

# VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION  
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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## Shortages show nuclear need

If any more evidence were needed, this winter has provided an object lesson in why we need more nuclear power plants in the United States.

First we had successive waves of rain, sleet and snow in much of the country, causing wet coal piles to freeze and making it difficult to generate electricity.

Now we have severe or potentially severe power shortages in the Midwestern states caused by an enduring coal strike.

Thus it is an abundantly clear that coal, like oil, is not always a reliable source of energy. Nuclear power, on the other hand, is generally unaffected by blizzards, strikes, or embargoes of any kind.

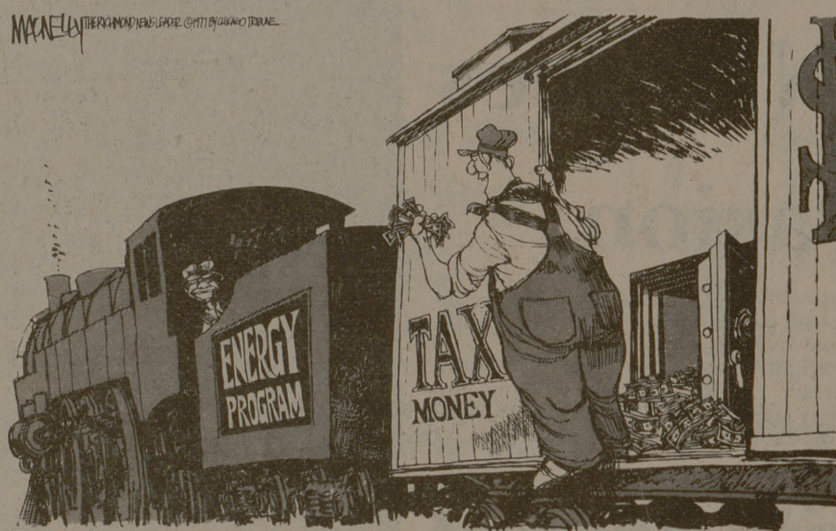
The Edison Electric Institute reports, for example, that Duke Power in North Carolina has been saving 23,222 tons of coal a day by drawing one-third of its electricity from three nuclear plants. As much as 62 percent of the power generated in New England comes from nuclear plants; more than 40 percent of the power in the Chicago area. A nuclear plant at Shippingport is supplying Pittsburgh with 23 percent of its power during the coal strike instead of the usual 10 percent. Other nuclear plants are helping to funnel emergency power into coal-short states like Ohio and Indiana.

Trouble is, only 13 percent of the nation's electricity comes from nuclear power. There simply isn't enough nuclear capacity to cushion the impact of a long coal strike or an oil embargo.

Energy experts theorize about drawing 50 percent of power from nuclear plants by the turn of the century. But unless the nuclear industry gets more public support there won't even be a smattering of new nuclear plants by then.

It now takes 10 to 12 years of cutting through red tape to put a nuclear power plant in operation.

President Carter has been saying for months he wants to shorten the process to six or seven years by approving construction sites in advance and cutting out some of the regulation duplication.



WE CAN STOP WORRYIN' ABOUT RUNNIN' OUTTA FUEL, JIMMY. THIS STUFF BURNS BETTER 'N COAL!

So far, though, the president hasn't come up with legislation to carry out his promises. Which just shows again how quick we are to talk about new nuclear power plants — and how slow we are to actually build them.

Scripps-Howard

## Behind the ideologies and issues

By **ARNOLD SAWISLAK**  
United Press International

WASHINGTON—CBS and The New York Times are out with a new poll that shows 42 percent of Americans identify themselves as conservatives, a 10 percent increase since 1964.

That finding, which also showed 27 percent of the 1,599 adults polled in the middle of the road politically and 23 percent as liberal, would seem to verify reports that conservatism is enjoying a rebirth in this country.

Until you read the rest of the poll. The pollsters also asked the same people a series of specific questions about issues. The answers seemed to pose the question "With conservatives like that, who needs liberals?"

