

VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

WEDNESDAY
MARCH 29, 1978

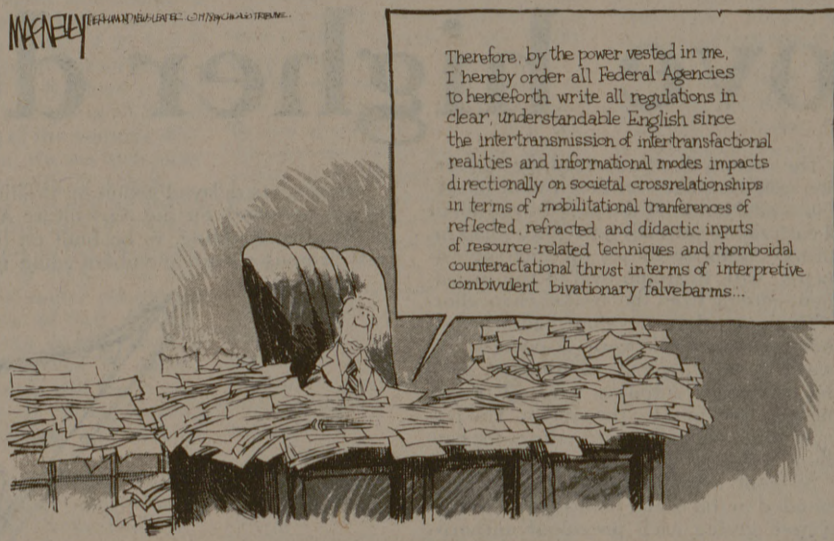
Paving the way

The first and tactically more important of the new Panama Canal treaties has made its way through the locks of Senate approval — barely. Supporters of the treaty, including President Carter, have a right to be peeved at the handful of senators who made the passage slower and more turbulent than it should have been by attaching unnecessary amendments and reservations. But that brinkmanship and the crowd-pleasing politics that prompted it will soon be forgotten.

In fact, the inevitable sense of climax that has set in after Thursday's dramatic Senate vote should help passage of the second canal treaty to be considered, that granting sovereignty over the waterway to Panama after the year 2000. The historical justice and strategic logic of an orderly transfer of control over the canal have been obvious from the day the documents were initiated. Subsequent senatorial agonizing about peripheral issues and semantic subtleties was inevitable. When the important issues in the treaty debate were focused upon, a two-thirds majority for ratification was produced.

It's a good bet the same majority — or an even more comfortable one — will approve the second Panama treaty.

The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette:



Emotional appeal lost by mayor

Who said that one has to spend money to win an election? Certainly not Larry Braveneec, the incumbent mayor of College Station.

When he filed his second campaign finance report on Monday, Braveneec disclosed that he has received no outside contributions and expended no funds for campaign purposes. In other words, he really hasn't campaigned in the traditional sense of the word.

But then again, the mayor of College Station doesn't have to campaign. College Station has prospered during the two years of his reign as mayor. His opponent, Karl Crawley, is a dark horse candidate with little chance of winning the election. Crawley, a Texas A&M sophomore, doesn't have the support of the local political powers. Braveneec does have their tacit support and endorsement.

What has Braveneec done during the past month?

His campaigning has been restricted to

pushing for the passage of the Capital Improvements bond issue election on Saturday. The bond issue will total \$9,165,000 to be used on improvements to the water and sewerage systems, streets, city parks and police and fire stations.

Politics

While Braveneec hasn't been running on money, his campaign just has to rest on his record as a city councilman and mayor. During his four years in College Station government the incumbent has made all his actions without flair and with deliberate direction.

His style of work is that of an accountant, which he is. A Texas A&M accounting professor, and an attorney, Braveneec will study an issue and make a decision that usually can't be attacked except on emotional grounds.

This could be his weak point. Emotions are sometimes important in an election campaign. They denote to the voter that a candidate is human, with human emotions. A candidate must express his emotions in a political manner. He has to show the voters that he publicly cares about their problems. Even if he can't solve the problems.

Often the voters are more interested in what happens to a neighbor's dog than a local bond election. And the voters demand a response to these emotional problems.

