

# Viewpoint

The Battalion  
Texas A&M University

Thursday  
January 19, 1978

## Big Brother sends cigarettes packin'

Even as the government's popular human rights campaign is opening the closet door for Americans whose personal preferences were heretofore deemed detrimental to society, that same government is driving into hiding millions of Americans engaged in a centuries-old habit. Smoking.

Health, Education and Welfare Secretary Joseph Califano Jr. last week declared war on smoking, and set up another (yes, another) branch of HEW, called the Office on Smoking and Health, to coordinate the fed's smoking research and information service.

Califano made his mark on America's bureaucracy on the 14th anniversary of the famous surgeon-general's report on smoking and health — the one 54 million Americans have at their fingertips that says, "Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined that Cigarette Smoking is Dangerous to Your Health."

Cigarette smoking and its potential for causing cancer is no laughing matter. It does warrant some degree of governmental imposition to advise the public of what it is getting into when it spends its billions every year on cigarettes.

But Califano's announcement last week has broken the uneasy peace that the American public has held with its cautioning government.

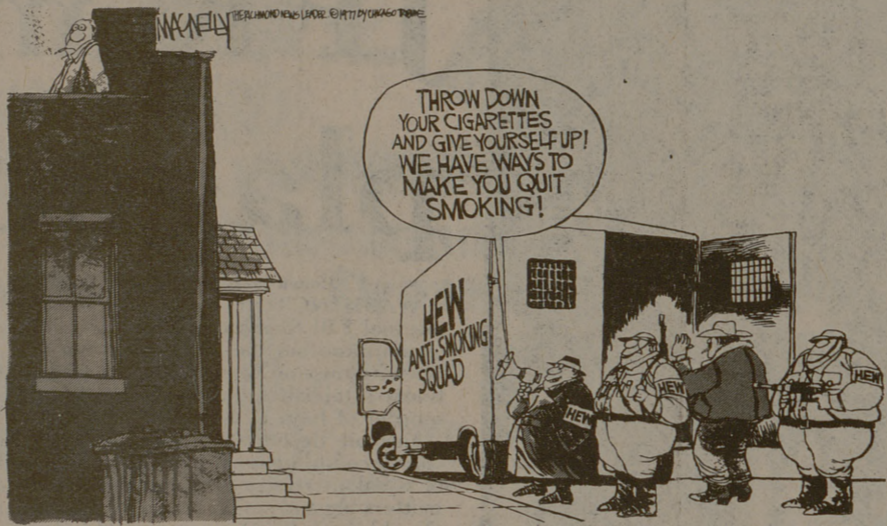
There appear to be two implications of Califano's anti-smoking drive: that of government's notorious alter-ego, Big Brother; and the aspect of governmental waste when it wants to be on a winning side despite the odds against it.

As for the latter, the tobacco industry does about \$14 billion a year in business. Its advertising and promotional expenditures alone amount to more than \$400 million a year. Califano plans to wipe out smoking by increasing the governmental anti-smoking budget from \$1 million a year to \$6 million a year. Big bark, no bite.

Even proponents of the anti-smoking drive doubt that far-reaching effects can be purchased with such a meager amount. As one health activist said, "Califano thinks he's going to throw \$1 million or \$2 million a year into anti-smoking programs and he's going to beat them. There's no way."

The tobacco industry is as formidable in lawmaking circles as it is in the economy. Califano's attempts to legislate cigarette smoking further will meet a stone wall in Congress. There's just too much money and politics riding on tobacco.

Even as HEW is gearing up for its anti-smoking fight, the Carter administration continues to subsidize the tobacco industry with price supports. According to presidential press secretary Jody Powell, the administration does not feel that families and communities dependent on tobacco-growing "should bear the burden of economic ruin" because of efforts to discourage a national habit.



It is clear that you can't feed and starve the tobacco industry at the same time and expect substantial results. The waste of government funds trying to fool the public into thinking otherwise is saddening.

