

# VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION  
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

MONDAY  
APRIL 24, 1978

## Consumer advocacy vs. common sense

Poor Ralph. First they postponed the air bags in cars. Now the House of Representatives has defeated plans for a proposed new consumer protection agency. Nader attributed the defeat, by a hefty 227 to 189 vote, to "the corrupting influence of big business campaign contributions."

consumer's best interests. It sounds good, but there are some fundamental problems. First, it's not always obvious what's in the consumer's best interest. Which would you choose — more lawnmower safety devices and higher prices for lawnmowers, or lower prices at greater risk to your toes and feet? Both sides have consumer appeal, but for different reasons.

Much to the horror of business interests in some cases, this is precisely what President Carter has been doing. Many of Ralph Nader's closest associates are now members of the Carter administration. Some of them have become targets of their former boss's scathing denunciations.

## Panama: The great canal giveaway

By MICHAEL WARD MILLS  
I wish to urge all readers to appeal to their Congressmen and urge them to propose a resolution declaring that all flags be lowered to half-mast to commemorate America's Day of Shame in recognition of one of the most reckless and tragic acts in our nation's history: the ratification of the Panama Canal Treaty, or more fittingly, for the Great Giveaway of the American Canal in Panama.

The Maritime Administration has estimated that by the year 2,000, U.S. exports through the Canal will double (wouldn't you rather save three months around South

can transit the canal, the projected growth of the fleet is toward smaller, faster vessels, so that, in essence, the Canal would assume even more importance. What we actually need is a bigger Canal!

proceeded to give the American people a good, old-fashioned snow job. By the way, wasn't it funny that the Merchant Midland Bank of Chicago, one of whose directors is on the commission, has \$12 million dollars coming to it from Panama by way of direct loans? Makes you wonder if one of the real motivations was to hand the Canal to Panama, so that as the Canal talks were gradually raised, the Panamanians could kick it back to their master's banks.

### Readers Forum

The confirmation of the treaty, riding the crest of lies and half truths about the proper sovereignty and effectiveness to us, has created one fighting mad citizen in me, as it should in most of you, since the overwhelming majority of Americans, according to records of Senators' mail, opposed this sell-out for numerous and sound reasons.

America and also save the risk of America being shutoff by Panama because they suddenly change their attitude or else are unable to maintain it because of ineptitude? However, I guess that the second possibility has already been taken care of since, contrary to what the man "who promised never to lie to us" has told us, we will be paying directly \$20 million in revenues to Panama when the treaty goes into effect in October, 1979. You will be "asked" to give the Reds \$50 million in military assistance over the next 10 years, as well as to finance the training of their Canal operators.

Don't be fooled by the ever-loving, trusting declarations made by our State Department; the typical Communist bargaining position has been, and will continue to be: "What is ours, is ours; what is yours, is negotiable." The result of the Kissingeresque style of shady, clouded diplomacy has been revealed in contradictions, numerous and serious of what the treaty means.

The fact of the matter is that the old saying, "what you see is what you get," does not apply in this case. Now Carter and his cohorts are trying to circumvent the Constitution which requires that the whole Congress, and not the Senate only, must vote to ratify any treaty, but specifically those treaties involving the expropriation of American territory. The big reason, of course, is that it hasn't a ghost of a chance of passing through the House because of close constituent ties. This flagrant violation will not occur if you good people will write your respective Congressmen and urge them to sign the petition asking for a favorable decision from the Justice Department on the issue of the House vote.

In spite of those brow-beating moralists that would have us pick apart and solve our consciences over the issue of our sovereignty there, which is valid, the facts blow away all arguments that the Canal is not ours and is no longer needed. Consider the fact that 66 percent of all U.S. export shipping last year transited the Canal. Not only this, but 96 percent of the U.S. fleet can transit the canal, even considering the fact that most supertankers that can't transit the canal don't have routes that bring them close to it.

