

VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

THURSDAY
MARCH 2, 1978

The great presidential backout

The keepers of the White House mansion could be ripping apart the Oval Office's mahogany desk and still you can bet the president would remain the paper tiger in the coal dispute.

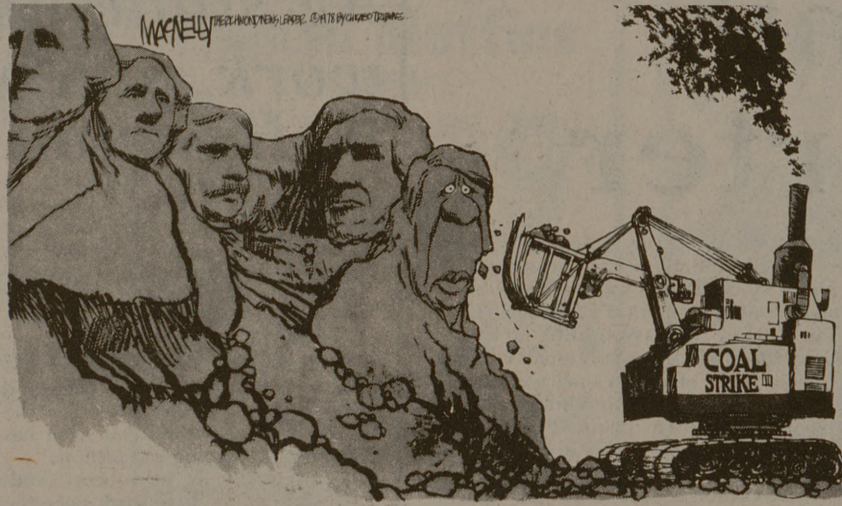
It's nearing the point where half a month's coal is left in supply to heat and light the nation. Thousands are out of work, directly or indirectly ousted by the coal strike. The economy is in desperate straits and millions are fighting one of the fiercest winters on record.

Jimmy Carter pulls on a sweater, makes idle threats and retreats behind the patriotic maxim, "leave just compensation to free collective bargaining." Meanwhile, who compensates the freezing families, unemployed laborers and queezed breadwinners?

Carter has placed the country in economic jeopardy in bowing to union and industry when it was obvious weeks ago that neither would budge on contract demands. His refusal to invoke the Taft-Hartley Act in the face of extreme national hardships and a huffing-and-puffing union is a sad and somewhat frightening commentary on a president under pressure.

God help us if OPEC or the Reds request invasion rights.

J.A.



What hassle lurks in Senate wings?

By IRA ALLEN
United Press International

WASHINGTON — With the Panama Canal debate finally under way, a domestic issue of equal fervor is waiting almost unnoticed in the on-deck circle.

What the administration calls its "labor reform" bill may be called up for action after the canal debate, and its opponents are promising a filibuster. Judging from the early stidency of its opponents, that debate could be the nightcap of a raucous springtime doubleheader.

Senate Democratic leader Robert Byrd will decide when the bill is called up, and last week he said he had given it little thought. "We have a full platter ahead of us," he said, referring to the canal treaties, the still-stalled energy legislation and other bills that are out of committee.

If the threat of a filibuster is clear, Byrd may not call it up at all.

The bill was designed as a reaction to the obstinacy of some companies — notably the J.P. Stevens textile firm — in

complying with labor laws requiring them to recognize unions if the employees want them and to begin collective bargaining.

Washington Window

Its conservative opponents see it as nothing less than "intimidation by union bosses" to force thousands of small companies to unionize.

The bill, already passed by the House, sailed through the Senate Human Resource Committee three weeks ago with the understanding that its opponents would offer their crippling amendments on the Senate floor.

At that time, the committee did take up one key amendment — to increase from 21 to 30 days the length of time a company has in which to hold an election among employees to determine if a union should come in.

The amendment was sponsored by Sen. Thomas Eagleton, D-Mo., who said it was a compromise in the spirit of preserving "peace and harmony."

After it passed by an 8-7 vote over the objections of committee chairman Harrison Williams, D-N.J., Eagleton remarked with some foresight: "That ain't much peace and harmony."

Besides the early election provision — there is no time limit under current law — the Senate version would penalize employers by making them shell out one and one-half times back pay for employees they unjustly fire for union activities and would bar them for a set time from getting federal contracts if they continue to violate the law.

