achieve, they have injected a healthy dose of controversy into the political picture, and this promises to increase the drama of an election campaign that is already stirring the French more than any event in years.

(Segonzac, a former French correspondent in Washington, writes on political issues in France.)

### Letter to the editor

## Who's going to adjust?

Editor:

It appears that laundry service at Texas A&M will be obsolete in the near future. If the efficiency of the service cannot be improved, the service cannot long survive.

Costs are still on the rise. What additional limitations will Fabric Care place on your laundry list next year? How much will Fabric Care charge next year? Next semester?

Cast your eyes at this quote from the Sept. 6 Battalion.

"Eddie J. Davis, director of management services, said students will just have to adjust to the new system."

That is just the kind of attitude to which students should never adjust! And why should we adjust to a more expensive fee accompanied with less service?

I would rather spend \$1.20 and two hours washing my clothes at a local laundromat than spend four days waiting for my laundry bag to be returned from Fabric Care Service. I can wash seven pairs of pants and the rest of my laundry for \$1.20.

Don't adjust to the system if it works to your disadvantage. Let the system adjust to you, or let it die. I'll bet Mr. Vandiver wears more than three pairs of pants a week.

— Greg W. Boatman

Editor's note: How you handle your dirty

laundry is your own business. However, several points in your letter need some clarification.

Your quotation from Ed Davis does not reflect the point Davis was trying to make. As you quoted him, Davis seems to be completely unconcerned about the students' laundry problems. However, that is not the case.

Davis has said the University's business personnel have been trying to make the most of a difficult situation with the laundry service. Any new program is going to be inefficient until all the problems are corrected.

But if your complaint is, as you say, trying to "adjust to a more expensive fee accompanied by less service," then welcome to the business world.

Yes, the service costs more and offers less. But that's because for far too long the University was running the service at a \$50,000-60,000 loss per year. Students got used to those prices and services. What business do you know that can run that large a loss each year and keep operating?

Fabric Care's contract allows them to change service limitations, with University approval. But those changes would have to be made well in advance and only to bring their prices in line with local laundry prices, Davis said yesterday.

So drop the service if you want. But don't expect it to make adjustments that are impossible.



"SINCE YOU'RE FROM OUT-OF-STATE, MAYBE I'D BETTER TELL YOU SOMETHING ABOUT TEXAS WEATHER."

## Top of the News

### State

#### Former prostitute won't testify

A former prostitute and heroin addict who drove the getaway car the night Dr. John Hill was killed has refused to testify in a wrongful death suit against the plastic surgeon's father-in-law. Attorneys in the Houston trial hope to provide the woman's testimony via a videotaped deposition.

The surviving family of Dr. Hill is suing millionaire oilman Ash Robinson for \$7.6 million in damages for their pain, suffering and loss in the sensational 1972 killing. Testimony resumes at 1 p.m. Monday.

#### Injured youth identifies Davis

The 22-year-old youth ambled down the Amarillo courtroom aisle on crutches sagging under his weight-twisted around and heaved his husky frame onto the witness chair. Gus Gavrel, Jr., still carries inside him the bullet that partially paralyzed his right leg the night he took a girlfriend to Priscilla Davis' fashionable \$6 million mansion. And the man responsible for his misery is millionaire industrialist Cullen Davis, said Gavrel, who has filed a \$13 million damage suit in connection with his injuries.

"He turned and shot me," Gavrel said of the ill-fated night he and Beverly Bass surprised a darkly clad gunman outside the Fort Worth mansion. Gavrel's testimony marked the second time Davis, 43, has been identified as the "man in black" involved in the Aug. 3, 1975 shooting spree that left two dead and two others wounded.

### Nation

#### Teen queen says no to crown

The 14-year-old winner of the Miss Teen Queen USA title has refused her crown amid a seething money controversy with pageant promoters. Sharon Gregory of Bridge City, Texas, was named winner Saturday night in the Memphis, Tenn., contest over 31 other contestants but quickly renounced the title. "Hold it," she said, taking the microphone after her name was announced. As she explained her rejection, she used the words "dishonesty, corruption and honor."

Miss Gregory and other Teen Queen winners from around the country said they were dismayed to find that \$100 advance payments they sent to cover hotel reservations had been paid to the hotel without promoter's check that bounced.

#### Billy says Bert won't resign

In Odessa, Mo., Billy Carter said Budget Director Bert Lance will not resign because of the controversy about his dealings as a Georgia banker. "Bert told me he won't resign," the President's youngest brother said during the weekend. "He may be fired, but he won't resign." He described Lance as "the best man in Washington" and said "If I had to take my choice between Bert and Jimmy I'd have a hell of a choice." The first brother from Plains, Ga., said he does not believe the President's popularity is slipping because of the Lance affair.

### World

#### Bakers strike in Britain

Thousands of Britons who endured the rationing of World War II are again standing in breadlines and stocking up on a dwindling supply of bakery goods — this time because of a three-day-old bakers' strike. "The strike is universal," David Duke-Evans, director of the Bakers Federation, said Sunday. "There is no activity at any of our bakeries. There is a total stoppage and we supply 80 per cent of the nation's bread." Thousands of Britons spent the weekend standing in breadlines at independent bakeries or prowling their communities for small shops with stocks of bread. By Saturday, packaged bread mixes had disappeared from grocery store shelves and even flour and yeast were becoming scarce.

### Weather

Partly cloudy and hot Monday and Tuesday with southeasterly winds 8-12 mph. 10% chance of showers today. Increasing cloudiness Tuesday with 20% chance of rain. High today 93°. Low tonight 70°. High Tuesday 88°.

## The Battalion

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