Finally, smokers and non-smokers alike are being cheated by such Big Brother intrusions. Once again, government has gone too far under the banner of citizen protection. To protect some it alienates others — even to the extent of unduly denying them of their personal preferences. As one U.S. senator has said, "Obviously some restrictions should be placed on where people smoke, but smokers should not be treated as second-class citizens and their rights should be respected."

In effect, as another Congressman has said, "The idea of increased regulation — more rules telling free Americans what they can and cannot do — has no merit whatsoever." J.A.

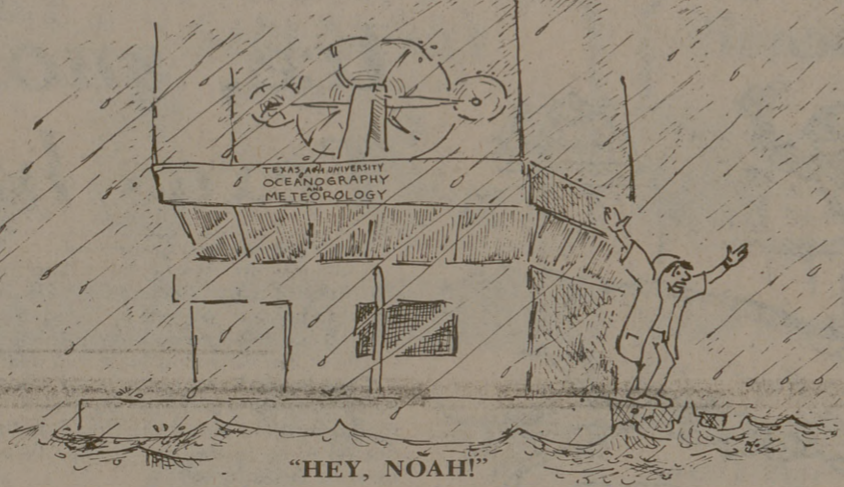
## Another canal has possibilities

By DICK WEST  
United Press International

WASHINGTON—Seven undecided U.S. Senators have been poking around Panama this week trying to crystallize their thinking on the canal treaty issue.

One matter they should look into is the prospect of America building a new sea level canal across the isthmus.

With the technology that is available today, it seems likely we could complete



pointed out to the professor, if water sought the level of, say air, it would make breathing pretty difficult. This may be why I got a D in the course.

Water seeking its own level wouldn't necessarily be a problem except that sea level on Panama's Pacific shore is higher

than on the Atlantic coast. When the original canal was planned, there was some talk about making it a sea level passage. But objections were interposed, based in part on fears that the higher water in the Pacific would run down through the canal inundating east

coast resorts.

Engineers claimed it wouldn't happen. Nevertheless, for a variety of reasons, the canal was constructed with a series of locks that raise and lower vessels from one ocean to the other.

Revival of the sea level concept almost certainly would revive the old drainage fears.

If the Atlantic Ocean were higher than the Pacific, we wouldn't have this concern.

California, as you know, has been hit by a severe drought. Building a sea level canal would alleviate that condition by covering the state with water.

It likewise would eliminate the Los Angeles smog problem by eliminating L.A. itself.

Meanwhile, on the east coast, advantages of a different sort would be accruing.

As the shoreline receded, the off-shore oil deposits that require expensive drilling platforms could be reached by land-based equipment.

If a way can be found to reverse the canal flow, it will solve the problem of water seeking its own level. It's a pity some of the politicians involved in the controversy don't seek their own level, too.

### The Lighter side

such a waterway by the year 2000, which is the date set in the treaty for Panama to take control of the existing canal.

That would be a perfect solution to the treaty dispute — two Panama canals, one owned by Panama and the other by the United States.

This is not to say there wouldn't be opposition to that arrangement, too. The trouble is that under the laws of physics water seeks its own level. Whatever that means.

When I was in freshman physics class, I never really understood that principle. What other level would water seek? As I

## Energy and hula hoops, supply and demand

By DON PHILLIPS  
United Press International

WASHINGTON—There is a basic principle of economics called "the law of supply and demand."