The chief opponent of the bill, Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, didn't fight the bill in committee, realizing the futility of going against a panel composed predominantly of pro-labor liberals.

At a news conference recently, Hatch sounded as if the filibuster had already started.

The intense, unsmiling freshman launched into full-blown debate rhetoric in answer to simple questions.

"If this bill passes it will change labor-management relations and turn it upside down," he said. "It will change a bill which has been a remedial statute for 43 years into a punitive statute and add clearly to the size of the bureaucracy and will do nothing more than force unionization all across this country."

"The only people who are benefited by this legislation are the union bosses who control this country."

Some of his choicest epithets for the bill were "reprehensible," "obnoxious" and, his favorite, "push-button unionism shrouded in the name of reform."

Strong stuff from someone who says he was raised in a union family, spent 10 years in an AFL-CIO union as a lather and who "personally believes in unionism."

But it sounded as if he was only beginning.

A short month long on aggravations

By DICK WEST
United Press International

WASHINGTON — You've heard Randy Newman's song about "Short People?" Well, that's the way I feel about our short month.

It's got nasty little days and dismal little nights. The only thing it's good for is dropping out of sight.

It's got treacherous little streets sending autos into spins. It's got glassy little sidewalks that throw pedestrians.

It's got salty little slush pools turning fenders into rust. And jagged little pot holes making springs and axles bust.

It's got little airlines grounded from

The Lighter Side

East Orange to Pocatello. It's got ghostly little heat bills that would bankrupt Rockefeller.

It's got tiny lethal flu germs breaking out in epidemics. And dreary Panama debates that give a bad name to polemics.

It's got high priced little plumbers thawing frozen little pipes. It's got frost-encrusted windshields that little wipers cannot wipe.

It's got coagulated traffic that moves like gelid grease. It's got a Middle Eastern

Letters to the editor

A 'bravo' for campus cultural productions

Editor: I am always saddened by the relatively few students who attend OPAS, presentations by the Aggie Players, and other campus cultural programs, but I was filled with remorse at the handful of parents, faculty, and otherwise interested persons who, last Thursday, witnessed one of the finest performances ever by a campus group. The rest of you Ags will never know what you missed.

The entire program was perfection, but I don't know when I've been so moved by music as when members from the brass section of the Aggie Concert Band formed two antiphonal choirs to accompany the University Symphonic Band in the Finale from the Symphony No. 1 by Kalinnikov, and joined them in The Stars and Stripes Forever for an encore.

A standing "Bravo" and a rousing "Whoohoo" for these fine groups. Who says we ain't got no class.

— Jim Metcalf, '75, '79

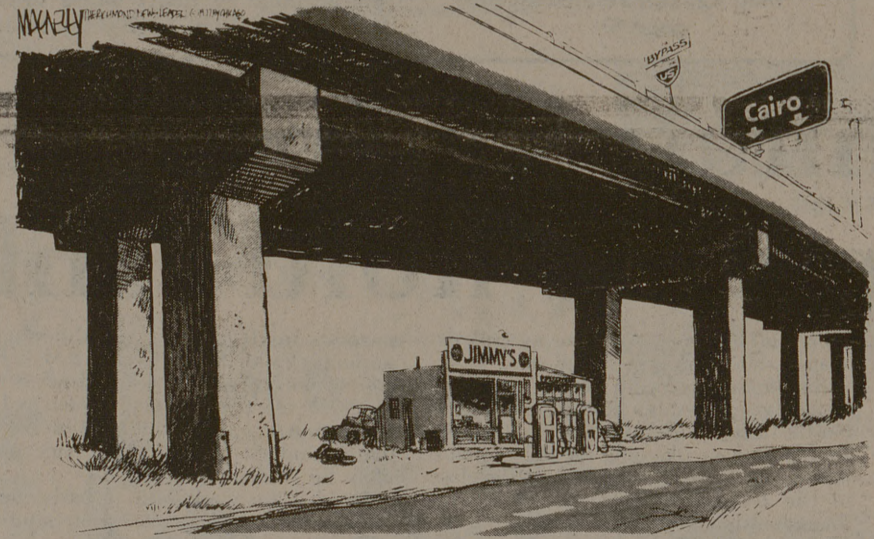
Stills still good

Editor: I am writing this letter in regard to an article written by Bob Ashfield on Eric Clapton Wed. Feb. 17, 1978.

I believe Mr. Ashfield made a rash statement concerning Stephen Stills in his article. I believe he referred to Stills as an old guitar whiz turned sour... on his own. Mr. Ashfield should have researched his subject more soundly before printing such a statement.