The obvious military importance of the Canal blows away any doubt of the same. The main flaw in the neutrality treaty is that there is no stopping Panama, with United Nations support, from shutting down quick American transits in time of war. While the fact is that 96 percent of our present fleet

The most regrettable part of the mess is that despite the overwhelming disfavor of Americans, particularly represented by the Texans who sent mail opposing the treaty by 99 percent to your good Senator Bentsen, who voted for the damned thing, Carter, under this influence of his advisors of the infamous Trilateral Commission,

In this age of so-called "democratic" ideals and lip service pertaining to such, let's show Washington who still runs this country!

Mills is a junior geophysics major.

## Senators get old too

By DAVID S. BRODER  
WASHINGTON — Of the 33 senators who terms were scheduled to expire this year, two have died since the beginning of the current Congress and eight others have announced their retirements.

(R), and a recent Republican poll shows him with less than 50 percent support and only an 8-point lead — not a comfortable position for an incumbent. Moore, a celebrated political infighter, is not making age an overt issue. But he rarely fails to mention that Randolph "has given almost a half-century of service to the state."

He drew more negative comments than positive from the cross-section of voters. Hart is convinced that there is more than coincidence in the fact that the only over-70 senators who have decided to seek reelection are in trouble. While Congress has repealed the mandatory retirement age for federal employees, the voters appear to think there is a time when it is appropriate for their elected officials to step down.

There is no iron rule on retirement — and probably shouldn't be. Senators who have been as well respected in their states as Randolph, Case and Thurmond may be able to persuade the voters that time has not yet run out for them.

### Letters to the editor

Editor: Just a few words to lodge my opinion against the very ugly wall the city of College Station erected in front of C.S. City Hall.

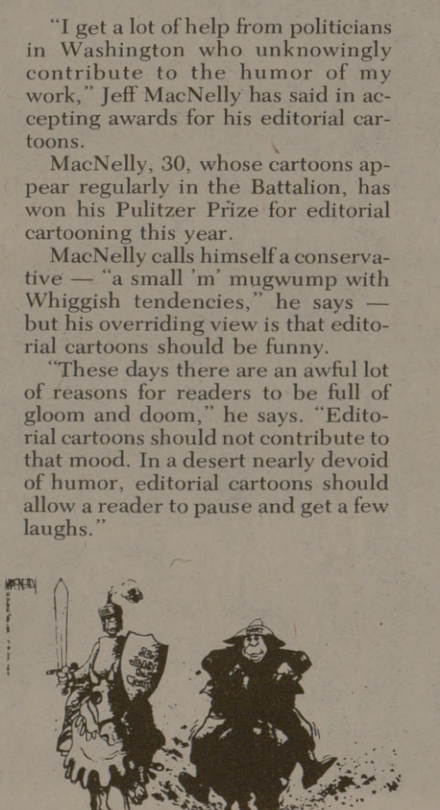
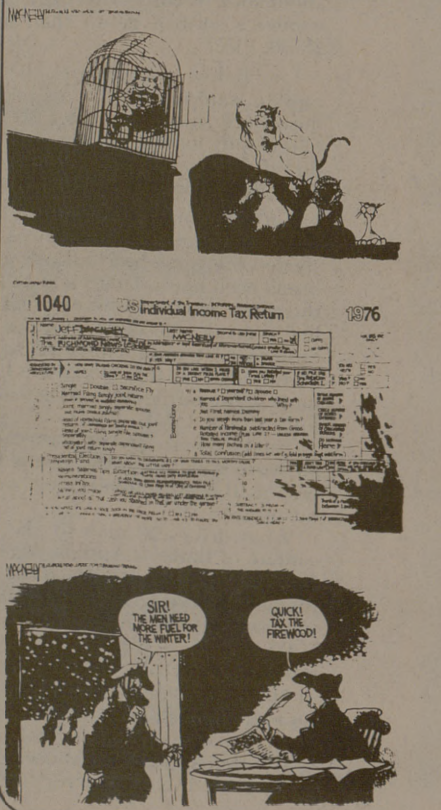
## New wall makes fortress out of city hall

were asked to pay for the damages since the fire occurred on their floor.