In responses from conservatives only, the pollsters found:

—79 percent believed the government ought to help people get doctor and hospital care at low cost.

—70 percent believed the federal government should see to it that everyone who wants to work gets a job.

### Washington Window

—A majority favored government restrictions on the sale of handguns.

—Two-to-one majorities favored sex educations in the schools and government imposition and enforcement of safety standards for industry. At the same time, two-thirds of the same conservatives said the government had gone too far in regulating business and interfering with free enterprise.

The most specific issue conflicts the poll found were on government-paid abortions for poor women and the unrestricted sale of marijuana. Liberals favored both, conservatives opposed them.

These findings are not really surprising. Public opinion surveys for years have disclosed major gaps between the ideological labels people adopt and the opinions that are supposed to go with those labels.

Perhaps the best contemporary example of that phenomenon is the division of opinion on the Panama Canal treaties. Conservatives like Ronald Reagan and Sens. Jesse Helms and Bob Dole oppose the treaties, but conservatives like William Buckley and John Wayne favor them.

And as for any assumption that liberals automatically favor what conservatives oppose, the CBS-Times poll found that 42

percent of those who called themselves liberal opposed the treaties and 38 percent approved of them.

Perhaps what is most needed now from the pollsters are some in-depth studies of what conservative and liberal means to the people they use in their opinion surveys.

The CBS-Times poll tried to get at that question by asking what was the biggest difference between liberals and conservatives. It found 17 percent thought the difference was "money, spending, economics," and 17 percent thought it was "personality characteristics." No other answer got more than 7 percent — except "don't know-no opinion" at 45 percent.

That last figure might help explain another in the poll: between 1972 and 1978, the number of Americans who replied "not sure" when asked to identify their political ideology doubled from 4 to 8 percent.

## What did Carter know, and when?

By **WILLIAM RASPBERRY**

WASHINGTON — As with Nixon and Watergate, the intriguing question for Jimmy Carter in the David Marston affair is not merely: What did the President know and when did he know it? It is also: What should the President have admitted, and when should he have admitted it?

Fortunately for President Carter, there is plenty of important news to take our attention away from Marston: the economy, the Middle East, the miners' strike, the canal treaties.

But not much front-page attention was paid to Watergate, either, during the early months, except for Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward. And there remains the possibility that Carter, like Nixon, could find himself mixed up in some needless obstruction-of-justice situation.

Thus the question: What should the president have admitted, and when should he have admitted it?

The question presupposes that he already had failed to do what he should have done last November when he first got the call from Rep. Joshua Eilberg (D-Pa.) urging him to "expedite" the replacement of Marston, the Republican U.S. attorney in Philadelphia. It's clear, in retrospect, that the president should have found out why Eilberg was so interested in getting rid of Marston before he passed that request along to Attorney General Griffin Bell.

Had he done that, Carter might have discovered that Eilberg was a probable target of a Marston investigation, in which case he doubtless would have stayed clear of the whole mess.

### Commentary

But having made the initial error, what should he have admitted, and when? Any hope that he wouldn't have to admit anything at all was dashed when, at his Jan. 12 news conference, he was asked why he was dumping Marston.

He tried to finess his response with a remark that he has "only recently learned about the U.S. attorney named Marston...one of hundreds of U.S. attorneys in the country." The message he apparently hoped to convey was that while Marston's removal in favor of a yet-unnamed successor might not have been in strict keeping with his campaign pledge to keep such appointments out of politics, it was, at worst, a routine political matter.

But as he conceded after reporters refused to let go, the "only recently" remark was misleading. He had known about Marston even before Eilberg's November

call and had talked to Attorney Bell about the matter.

What more should he have conceded, and when?

"Look," Carter might have said, if it were true, "When Eilberg asked me to expedite Marston's removal, I had no idea that Eilberg himself was a possible target of a Marston investigation. I'd better not say any more just now until I have a chance to look at the whole matter in view of the questions you have raised."

