

VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

MONDAY
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Step up audits

The Energy Department has uncovered what it believes to be some price violations by two oil companies, Chevron U.S.A., Inc., and Getty Oil Company.

The alleged wrongdoings on the part of the two oil companies appear to be only the latest in a series of get-rich schemes that may be more widespread than previously believed.

Government auditors also have accused Texaco and Exxon of violations of the price rules.

The problems created by such dealings, if they prove to be fact, are obvious. The consumer ultimately foots the bill by paying higher prices for the oil products he must have. There is also the potential for inflation if such practices become widespread. Inflation already has been fueled by the enormous price increases brought about by the OPEC nations.

The only way the government can prevent the cheating that apparently has been occurring is to continue and even intensify the audits of oil companies and those who are in the distribution chain. It seems likely that as oil prices rise, the temptation for oil companies to make some fast money in the industry is going to be increasingly hard to resist.

Norwich Conn. Bulletin



Failing a crash course in tradition

By KEITH A. TAYLOR

My cousin from USC, Phineas T. Fernwood, visited me last semester and I took him on a tour of Texas A&M University.

"This is the Memorial Student Center, the meeting place of all good Ags," I told him. "How do you like it?"

"Nice," he said, suspiciously eyeing the decor in the main lounge. "Who was the decorator? Librace?"

"Oh, no. The University hired a famous interior decorator at \$30,000 a month to do this job."

On our way to Rudder Tower, Finny accidentally stepped on the MSC lawn. Three uniformed men rushed over and leaped on him.

When Finny regained consciousness at the Quack Shack, he asked why the police had attacked him.

"They're regular students," I said. "Aggies don't like people to step on the MSC grass."

"Why," he asked puzzled, "are they nature lovers?"

"I guess you could say that," I said. "Three hours later, the nurse made me take Finny back to the dorm to take a shower, and another three hours later, the doctor said that Finny's nose was all right."

"I'm going to show you the Corps Quad, where the backbone of A&M lives."

"Who?"

"The ROTC cadets. You know, the guys who keep tradition alive, who present a good image for A&M, the ones who greet everyone, makes everyone feel welcome."

Reader's Forum

"Hey," Finny said, "these are the guys who beat me up."

"Never mind," I said. "These guys are great. Why they..."

"What are they doing over there?" Finny interrupted.

"That's some guy getting 'quadded.' They hold him spread-eagled, and pour water from a garbage can onto his crotch from a second story window."

"Why do they do that?"

"Depends. Maybe because it's his birthday, or because they like him a lot, or because they don't like him at all, or because he's their commanding officer."

"It seems awful cruel."

"No, it's fun. And it's tradition."

"Tradition?"

"You see, life at A&M revolves around tradition. Those guys did a number on your nose because it's tradition not to step on the MSC grass. We have quite a few traditions here. There's the elephant walk and bonfire..."

"That night we went to Midnight Yell Practice early."

"Where is everyone?" asked Finny.

"They will be marching in with the band."

"Are these few people in the Corps?"

"No, most of them are non-regs," I said. "Is that a fraternity?"

"No dummy. Non-regs are students who are not in the Corps. We don't like fraternities here at A&M, because traditionally we already belong to the largest fraternity in the world, the Aggies."

Suddenly, a drunk non-reg threw up on Finny.

"I thought you couldn't drink in the stadium," Finny said, wiping at his sleeve.

"You're not supposed to, but everyone does," I said.

Finny scowled. "How do you know which rules to obey and which to ignore," he asked.

The band marched in and we humped it for the first cheer.

"More tradition," I told Finny.

"Are the guys in overalls making hand signals for the deaf?"

"They're yell leaders," I cried, "and those signals tell us what the next yell is going to be."

"Where are the girl cheerleaders?" Finny asked, "and why are people beating that guy to a bloody pulp?"

"Because he ran onto the field. You can't walk on Kyle Field before a football game."

"Why?"

"Tradition."

At bedtime I told Finny to get plenty of rest because we had to stand for the entire game.

"Why?" he asked.

"It's tradition," I said.

"It figures," Finny replied.

The next morning he was gone. His note said he was headed back to USC and he would see me after I graduated. As I read the note, there was a knock on my door. It was Finny.

"I thought you left," I said.

"Believe me, I wanted to, but the campus police just towed away my car. Is that tradition too?"

And suddenly, strangely, he began to weep.