Braveneec has found it difficult to react to citizens' complaints about higher utility costs, housing construction problems and other problems because they are not distinctly part of the city government's domain. While the city may not be able to solve these problems, the council and mayor can exert pressure on the parties involved.

An example is the case of the Barcelona Apartments in 1976. The apartment complex decided to increase their rates by as

much as \$180 per month. When Councilman Lane Stephenson brought this up in a council meeting the council realized they had no grounds for action. Later the apartment owner declared that an error had been made and the increase was limited to \$100 per month.

This is what politics is all about. Getting support by supporting the voters. While a politician may not be able to use a law or his power as a delegate of the people to right a wrong, he can and should use his clout as an elected official to solve problems over which he may not have direct control.

Braveneec is not the kind of politician that mixes emotions with politics. By definition he could be placed in another category outside that of a politician. He likes everything to be orderly and business-like. Braveneec likes to do his homework and work through the council. This may restrict him from handling the problems brought before the council that may not directly involve the city.

Double trouble for Democrats

WASHINGTON — Republicans won a victory with the defeat of the campaign funding bill in the House of Representatives. But the damage that Democrats did to each other was greater than the humiliation inflicted on them by the Republicans.

The bill would have reduced limits on the amount political parties could contribute to candidates. It also would have reduced the amount that could be pumped into campaigns by special interest groups operating as political action committees. Then, an amendment was offered to add public financing of congressional elections. But none of it ever came to a vote. Nearly one-fourth of the Democrats in the House joined with all the Republicans to kill the rule that would have cleared the bill for floor action.

"This is not over. The fight is still there," said Rep. John Brademas, D-Ind., the Democratic whip and a central figure in the party infighting that led to the decision to

send it to the floor in the face of his own count that showed insufficient Democratic support.

Washington Window

Rep. Frank Thompson, D-N.J., chairman of the House Administration Committee that wrote the bill, said he expected the committee would come back with a new measure pegged only to the way political parties raise and handle campaign funds. The issue of public financing would not be allowed.

A majority of the 288 Democrats in the House — 175 by count — favor public financing, according to Brademas. But that is short of the 218 majority needed to pass anything in the House, and there are not enough Republican votes to gain that

majority. So Brademas and Thompson reason that public financing can't be voted through the House. And opposition to it from within their own ranks killed the rest of the bill, which would have kept Republicans from spending the huge war chest they are amassing for the November congressional elections.

According to Thompson, that is why a new bill will continue the limits on spending for candidates, but exclude the public financing issue. No Democrat will go on record as agreeing with the Common Cause lobby that Thompson and Brademas oppose public financing and used the campaign funding bill as a tool to kill it. But the insinuations are there.

Sixty-nine Democrats joined 40 Republicans in killing the rule. An analysis shows that 51 of those Democrats hold some position of power in the House. Yet, they went against the plea of the Democratic leadership to vote at least for the rule and let the issue of public financing come to a vote on its own merits.

Democrats voting "no" included the chairman of five committees and 37 subcommittees and nine members of the party whip organization.

Speaker Thomas O'Neill, curiously, did not take full command of the effort to get the rule adopted. Asked for his post-mortem on the vote, he said only, "It was a Republican victory and a defeat for the American people."

Was it a case of Democrats failing to have their own House in order before the vote? "I'm not going to talk about that," O'Neill replied.

It was a setback for the leadership. To make it worse, the insult came from fellow Democrats. And with the trouble President Carter is experiencing on occasion with his fellow Democrats in Congress, that spells double trouble for the party in power.

Letters to the editor

Stolen book market blamed on slack policies

Editor:

I was involved in an unfortunate incident last week that I think might serve as a warning to others who could end up in the same situation.

I had left a \$20 textbook on a table in Sbis and returned after eating to find it gone — stolen, actually. I reported its loss to the campus police, the MSC bookstore and the Northgate bookstores the next day. I ended up finding it on the counter of one of the Northgate bookstores, and found out

that it had been sold to the store and I in turn would have to buy back my own book for \$8. I told the manager it was stolen merchandise and the price was lowered to \$6. I had very little choice and did buy back my own textbook.