Utay have been asked to pay for acts of vandalism committed on their floor regardless of their purported involvement in these destructive actions.

for their deeds. We also believe it is illegal to try to force other residents to pay for someone else's sadistic behavior.

## Cartoonist wins second Pulitzer



Panama 'insight'  
Editor: The following is a short comment on Lee Roy Leschper's editorial, "Panama's Puppy Bares His Teeth."

Everybody pays  
Editor: Imagine this: A fire is put out on the third floor of a dorm at Texas A&M University. After the damage done to the building was estimated, the residents of the third floor

# TOP OF THE NEWS CAMPUS

## Pre-registration begins Monday

Pre-registration for the fall semester at Texas A&M University began at 8 a.m. today and will continue through Friday afternoon. Fall class schedules are available at Heaton Hall (the old Exchange Store) and at the Rudder Tower information center. Only students currently enrolled for the 1978 spring semester will be allowed to pre-register. Classes for the fall semester begin Aug. 28.

## Battalion staff receive awards

The Battalion received a total of 11 awards from two regional journalism conferences Saturday. Two of these were second and third place recognition for best student newspaper.

## STATE

## Freight trains derail in Cibolo

Two Southern Pacific freight trains collided in Cibolo, Texas, during a thunderstorm Saturday resulting in a derailment, several injuries, a diesel spill and heavy damage to both trains. Emergency vehicles were dispatched to the site in southwest Guadalupe County about 35 miles northeast of San Antonio. Several persons received minor injuries and were taken to nearby hospitals for treatment. A spokesman for Southern Pacific said several boxcars had derailed and the cause of the collision was being investigated.

## LULAC will file federal lawsuit

A spokesman for the League of United Latin American Citizens said Saturday in Houston that the group will file a federal court suit Monday against the Texas Employment Commission, LULAC Attorney David Lopez said the group will charge the TEC with discrimination against Spanish citizens in employment, recruitment and assignment of persons already employed. The LULAC suit will name Susan Banda as a plaintiff, he said. Lopez said she worked for the commission for 15 years and failed to get a promotion she felt she had earned. Lopez also said the TEC had been contacted by the federal government and warned if its officials did not change the agency's policies, the U.S. Justice Department would file its own suit.

## NATION

## Indians' trek protests legislation

A group of about 250 Indians on a cross-country trek from California to Washington to protest "anti-Indian" legislation before Congress called time out Saturday and announced they would spend the week camping at a northeast Kansas reservoir to reorganize their ranks. David Hill, a member of the Choctaw tribe who joined the group in Utah, said the purpose of the "Longest Walk" was to bring public attention to legislation that would force Indians to give up renewable natural resources and rights guaranteed them under treaties.

## WORLD

## Korean plane survivors aided

A Pan American plane on a mercy mission from Murmansk arrived in Helsinki, Finland early Sunday with the 106 surviving passengers of a South Korean Airlines jetliner forced to crash-land. The plane crashed on a frozen lake in a remote northwest corner of the Soviet Union when Soviet jetfighters attacked and opened fire on it. Also on board the Pan Am Boeing 727 were the bodies of two passengers, a Japanese and a Korean. Passengers said the two were killed by bullets fired from the Soviet interceptors that scrambled to meet the South Korean Airlines Boeing 707 when it strayed over sensitive Soviet territory Thursday while flying the Polar route from Paris to Seoul. Another 16 passengers were injured but it was not immediately clear whether any had been wounded or whether they suffered injuries when the MIGs forced the South Korean plane to crash-land near the Finnish border.

## WEATHER

Mostly cloudy this morning becoming partly cloudy and warm later this afternoon. Fair and cool tonight. Sunny and warm on Tuesday. High today upper 80s, low tonight low 50s. High tomorrow upper 80s. Winds from the south at 10-15 mph becoming northerly tonight at 5-8 mph.

## THE BATTALION

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