Simply stated: if the supply of a product is high and public demand for the product is low, then the price will fall. If supply is low and demand is high, then prices will rise.

That's why hula hoops sold for 50 cents

### Washington Window

after the fad disappeared, and why diamonds cost small fortunes.

It's also why energy is going to cost the American consumer far more in the future.

It doesn't matter if one believes that oil companies are deliberately withholding energy supplies until they get the price they want, or that oil companies must be guaranteed a fair profit before they risk the

investment necessary to develop new energy sources. The end result is the same: you pay more.

The world is not running out of energy. It is running out of conventional, cheap sources of energy.

Take a look at some of the "new" sources of energy, some of them obvious and some a little surprising:

Coal. Hundreds of years of America's energy needs could be supplied by coal. But coal must be converted to a usable form such as synthetic oil and gas, or used as fuel for electrical generating plants.

Sunlight. This is one of the most constant sources of energy, bombarding earth continually with heat and light. But more research is needed before sunlight could become a significant source of usable energy.

Geopressurized methane. Under the surface of Louisiana and Texas, absorbed in salt water thousands of feet deep, is enough methane to supply America's natural gas pipelines for hundreds of years. The problem is how to take the

methane from the water, and how to prevent Louisiana and Texas from sinking as tons of water is removed.

Shale rock. Many barrels of oil are locked in shale rock in the West, but commercially feasible methods must be found to extract it.

Nuclear. The power of the atom once was thought to be the answer to man's energy problems, but technical and environmental problems have slowed its growth.

Oil and gas. Most of the world's "easy" oil and gas have been found. But hard-to-get-at supplies still abound.

The common thread running through all of these energy sources is cost — high cost. No matter what source or sources of

energy the country turns to over the next few decades, the consumer will have to shell out more money.

It will not matter if the government nationalizes oil companies or goes to the other extreme and removes all price and environmental controls from energy sources. Energy will cost more.

As in any crisis there will be profiteers. And it is the function of government to root them out and prevent them from taking advantage of the masses who must have energy at any price.

But the final determination of how much Americans must pay for the energy they use will, in the long run, be determined by a simple economic principle, the law of supply and demand.

### Slouch by Jim Earle



"WE'LL DO OUR VERY BEST TO RELIEVE YOU OF YOUR FRIDAY AFTERNOON CLASSES. GIVE ME YOUR NAME AND I'LL ADD IT TO OUR WAITING LIST!"

### Letters to the editor

## Schedule causes problem

Editor: I fully understand the high patient load of the Beutel Health Center; I also feel the doctors and nurses are doing an excellent job of overcoming this obstacle. My complaint is with the schedule.

For a great many student in need or a physician's assistance, getting to the health center between classes is no major problem, but there are some of us who are unable to make it between 8 and 4 due to classes and/or other responsibilities.

My displeasure stems from the fact that today (Jan. 17) I went to the health center as soon as I was able (as a student teacher, I am out of town from 7 to 4:30). When I got to the emergency clinic, I was seen by a nurse who took my temperature and after checking out the problem told me that I would either have to come during clinic hours (missing a full day of student teaching) or pay to see a private physician during my lunch break if I wanted to be seen by a doctor. All the nurse could do was to give me something to relieve the symptoms but not the cause. Now, I realize that this health service is

designed to reach as many people as possible, and can not accommodate every student. Surely the administration can find a suitable solution. After all, if its mandatory for students to pay a \$15 health center fee, the administration has more responsibility to them than to ask them to shirk their own responsibilities in order to be treated for minor medical problems that require a doctor's attention. —Gary C. Sartor

## Housing supported

Editor: I absolutely support Jennifer Seale's position on the issue of married housing and, moreover adequate housing for students in general. What is the objective of an institution like A&M anyhow?