The other stores said they had a policy of taking identifications when people bring in books to sell in order to trace them if they are stolen books. But the manager of this store said they didn't do it because they felt it gave them a bad reputation to be so strict.

So they end up being big with hot-book thieves. The campus police said they have had problems with this store in the past. All I know is that there were a lot of books piled up on the counter. Who knows how many were sold legitimately?

Perhaps the manager of this particular store will take note. A bad reputation for slack business practices is what you're getting. A change in policy would help your reputation and save a lot of us some bucks. And a note in general: not all is sacred in Aggieland.

— Jim McCarthy, '81

their help in making Thursday night a fine evening.

— Andy Tirpak, '80
Moody College

Rider's thanks

Editor:

This letter is addressed to Jerry. I didn't catch his last name, but this is to say thanks for giving me a lift. I was walking on the access road of hiway 6 towards Plantation Oaks last Thursday night. I was soaking wet as it had been raining for some time. Jerry stopped and asked if I wanted a ride. I told him I was soaking wet, but he said it didn't matter. He drove me right to the apartments, and when I asked him if I could pay him for his troubles, all he could say was "You don't need to give me anything, I just hope you're not sick."

That, my friends, is the true definition of a good Ag. I hope Jerry reads this.

— Brett Smith, '81

Correction

A Management Society field trip to Houston was reported in Tuesday's Battalion as leaving Texas A&M at 7 p.m. Friday. That time should be 7 a.m. The group will be leaving from the MSC. The Battalion regrets the error.

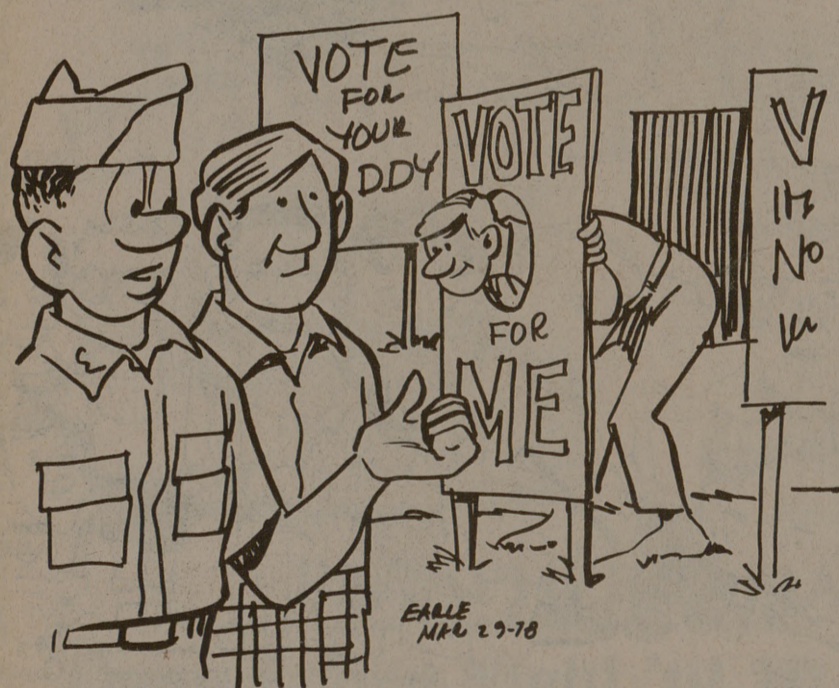
Readers' Forum

Guest viewpoints, in addition to letters to the Editor, are welcome. All pieces submitted to Readers' forum should be:

- Typed triple space
- Limited to 60 characters per line
- Limited to 100 lines

Slouch

by Jim Earle



"NOW THERE'S A GUY WHO WANTS TO GET ELECTED!"

TOP OF THE NEWS CAMPUS

Psi Chi sponsors noon lecture

"The Obstacles Which Confront Successful Women," was to be presented by Diane Strommer, assistant professor of English and associate dean of the College of Liberal Arts, at noon today in room 401 of the Rudder building. Psi Chi, the psychology national honor society, sponsored the lecture.