But it wasn't true. He did say at that Jan. 12 news conference that "as far as any investigation of members of Congress, however, I am not familiar with that at all and it was not mentioned to me."

That wasn't true, either, as Carter admitted in a statement — the "Shaheen report" — during a subsequent in-house Justice Department inquiry. What he said then was that he had learned that Eilberg "was of investigative interest" a few minutes before the Jan. 12 news conference, when congressional liaison Frank Moore told him.

Having virtually admitted that he lied in his Jan. 12 statement, perhaps that was the time to make a clean breast. He didn't and the thing rolls on; we discover that the Shaheen report itself was doctored before its public release, excised of those portions that either made Marston look good or gave evidence of prior White House

knowledge of what was going on.

Now suppose it turns out that Eilberg was in more serious trouble than Carter even imagined; Wouldn't that set the president up as having contributed, successfully or otherwise, to an attempted obstruction of justice?

We shouldn't forget that what did Nixon was not that he participated in, or even that he knew about, the Watergate break-in. What got him was his participation in the after-the-fact attempt to cover it up.

The problem for Nixon was that there never seemed to be an appropriate time to come clean, after he had made the initial bad judgment. Even with the benefit of hindsight, I cannot say with any assurance when he should have made a clean breast of things. A few days after the break-in? Just after his reelection? Ten months later when James McCord started to sing?

And so with Carter. The fact that he, presumably, has not particular interest in what happens to Eilberg is beside the point. The danger for him is that his original lack of candor, which he has so far found no appropriate time to correct, could ensnarl him in an obstruction of justice.

What should he have admitted, and when should he have admitted it? Is now too late?

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### Letters to the editor

## Pari-mutuel betting slipped onto ballot

Editor:

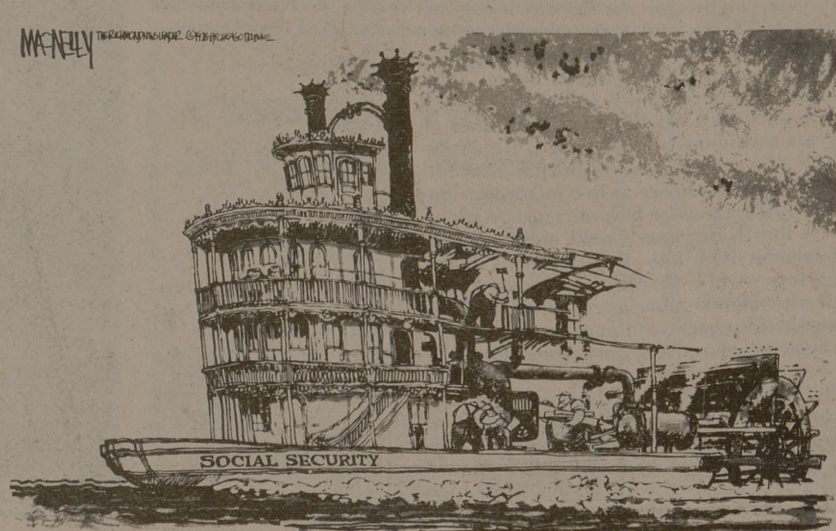
I am categorically opposed to pari-mutuel betting in Texas. No matter what you call it, it is legalized gambling. Horse racing in Texas is currently legal; betting on horse racing is not.

The gamblers are trying to slip it up on an unsuspecting public. By asking, "Are you in favor of horse racing?" they have distorted the issue. The real issue is: "Are you in favor of legalized gambling?"

I am against legalized gambling because it brings suffering to people who can least afford to lose. It preys on human weakness, tempting many persons to gamble away their pay checks. Also, it attracts the criminal element to the state.

So don't let the gamblers give you a snow job. Do not support attempts to legalize pari-mutuel gambling in Texas.

