

VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

THURSDAY
MARCH 30, 1978

Oust the wards

College Station voters will again have the chance to deal with the ward issue this Saturday when they go to the polls. Voted in two years ago under much controversy, the ward system is back on the ballot to see what the people think of it. Indications are that it will be done away with Saturday, and we could not be happier.

The biggest argument against the ward system is that the city is just not big enough to reap its benefits. In larger cities it ensures adequate representation on the council for various political, ethnic, and racial groups who otherwise might have problems getting their views presented. College Station as yet is not so divided, and a ward system in this town serves only to prohibit very qualified (and certainly representative) candidates from seeking public support.

An unnecessary ward system compounds its own shortcomings by inviting few people to the polls. When only half the city each year is beckoned to fill council seats, the enthusiasm over the races is less than stirring. The ward system designed to zero in on specific area interests instead nurtures voter apathy in the wards involved in elections and rests totally forgotten in the minds of residents of off-year wards. Apparently, splitting voter activity has only weakened voter involvement.

By JIM CRAWLEY

When the College Station City Council divided the city into wards in 1976 the big question was in which ward or wards they would place the on-campus students. Nearly half of the dormitory residents, all in the Commons and Corps dorms, were placed in the Place 2 ward, up for election this Saturday.

Students form the majority of the ward residents but all of the political activity in the election is just across Jersey street. That is where the non-student voters live in the ward. Both candidates for the position are non-students. One is a local businessman, the other a Texas A&M professor.

Each is a contrast to the other in many ways. Homer Adams, the 55-year-old owner of Adams Storage Co., is a former councilman of three terms. He lost two years ago to Councilman Lane Stephenson.

David Pugh, 35, is an urban planning professor at Texas A&M and a former planning consultant for College Station. Both candidates live within earshot of each other and the campus.

It seems ironic that Homer Adams is

running for a council position in which the majority of his constituents would be students. Adams is well-known in political circles as being opposed to any actual role for students in city government. While on the council Adams has expressed his disdain for students trying to become directly involved in city government. He believes that students are only temporary residents.

Politics

During the original ward system election, he was the only councilman running to favor the system. The reasoning behind his endorsement was that it would limit the students to only one representative on the council. Adams was afraid that the students would suddenly arise and electorally seize the city council.

Of course the ward system narrowly passed and so the council was saved from the students of Texas A&M.

This race differs from the other contested council race as both candidates are

Place race keys on zoning

qualified through past experience with city government. Pugh has written many of the zoning ordinances currently in force.

Their biggest difference is concerning the zoning of land in College Station. Adams views zoning as a business man. Pugh uses zoning as a major tool in shaping a city's environment.

Adams takes a "free enterprise" approach to zoning. If people want to build on the land, let them. Pugh's approach is in opposition. Regulate the use of the land for maximum benefit. This difference has been the main issue in the past few council races. The candidates usually take one side or the other.

The zoning of apartment complexes and the strip zoning along Texas Avenue have long been enigmas to the citizens of College Station. Many of the residents, especially those born in the North, have encouraged zoning as a method of controlling the growth and environment of College Station. Other residents, looking toward Houston and Bryan (both surviving without zoning), want zoning to be discontinued or kept to a minimum.

The urban planners, such as Pugh, want the city to plan out its growth and concen-

trate the business section to a more distinct area than the sprawl of stores known as Texas Avenue.

Expansionists, such as Adams, want the city to grow unimpeded by restrictions on commercial property.

The east side of College Station is currently undeveloped because of zoning restrictions on building in the flood plain that occupies most of the area. Pugh, along with many residents and councilmen, wants this area to stay undeveloped because of the threat of flooding. Adams, with a following of businessmen and developers, is in favor of opening the area.

This disagreement over zoning is continued concerning the issue of the strip zoning of Texas Avenue for commercial establishments. Pugh wants to stop the "neon-light syndrome" currently developing on Texas Avenue. He believes that strategically placed shopping centers would further the growth of College Station better than the current strip. Adams says that people want the neon lights and businesses lining the curb of Texas.

So the people of the second ward are again faced with the ongoing issue of zoning.