How to know your lawyer

By DICK WEST
United Press International

WASHINGTON — Not long ago I had to go to a suburban courthouse on business. My appointment was delayed and to kill time I spent about 30 minutes sitting in traffic court.

The Lighter Side

The first case involved a young man charged with driving without lights. The only witness called was a patrolman who testified he had seen the unilluminated auto at 7:30 p.m. on such-and-such street. So he had the driver pull over and gave him a ticket.

It seemed like such an air tight case I wondered why the defendant hadn't simply paid his fine and gone on his way. But he not only pleaded innocent; he brought along his lawyer, who moved for dismissal on grounds there was no evidence to show what time the sun had set on the day in question.

"I don't know what time the sun went down," he told the judge. "It might have been 5:30, or 7:30, or 9:30."



And dang me if he didn't get his client off. I mention this now as a commentary on

Chief Justice Warren Burger's recent assertion that many of the nation's trial lawyers are incompetent.

If officials of the American Bar Association were upset by Burger's criticism, and they were, you can imagine how people in need of defense attorneys must have felt.

In the event that you, God forbid, should ever have to go to court, you want to be sure your lawyer knows what he is doing. So I have prepared a little competency test that might help you evaluate your counselor.

1. The place where the judge sits is called a (check one): Stool; Dias; Desk; High Chair; Davenport; Bench; Throne; Pulpit; Pedestal.

2. The judge should be addressed as: Your Majesty; Your Highness; Your Grace; Milord; Your Honor; Your Worship; Your Obedient Servant; Your Father's Mustache.

3. The place where the jury sits is called the: Grandstand; Mezzanine; Choir Loft; Orchestra Pit; Control Booth; Jury Box; Penalty Box; Press Box; Batter's Box; Dugout; Endzone.

If your attorney gets two or more right, you're in good hands. One out of three isn't bad. But if he misses them all, better take the Fifth and throw yourself on the mercy of the court.

Letters to the editor

'Today's Student' continues to draw fire

Editor: Let me express my complete and utter surprise at the slanderous statements made in an article published in "Today's Student" Vol. 1, No. 19. I would just like to know how that newspaper determined that those protesting distribution of their rag were atheists. It seems to me that such reporting doesn't belong in any paper distributed on this campus, or for that matter, anywhere. That article reeks of the type of journalism commonly found in the yellow press of the 19th century.

Maybe it's time for Mr. Blatchley and his committee to re-evaluate their original decision to allow distribution of "Today's Student." While I am not one of those who attempted originally to prevent distribution of that publication, I now join them in demanding that distribution be ceased immediately. If the newspaper must be distributed let it be done at the city dump.

Incidentally, I should hope a retraction and apology are forthcoming from that newspaper. Quite frankly, while I am not an attorney, I would suggest that civil action be taken against that newspaper.

— David P. Rainville, graduate student, chemistry

Legal question

Editor: "Today's Student" it strikes me that the articles are written by people pretending to be historians, people pretending to be philosophers, people pretending to be scientists and, most notably, people pretending to be reporters. I speak specifically of last week's issue in which Texas A&M appeared.

True to the style of "Today's Student" objective reporting has been abandoned in the interests of God, Jesus Christ, and

Christianity. The article I am concerned with is the one summarizing the protest against "Today's Student."

Let's set the matter straight. I am one of those individuals grouped under the loose term "student atheist." Myself, and several others grouped under the same title, protested "Today's Student" on the grounds that it was being distributed on this campus illegally, in violation of certain regulations. Period. The person who wrote that article totally misrepresented our position.

I repeat: Our only complaint was the fact that certain individuals were passing this paper out in knowledgeable violation of regulations dealing with student publications. First, the people concerned were not supported by a recognized student organization on campus. And second, they were not granted a permit by the concessions committee to distribute the paper on campus. Our group repeatedly informed those people passing out "Today's Student" that they were in violation, but they seemed unconcerned and continued to do it the following two weeks. It was not until Ron Blatchley caught up with them that they were forced to seek a permit.

In the article, the writer (whoever the person may be) twisted our protests to sound like they were "expressions against God." This remark besides being blatantly misleading, was totally irrelevant to the issue. The purpose was to stifle freedom of speech (e.g. "Today's Student") then we would have had a very weak argument. Any group or individual may pass out propaganda on this campus provided the group or individual receives a permit from the concessions committee. "Today's Student" was not granted a permit, and that was the only substance of our protest. Although certain individuals may think we think otherwise, even the pseudo-historians, pseudo-philosophers, pseudo-

scientists, and pseudo-journalists writing for "Today's Student" have the right to express their views on this campus.