Is it to support and foster the learning of young people or is it to foster and support the operation of private apartment owners around the campus? Perhaps this should be made clear in the university charter. —R. Muchontham

## Top of the News

### State

#### JFK probe memo 'pure bunk'

Former Texas Attorney General Waggoner Carr said Wednesday an FBI analysis criticizing his 3,000-word report on the investigation of the assassination of President John Kennedy was "pure bunk." An Oct. 9, 1964 memorandum from Alan Belmont, an assistant to FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, dismissed Carr's report as a "self-serving apologetic treatise" on the actions of Texas authorities following the assassination. The memorandum was contained in FBI files released Wednesday in Washington. Carr first called a special court of inquiry into the Kennedy assassination, but then canceled it at the request of the Warren Commission and instead issued the 3,000-word report. (Other JFK probe stories on page 7.)

#### Water dispute, back to court

A Falls County dispute between a water supply corporation and contractor accused of building a faulty pipeline system Wednesday was sent back to the trial court for a third hearing. The Texas Supreme Court, in a 7-2 decision, withdrew an earlier opinion and ordered a new trial in Tri-County Water Supply Corp.'s damage suit against A.F. Conner and Sons, Inc., and Fidelity and Deposit Co. the contractor's bonding company. The most recent trial of the suit the second time the case had been argued — resulted in Conner being ordered to pay tri-County \$389,815 in damages, plus \$75,282 in interest. The Court of Civil Appeals had reduced that judgment by \$19,542, but otherwise upheld the decision.

### Nation

#### Farmers rally at Capitol

Several thousand farmers rallied outside the Capitol Tuesday to launch a lobbying campaign in their strike for higher guaranteed crop prices. A spokesman said American farmers, who began a nation-wide strike Dec. 14, would remain on strike until they win their goal — a law which would raise the average guaranteed price of their crops by 50 percent. Police estimated at least two thousand cheering and clapping farmers, undaunted by the late arrival of a tractorcade, gathered on the west side of the Capitol. They overflowed a scheduled news conference on the east side of the building.

#### College costs relief in sight

Two Republican senators urged Congress Wednesday to enact tax relief for middle-income families struggling to send their children through college — a proposal opposed by the administration. Sens. William Roth, R-Del., and Richard Schweiker, R-Pa., outlined their legislation to a Senate Finance subcommittee, the day before the convening of the second session of the 95th Congress. In his statement, Roth called for a college tuition tax credit and said, "It is very clear a vast majority in both the House and the Senate are in favor of this approach, and I believe the tuition tax credit will be enacted into law in 1978." Roth's proposal, which would grant a \$250 tax credit for each college child, was approved by the Senate last year as a rider to the Social Security bill. It was scuttled, however, by Senate-House negotiators.

#### Seabed treaty may be dropped

U.S. Ambassador-at-large Elliot L. Richardson said Wednesday if a worldwide conference on seabed mining rights doesn't produce a treaty America likes, then the U.S. will "forego" such a treaty and start mining the sea on its own. "We have the means at our disposal to protect our ocean interests if the conference should fail and we shall protect those interests if a comprehensive treaty eludes us," Richardson said. For the past four years, worldwide conferences to the "Law of the Sea Conference" have been debating procedures for mining the rich mineral resources at the bottom of the oceans. American and other "developed" nations favor wide-open seabed mining, but some "developing" countries with rich land-based minerals want restraints placed on seabed mineral production.

### World

#### Sadat orders delegates to return

President Anwar Sadat Tuesday ordered Foreign Minister Mohammed Kamel, chief of the Egyptian delegation to the Jerusalem peace talks, to return to Cairo immediately. Sadat also summoned the Egyptian Parliament for an emergency session at 11:30 a.m. Saturday "to reveal all aspects of the situation to the nation's representatives, a government announcement said. In announcing the moves, the Egyptian president charged the Israelis were trying the untrack his push for Middle East peace.

### Weather

Decreasing cloudiness and colder tonight. High today in the mid-30's, low tonight in the low-20's. High tomorrow in the low-40's. Winds out of the North at 15-20 mph. Increasing cloudiness and cold on Friday, turning colder with the possibility of freezing rain on Saturday and Sunday.

### The Battalion

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