Perhaps as the city develops the time will come when wards will be needed to ensure equal representation. But that time has yet to come. J.A.

Urban policy plagued by smog

By DAVID S. BRODER

WASHINGTON — There was something terribly sad about the Good Friday briefing on President Carter's urban policy — something which tells you a great deal, not only about the inability of this president to achieve his goals, but about the inherent frustrations of a governmental process so big and complex as to overwhelm almost anyone.

When Patricia Roberts Harris, the secretary of Housing and Urban Development, and Stuart Eizenstat, Carter's top staff assistant for domestic policy, came into the briefing room in the Old Executive Office Building, the rumors were already flying through town that Carter had all but axed the program earlier in the day.

The rumors were not confirmed until later that evening. But as you listened to Harris and Eizenstat wend their conscientious way through the intricacies of the proposals, you could see why Carter had thrown up his hands in horror ten hours earlier — before relenting and allowing them to persuade him it was the best package they could devise right now.

More than a year ago, the president had asked Harris to assemble an inter-departmental task force and examine what the federal government was doing to or for the cities and what it ought to be doing. What he had in mind was to sort through the more than \$30 billion a year of federal aid already pouring into the cities through scores of separate, ill-coordinated federal spigots, find what was working and what wasn't, and rechannel that assistance in ways that made sense.

What he got was something quite different. Harris interdepartmental committee, tabbed with an acronym that was ugly even by Washington standards, URPG (for Urban and Regional Policy Group), proved mainly to be a device for protecting every program of every agency represented.

Carter rejected their first-draft proposal last fall as an impossible "wish list," and ordered them again to reexamine critically what the government was already doing. Maybe that would have been done if he had really pushed them.

But he was busy lobbying for his Panama treaties and energy bills, struggling with the coal strike, worrying about Menachem Begin and a hundred other urgent matters. And in his kind of Cabinet government, with a weak White House staff, even as able an aide as Eizenstat has little authority to crack the whip in the president's behalf.

So what came back was "ten recommendations supported by 38 strategies," or maybe ten strategies supported by 38 recommendations, plus 160 suggestions for improving old programs left scattered in five agencies — in short, a smorgasbord.

None of the 160 recommendations call for eliminating any single existing federal program — despite the almost universal

acknowledgment that some of them are real losers. Instead, the recommendations guarantee more bureaucracy, regulations and frustrations for local officials.

For example, the Title II business development loans of the Economic Development Administration contributed only \$55 million of aid this year. The evaluation says the basic legislation "imposes inconsistent requirements on EDA and on borrowers, making the program difficult to use." It also says the "program administration has been too conservative, and long delays and difficulties are imposed on potential borrowers."

Does that mean it should be scrapped or merged with other programs to provide a meaningful fund of economic development capital? No way. Instead, the recommendations call for "tougher" guidelines, tightened selection criteria, and those other bureaucratic favorites, "close linkages and focused coordination" with other "infrastructure programs."

And so it goes. That result might have been avoided if the urban aid study had been linked to a basic reorganization and consolidation of the government's scattered economic development programs, as some recommended. But Carter is already committed to one major reorganization fight — on civil service — and no one thought he had enough time, energy or political capital to take on another one.

Instead of resolving the jurisdictional and bureaucratic struggles, this new proposal compromises and compounds them. The new development bank for urban industry was fought over by Treasury,

Commerce and HUD. Solution: Make it an interagency bank, with all three departments represented equally on the board. The guaranteed effect: A slowdown of its ability to make loan and grant commitments.

Instead of naming a White House staff coordinator for urban programs, as the mayors wanted, there will be an inter-departmental committee of assistant secretaries. At briefing time, no one knew who would run it. Rumors were that Midge Costanza and Jack Watson, two Carter aides struggling for larger influence, were maneuvering for the job.

By five o'clock, an hour after the briefing had begun, Eizenstat had reached the point where he was reading off the list of little programs awarded each agency as a payoff for its participation in the whole ghastly process: social service and health money for HEW; urban parks for Interior; Transportation Department money for "intermodal connections"; solid waste grants for EPA; "mini-grants" for ACTION; arts money for Joan Mondale's friends; and neighborhood grants for Rosalynn Carter's favorites in the bureaucracy.