— John McCulloch, '81

No passes

Editor: To those Aggie men who have misinterpreted my intentions:

Slouch

by Jim Earle



"NICE OF YOU GUYS TO HELP! GUESS YOU CAN BEGIN BY SORTING MY RECEIPTS AND STUBS!"

TOP OF THE NEWS

STATE

'Governor turns back on farmers'

Texas farmers have paid as much as half of their net income in property taxes in recent years and need property tax relief but can expect it from Gov. Dolph Briscoe, Attorney General John Hill Sunday. Hill, who opposes Briscoe in the May 6 Democratic primary, made the remark at a campaign stop at a meeting of the Ag County Taxpayers Association in Sealy. "Our governor turned back on our farmers and ranchers last year when the legislature considering a plan to tax agricultural land on the basis of production rather than market value," Hill said. "When the plan failed by one vote, the governor made no effort to find that vote," he said. "We still have no program to give our farmers the relief they need from our unfair property tax system."

NATION

Burn victim gives birth

A young woman gave birth to a boy in Prospect Park, Pa. Sunday while fighting for her life with burns sustained in a fire that killed her husband and three other persons. The baby, who developed respiratory problems shortly after the birth, was listed in stable condition today at an area hospital. The mother, Patricia Lange, 23, is in serious condition at a burn center. The boy's father, Joe Allyn Lange, 23, a U.S. Navy corpsman assigned to the Philadelphia Naval Hospital, was one of four persons killed Saturday in an early morning blaze in suburban Prospect Park. Mrs. Lange gave birth to the 7-pound, 3-ounce boy at 6:22 a.m. Sunday at the Crozer-Chester Burn Center in Chester. "He came out of the birth fine," hospital spokesman Kenneth Dale said of the infant. However, the baby's condition worsened when he developed respiratory problems and he was transferred to the intensive care unit at Hahnemann Hospital in Philadelphia.

Energy issue heads governors' list

The nation's governors in Washington, steering clear of discussion on the coal strike, Sunday made a report to President Carter on fuel conservation measures and sought an equal voice in national energy planning. The governors also planned to urge Carter to ease his stand on continued oil and natural gas price controls, saying faster decontrol than that now favored by the administration is needed to boost U.S. energy production. Several governors accused the administration of using apparently phony figures to support production goals in its energy plan and said federal officials are holding back on promised impact aid to coal producing states. The conservation report to Carter was issued in advance of an afternoon meeting between the president and governors at the winter session of the National Governors' Association, which started Sunday.

Park returns to U.S. to testify

Tongsun Park smiled broadly when he got off the airplane in Washington on his long-awaited return from South Korea. "Nice to see you," he told reporters smiling. "I'm delighted to be back." Park arrived Sunday, and to a casual observer, it might have appeared the indicted rice dealer was running for office instead of preparing to be the star witness in what could become the biggest Washington scandal since Watergate. Park, who was expected to remain out of sight today, is scheduled to begin testifying secretly Tuesday morning in the House ethics committee about his role in Korean influence-buying efforts in Congress. His arrival at Dulles International Airport under a cloak of secrecy and amid heavy protection by the FBI and U.S. Marshals was punctuated by hand-shaking and grins. Turning to reporters, the 42-year-old millionaire tried to adopt the same effusive style that made him a popular Washington socialite in earlier years.

Burns begins to answer critics

At a time when the nomination of his successor may be in trouble, Arthur Burns has begun answering critics of his Federal Reserve Board leadership, it was learned today. Before President Carter designated businessman G. William Miller for the position, Burns had said he would like to serve another term. But Burns' opposition to economic stimulation through budget deficits and his money supply policy during Richard Nixon's reelection campaign in 1972 were cited by Democrats as justifying his removal. The criticism was led by House Banking Committee chairman Henry Reuss, D-Wis., Senate Banking chairman William Proxmire, D-Wis., Sen Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., and Chairman Charles Schultze of the Council of Economic Advisers. In a personal letter obtained by UPI, Burns denied pumping up the money supply to enhance Nixon's reelection bid.

WEATHER

Mostly cloudy and warm with a slight chance of showers today. High today low 70s, low tonight near 50. High tomorrow mid-70s. Winds from the southeast at 10-15 mph. Twenty percent chance of rain today, tonight and tomorrow.

THE BATTALION

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