STATE

Prison land purchase delayed

Gov. Dolph Briscoe delayed action Tuesday on purchase of a new prison site in South Texas until legal problems and questions about the value of the land can be cleared up. Briscoe, in Austin, said an appraisal by officials of Texas A&M University indicated the land was worth \$6.88 million instead of the \$8 million prison directors voted to pay. A question was raised about the legality of buying Valley land since legislators directed the new facility to be in West Texas. Briscoe also expressed concern that Monte Cristo Farms until two months ago had belonged to Wallace Groves of England and the Bahamas, a longtime associate of crime syndicate leader Meyer Lansky. The land deal would include 6,741 acres and property worth \$500,000 as well as an option to purchase another 7,760 acres next year for \$1 million.

Ex-police draw year in prison

A federal judge in Houston Tuesday sentenced three former policemen to one year in prison for violating the civil rights of a drunken Mexican-American who was beaten and drowned in their custody last year. Terry Denson, 27, Stephen Orlando, 22, and Joseph Janish, 24, were convicted Feb. 8 of misdemeanor and felony violations of the civil rights of Joe Campos Torres, 23. Torres was arrested May 5 on a barroom complaint and found floating in Buffalo Bayou downtown May 8. The one-year sentence was the maximum prison term the law allowed on the misdemeanor conviction. The judge also sentenced the three to 10 years in prison suspended in lieu of five years probation on the felony conspiracy charge. Torres' mother and two-dozen demonstrators were angry with the sentence. Mrs. Torres said "life" would have been a fairer sentence. "The are alive. My son is dead."

Texas tourism hits record high

A record 23.2 million persons visited Texas last year and spent \$4.1 billion, said state tourism officials Tuesday. These figures are the highest ever recorded in the 30 years the department has been reporting on the tourism rate. Short-term auto visitors stayed an average of 6.8 days and constituted 94.6 percent of the 19 million auto visitors.

NATION

Signals coming from air station

Those mysterious radio signals that come Eugene, Ore., residents say turn their skin red and cause other health problems are coming from a Navy air station in Alameda, Calif., the FCC said Tuesday. Theories on the source of the signals, which have been investigated by engineers and Oregon health officials, ranged all the way to outer space. The signals had been heard at widely scattered areas in Oregon, but they were up to 100 times stronger in the Eugene area. People have reported noises in the head and stuffiness and reddened skin at the same time the electromagnetic signal has been detected. An FCC official said there was nothing unique about the effect of the signals on humans and there is no reason to believe they would cause any type of reaction.

Court denies release request

A 21-year-old Springfield, Mo., college student, sentenced to prison for seven years for making a one-third ounce marijuana sale will have to stay in prison at least a while longer. The Missouri Supreme Court was asked Monday by the attorney for Jerry Mitchell to allow him to return to college to finish the current semester while his case is being appealed. The court denied the request for a stay of execution or release on bond. It withheld action on a request to review the case and its earlier decision. Mitchell was sent to the penitentiary March 10 after the Supreme Court affirmed his 1975 Howell County Circuit conviction of selling less than one-third of an ounce of marijuana to an undercover highway patrol officer. Mitchell had been attending the university on a regular basis for the past two and a half years and had completed the course work for this semester up to the time of his arrest.

WORLD

New device guards drilling pipes

A unique plastic device resembling a giant clam shell that has allowed oil drilling off the coast of Latin America could reap energy benefits for the United States, say drilling officials. The device acts as an undersea air foil to prevent strong currents from destroying drilling pipes. A Dallas drilling contractor, SEDCO, Inc., has used the system around exploratory wells in the Amazon delta off Brazil. Other possible areas for use of the devices are in the Celtic Sea and off Sumatra. The plastic devices have specific gravity very near to seawater so they do not float or sink.

WEATHER

Mostly cloudy and warm today, tonight and Thursday with considerable late night and early morning cloudiness. High today upper 70s, low tonight near 60. High tomorrow in the upper 70's. Winds from the south at 10-15 mph.

THE BATTALION

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LETTERS POLICY

Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words and are subject to being cut to that length or less if longer. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit such letters and does not guarantee to publish any letter. Each letter must be signed, show the address of the writer and list a telephone number for verification.

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