When it was finally over, a HUD official who had struggled to make it what Carter wanted stood outside on the curb, shivering in the cold wind, waiting for a lift to a speaking day. "You know," she said, "you ride around everywhere in these government cars, and you never find out what the weather is like outside." The same, sadly, might be said of government itself.

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TOP OF THE NEWS

CAMPUS

Psi Chi sponsors noon lecture

"The Obstacles Which Confront Successful Women," will 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, is sponsoring the lecture.

Candidates should sign up

The following candidates should fill out a questionnaire and sign up to have their picture taken no later than 5 p.m. Wednesday, March 29: student government executive positions, yell leaders, OCSA president and RHA president. Questionnaires should be completed and turned in at the Battalion no later than 5 p.m. Friday.

STATE

Yarbrough sentenced to 5 years

Former Supreme Court Associate Justice Donald B. Yarbrough will receive a five-year prison sentence today. Yarbrough was convicted of lying to a Travis County grand jury about his dealings with William Rothkopf, a former business associate. Though Yarbrough denied meeting with Rothkopf on May 16, 1977, the grand jury produced pictures, eyewitness testimony and tape recordings of conversations between the two men concerning the forging of an automobile title. The Travis County jury rejected Yarbrough's tearful pleas for probation. The maximum sentence he could have received on the aggravated perjury charge was 10 years. Yarbrough was also indicted for forgery but has not been tried on that charge. Upon learning of the conviction, Yarbrough's lawyers said they would probably appeal the convictions. Defense attorney Waggoner Carr said there were several errors in the trial that might result in a reversal of the conviction. Facing civil suits and investigation on criminal charges, Yarbrough resigned from the Supreme Court July 15, 1977, only after learning the Legislature was considering a proposal to remove him from office.

Near collision capsizes small boat

A near collision with an oil tanker early Wednesday morning caused a small boat to capsize about 20 miles from Port Arthur in the Gulf of Mexico. A boat and helicopter searched the waters for the two persons believed missing. Cmdr. Merrill Louks of the Coast Guard station at Sabine Pass said, "From the information I have it was a near collision between the Zapata Ranger inbound and the Party Boat outbound from Brazosport. As a result of the near collision the Party Boat capsized." Coast Guard personnel were waiting to interview the Zapata Ranger crew when it docked in Nederland.

NATION

Train derailed, leaks chemicals

A train derailment behind a petroleum plant caused an explosion and fire Wednesday, sending toxic fumes billowing into the air and forcing the evacuation of 1,700 residents of Lewisville, Ark. No one was killed but three crewmen on the Cotton Belt train suffered minor injuries. Four diesel engines and five tankers on the 116-car train were derailed. A spokesman for the state Pollution Control and Ecology Department said the derailment caused leakage of flammable chemicals used in making plastics and synthetic rubber compounds. There also was an unconfirmed report that the train was carrying some munitions.

Mass strike threatens New York

New York City is threatened with a string of strikes in the next few days that would impair its transportation, shopping, health care and even its reading habits. The walkouts — should they occur — could tie up transit in the city and some of its suburbs, hit New York's three major daily newspapers and shut down the world's biggest department store and a number of nursing homes. Unions representing New York City bus and subway workers and Long Island Rail Road employees have scheduled strikes at 12:01 a.m. Saturday if they do not have new contracts by then. The city's three major newspapers — the Daily News, the Times and the Post — face the threat of a walkout at 12:01 a.m. Friday. Thousands of employees at Macy's department store are threatening to strike in their five stores Saturday morning. A union representing 15,000 nurses, orderlies and kitchen workers at 60 nursing homes in the metropolitan area has set a strike deadline for 6 a.m. Tuesday if no contract agreement is reached.

WORLD

Perez warns Carter about oil

Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez warned President Carter in the capital city of Caracas Wednesday that oil will be used as a weapon to force industrialized nations to help forge a new world economic order. Carter had just aired his own plan for a new international economic order in a speech to the Venezuelan congress by proposing a five-point plan to improve global economic conditions and to raise living standards in answer to Third World demands. The points were increased capital flow to developing nations, a more open system of world trade, world price stabilization, especially for raw products, cooperation on energy conservation and development, and increased transfer of technology to the developing nations.