— Natalie Ornish,  
Dallas, Texas



## TOP OF THE NEWS CAMPUS

### Twenty-one arrested for drugs

Undercover investigations in Bryan-College Station have resulted in 80 drug charges against 41 persons, the Associated Press reported Friday. Twenty-one of those charged had been arrested Friday, said a spokesman for the Department of Public Safety. The DPS said three women and 18 men were arrested Wednesday night and jailed in lieu of bonds totaling \$545,000, according to the AP article. Indictments returned by the Brazos County grand jury named 29 persons, and the other 12 were named in warrants from nearby Travis, Brazoria, Burleson and Robertson counties, the story said. Police records show that several Texas A&M University students were among those arrested.

### Marine council meets at A&M

The 20-member Texas A&M University Marine Advisory Council will hold its first meeting here tomorrow in the Memorial Student Center. Dr. Robert B. Abel, assistant vice president for marine programs, said the Council's initial meeting will include overviews of Texas A&M's shrimp mariculture and coastal studies programs, as well as discussions of scientific information processing and marine sciences curricula. Texas A&M President Dr. Jarvis E. Miller will welcome the group in the morning.

## STATE

### Acreage charred by fires

Fires that in some places were so intense that they moved through the air like whirlwinds of red flame charred thousands of acres of dry Texas brush and timber land during the weekend. At least six major fires, all driven by winds up to 40 mph, were reported in northern and north eastern parts of the state but there were no reports of injuries. "So far we have been lucky," said Graham fireman David Hooper. "We've had no injuries and no homes have been burned. Hooper said the strong winds and low humidity kept fires in that area going from about noon Saturday to late Sunday before they could be brought under control. In Graham and other areas all-night patrols were set up to watch for new outbreaks. More than 2,100 acres of a Boy Scout camp near Athens, burned Saturday and Sunday. And in Throckmorton County, about 75 miles southwest of Wichita Falls, 100 firemen were needed to control a major blaze. Smoke from a 16-mile long wall of flame could be seen in Weatherford, about 90 miles to the southeast.

## NATION

### Connally presidential hopeful?

Former Texas Gov. John Connally has decided to delay any declaration on his political plans, but is suggesting he might feel at home in a crowd of GOP presidential hopefuls. "I frankly don't want to approach a decision yet," Connally said Sunday on ABC's "Issues and Answers" program in Washington. "A year from now I suspect I will have made my decision. Right after the elections in November—the next two or three months after that—I'm going to seriously think about what I want to do. If I decide to run, and I might, then I'm going to announce." Connally said at the moment the party should concentrate on electing Republican congressmen, governors and state legislators and he indicated he would make himself available to help in those campaigns. After that, he said he would consider a bid for the presidency even though "there may be a dozen of us" seeking the GOP nomination. He said he was undaunted by the prospect of challenging either former President Gerald Ford or Ronald Reagan, although conceding them to be tough opponents.

### Miners ponder new contract

Striking coal miners pondered a new contract proposal today with little of the bitter rhetoric that heralded their 2-1 rejection of its predecessor. With the crippling walkout in its 105th day, financial wounds festered with desperation for many of them, and many said they will opt for a return to the pits when the new pact comes up Friday for a ratification vote. "I voted for the first contract because I have to go back to work, and I'll vote for the contract this week for the same reason," said Virginia miner Walker Raines. "I had about \$3,000 when the strike started in December. Now I'm down to less than \$500."

## WORLD

### Incumbents win in France

President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing's ruling coalition in Paris today won France's legislative elections, turning back a leftist bid for office that would have put Communists in the Cabinet for the first time in 31 years. With all 491 election districts reporting early today, the incumbents won 291 seats compared with 200 for the Socialist-Communist opposition. Sunday's voting was a runoff election from the preceding weekend. It could only be welcome news for the U.S. State Department, which had viewed the prospect of Communists in the French Cabinet with unconcealed foreboding. Communists last served in the French government from 1945 to 1947.

## WEATHER

Mostly cloudy this morning becoming partly cloudy this afternoon and tonight. High today low 80s, low tonight near 60. Winds from the southeast at 10-20 mph. Partly cloudy with continued dry weather and warm temperatures through Friday.

## THE BATTALION

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