Stills has eight albums to his credit since going off on his own. In his first two albums he composed all selections. Stills' talents can be equalled by few — he plays most any string instrument, all key boards including harpsicord, steel drum, percussion, and moog synthesizer. He also conducts, composes, arranges, and produces his own music.

Stephen Stills' music and lyrics have been around for more than a decade (he



stalemate that drags on without cease. It's got little power blackouts that everybody curses. It's even got me cursing it with inane little verses.

February, in short, has got no reason to live.

All of its myriad miserable defects

seemed to come to a head one morning this week when Uncle Fermus turned on the radio to find out if his weekly trombone lessons were on or off.

"This bulletin just in," the radio said. "Connecticut has been cancelled due to February."

"Did you hear that, Uncle Fermus?" I called. "They aren't going to have Connecticut today."

"What about trombone practice?" Uncle Fermus asked.

One Dolly Parton record and six commercials later the radio said, "Here's an update on the latest closings. Rhode Island has been shut down until further notice."

"Rhode Island has trouble staying open even in good weather," Uncle Fermus snorted.

The radio reported the latest non-developments in the Mideast peace talks, the Panama Canal debates and the flu epidemic. Then it announced that Delaware had been postponed until Friday.

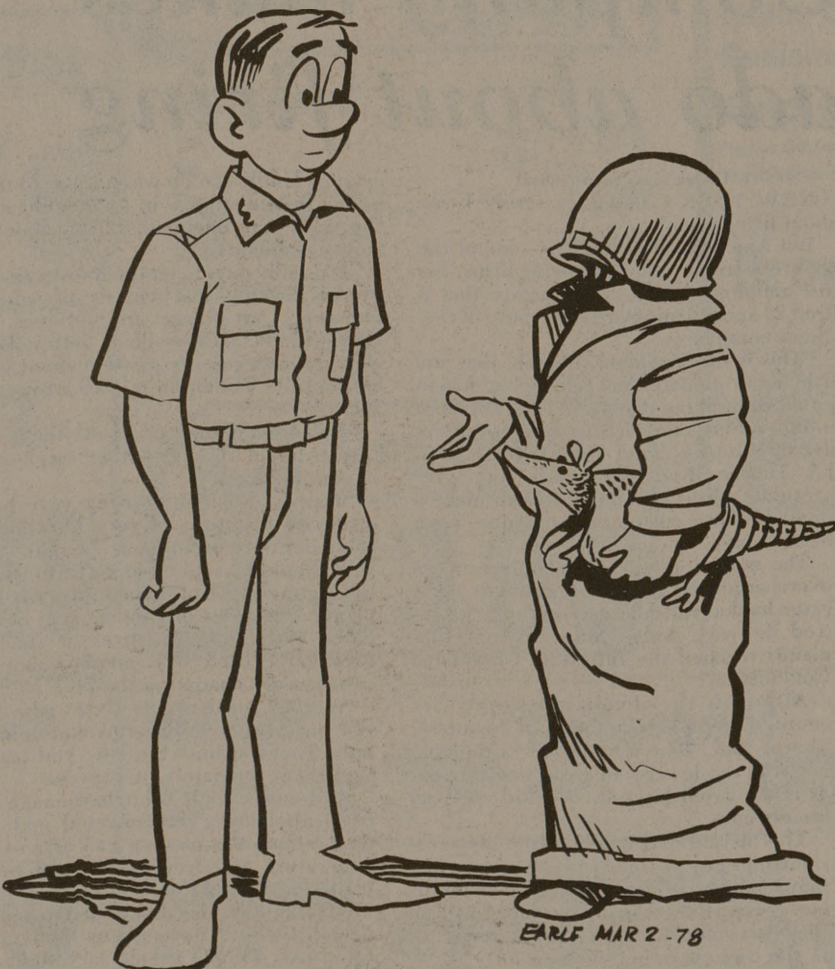
"February is even worse than I remembered," I said. "Thus far they've called off three snowmobile demonstrations, four drum and bugle corps rehearsals and two-thirds of New England."

We turned to another station. It said that Marine was being dismissed two hours early.

About the only thing functioning normally this month is the TGILP Club. In case you care to join, that stands for Thank God It Isn't Leap Year.

Slouch

by Jim Earle



EARLE MAR 2 '78

"FOR SOME REASON, HE IDENTIFIES WITH ME!"