PLO endorses no cease-fire

The Palestine Liberation Organization said in Beirut it will do all it can to assure the success of the U.N. peace-keeping mission in southern Lebanon, but it stopped short of endorsing a cease-fire with Israel. An estimated 1,000 U.N. troops stepped up reconnaissance patrols in the region Wednesday and Israel threatened to take matters into its own hands unless Palestinian guerrillas halt their rocket attacks on northern Jewish towns.

WEATHER

Partly cloudy and warm today, tonight and tomorrow with considerable late night and early morning cloudiness. High today upper 70s, low tonight mid-50s. High tomorrow upper 70s. Winds from the south at 10 mph. Continued cloudy with a chance of showers late Saturday and early Sunday.

THE BATTALION

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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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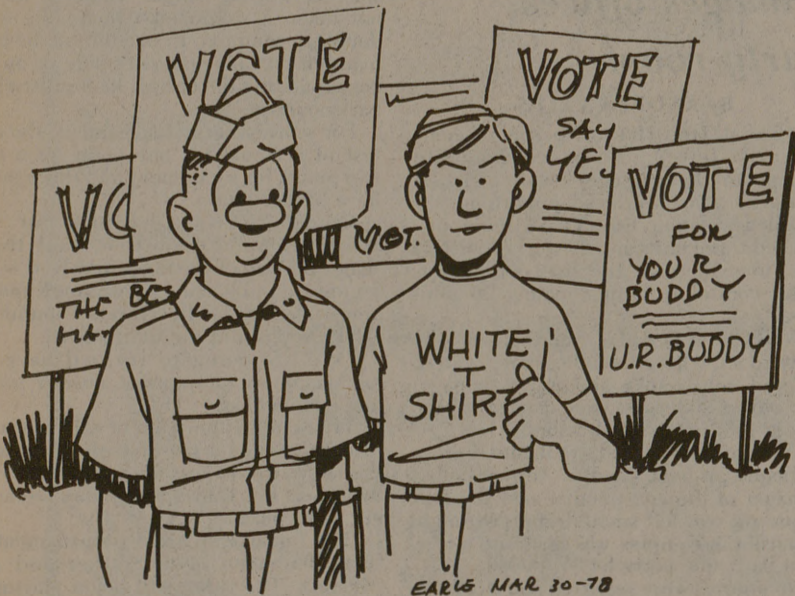
Letters to the editor

Editor:

I would like to say two things in response to Mr. Welch's letter about detouring around a JROTC Drill Team on Saturday.

First, the Association of Former Fish

Slouch



"I WANT AN ELECTION TO DECIDE IF WE HAVE ELECTIONS!"

Patience needed for special events

Drill Team Members accepts full responsibility for not briefing the teams about practice areas and for not providing a separate, isolated practice field off campus. We regret having inconvenienced anyone.

Second, the 38 drill teams were here for

by Jim Earle

their state championship. The Texas A&M Competition means a great deal to them and they spend many hours and hundreds of dollars to prepare for the meet. Regardless of whether they become Aggies, what they see and hear affects their opinion of us. The Aggie Spirit should let each of us go a little out of our way on matters that are important to others.

— Robert A. Cook, '78
President and Meet Coordinator,
Association of Former Fish
Drill Team Members

TM religion

Editor:

It was very apparent in George Sofka's letter (Tues. March 21) that, though being president of the local meditation society, he seems to be completely unaware of the total goal of TM as expressed by the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. Though proclaiming itself in the guise of the "scientific" and purporting physiological benefits, TM still, no matter how cleverly disguised, implies a means whereby an individual can attain to a form of "God-realization." To deny that this is the ultimate goal of TM is to disagree with such standard TM literature as "The Meditations of the Maharishi," "The Science of Being and the Art of Living," and also the Maharishi, himself. In fact, in "The Meditations of the Maharishi," he states that, "Transcendental Meditation is a path to God." (P. 59).

— Johnny Stimson, '80