TOP OF THE NEWS

CAMPUS

Volunteers needed for flu study

The Texas A&M University College of Medicine is asking for student volunteers for an influenza prevention study. About 600 students are needed for the study which will last six to nine weeks. Participants can earn about \$30. The use of the drugs amantadine and rimantadine will be studied. Further information can be obtained by meeting today from 3 to 5 p.m. and Friday from 10 to 11 a.m. Meetings are in Room 107 of the SLAB.

STATE

Ma Bell goes to Supreme Court

Southwestern Bell Telephone Co., contending it is losing \$350,000 a day because of a Public Utility Commission decision, Wednesday won the right to argue its appeal before the Texas Supreme Court in Austin. Bell contends the PUC acted improperly in January 1977 by permitting Bell a \$57.8 million rate increase when the company had requested a statewide increase of \$300 million. Arguments on Bell's appeal were scheduled for April 5. It will be the first time a case challenging the Utility Commission's rate making policies has reached the Supreme Court since the regulatory agency took jurisdiction over statewide utility rates in September 1976. General Telephone Co. of the Southwest, Continental Telephone Co. of Texas and Entex, Inc., a gas utility, filed friend of the court briefs supporting Bell's arguments.

Borderline case of farmstrike

Police in Hidalgo Wednesday fired tear gas into a group of 200 angry farmers blocking traffic on the International Bridge protesting the importation of agricultural products from Mexico into the United States. The protesters were routed from the center of the bridge where they had forced two Mexicans to abandon a truckload of watermelons. Police officers implored the farmers to move from the bridge and allow a backlog of traffic to clear. When the farmers lingered on the bridge, the tear gas barrage began. An estimated 1,000 spectators gathered on both sides of the border until the farmers drifted into the crowds. As the farmers moved toward U.S. soil they were met by a line of state troopers standing shoulder to shoulder who ushered them into a fenced area. The farmers were then loaded aboard a bus, apparently to be transported to the Hidalgo County Jail. The farmstrike participants were at the border to protest the importation of crops grown in Mexico with the aid of pesticides such as DDT that are banned in the United States.

Cooley's transplant patient dies

A 21-year-old oil field worker who underwent transplant surgery two weeks ago to receive a new heart died Wednesday at St. Luke's Hospital in Houston. Hospital officials had reported earlier in the day that although Kirk Martin of Bay City had seemed to be recovering, his condition began deteriorating early in the day. Martin received a heart and kidney from a 38-year-old suicide victim Feb. 14 by a team of Texas Heart Institute surgeons led by Dr. Denton A. Cooley. Cooley was the first heart transplant Cooley had attempted in eight years. Cooley had given up the procedure after 21 tries in 1968-69 because of difficulty in overcoming the body's natural rejection of foreign hearts. All 21 patients of the initial attempts at heart transplants died as a result of complications of the surgery or the rejection. Although results of the autopsy will not be released for several days, a hospital statement indicated the failure of the transplanted kidney led to Martin's death.

NATION

For sale: one Superdome

Gov. Edwin Edwards of Louisiana said negotiations to sell the Louisiana Superdome in New Orleans to the Hyatt Management Corp. were in the preliminary stages and no dollar figure for the mammoth stadium has been mentioned. Edwards confirmed Tuesday HMC executives were negotiating with the state to buy the \$165 million facility. Since its opening in 1975, the Superdome has operated at a deficit averaging \$5 million annually.

Two killed in DC-10 fire

Two persons were killed and 30 were injured Wednesday when Continental Airlines DC-10 with nearly 200 persons aboard burst into flames and skidded to a halt as it was leaving Los Angeles International Airport. Continental said the plane was carrying 187 passengers and a crew of either nine or 10. Ambulances took the injured to several hospitals in the vicinity of the airport. The control tower said many of the passengers walked unaided from the plane to the terminal. A spokesman for the Department of Airports said the fire started when the landing gear broke down after the tires blew out and the plane skidded along the runway. The fire was extinguished seven minutes, the spokesman said.

WEATHER

Mostly cloudy today with a chance of showers. Clear and cooler tonight with a continuing possibility of rain. High today mid-60s, low tonight low 40s. High tomorrow low 50s. Winds from the southeast at 10-15 mph. 30% chance of rain today, tonight and tomorrow. Cloudy and colder on Saturday with a continued possibility of showers.

THE BATTALION

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