

# VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION  
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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## Gramm's the man

It's going to be a close one.

The 6th Congressional District race between Texas A&M economics professor Phil Gramm and Dallas attorney Ron Godbey is going down to the wire for this Saturday's Democratic run-off election. The Battalion's vote goes to Phil Gramm.

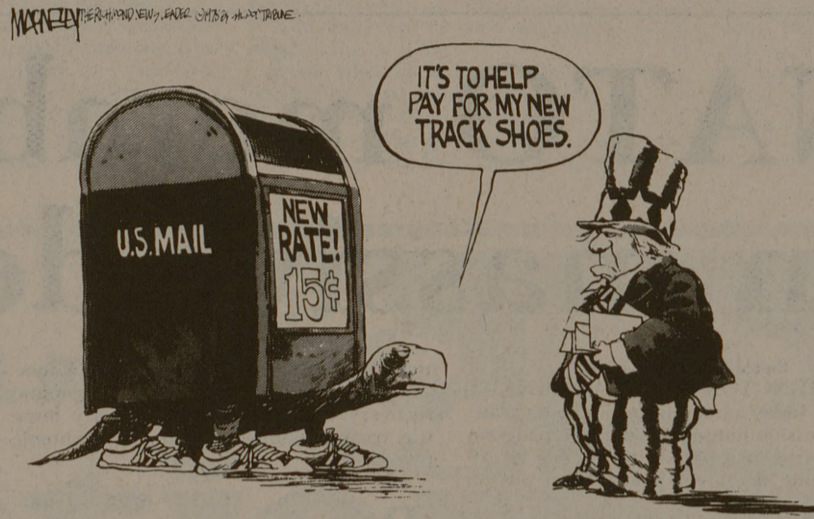
Gramm has worked hard for almost a year to win retiring Congressman "Tiger" Teague's House seat. He has made himself available to the people he would represent in Washington. But more importantly, he has taken a stand on almost every important issue facing America today.

Voters know where Phil Gramm stands on more government bureaucracy — he's against it; on a stronger military — he's for it. Gramm understands the economic principles that can make this country work. He has an established record in Washington as an economic expert.

Ron Godbey has not been as open with voters.

As primary candidate Don McNeil said in endorsing Gramm after the primary: "I feel I know Phil Gramm well. I know where he stands on the issues. I listened to Ron Godbey for eight months and I don't know where he stands on anything."

For that reason our choice is Phil Gramm.



## Ol' homestead no longer so safe

By R. MICHAEL PATTERSON

United Press International

Rural America has become vulnerable to crime for exactly the reasons it was considered safe — its supposed virtues, peace and isolation. Hundreds of small communities and thousands of farms and ranches across the nation's heartland are becoming easy targets for thieves.

"You name a commodity and they're stealing it — grain, fruit, vegetables, farm equipment, livestock," said Ken Cheatham, director of local governmental affairs and safety for the American Farm Bureau Federation.

**THE LATEST FBI crime report** — a preliminary one for 1977 — showed a 4 percent drop in the overall level of serious crime. But it dropped only 1 percent in rural areas, where it previously had been rising at a disproportionate rate.

Cheatham said rural crime is increasing two to two and a half times the rate of urban and suburban crime, costing more than a half billion dollars a year.

"The criminal is moving his base to rural areas," said Cheatham. "He's finding out that police forces are smaller and less experienced out there."

"He's also finding out that there's property out there that has value. He's working in isolated areas that are more accessible to being ripped off without being seen."

"There is a clear message in current crime statistics," said the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. "Cities no longer have a monopoly on serious crime."

**HERE ARE THE reasons:**

— Farm houses are often miles from the nearest neighbor, making it less risky for the criminal to be seen. Their isolation in-

creases the response time of law officers. — Sheriff's departments, the traditional enforcers of law and order in rural areas, are understaffed, underpaid, overworked and often undertrained. Rural areas have only 1.1 officer per 1,000 persons, compared to 2.2 in suburban areas. And deputies' salaries average only \$8,930, compared to \$10,214 average starting salaries for urban policemen.

### Commentary

— Criminals are finding that farms contain not only valuable household goods, but expensive equipment and machinery that are nearly impossible to trace.

— Improved law enforcement has made it harder for the criminal to operate in the city. Instead, he can drive out to the country during the day when most people are away from the house, ransack the premises and disappear among the hundreds of motorists driving into the city.

A Rogers County, Okla., woman who did not want her name used said: "THEY BROKE IN the back door and took everything that wasn't glued down, except the furniture. They took the stereo and the tape decks, the radio, the TV and jewelry and guns. They emptied the drawers."

"We're simply outnumbered by the people doing the stealing," said Fresno County, Calif., Sheriff Harold McKinney. "Anytime, day or night, most of our officers are at least 50 minutes away from a crime scene and we can't answer all the calls because we just don't have a large enough staff."

McKinney said his greatest problem is

with an estimated 8,000 heroin addicts who reside in the county and "most of them turn to crime to support an average \$40 per day habit."

Dennis Emerson, assistant to the president of the Florida Farm Bureau Federation, said \$20.5 million worth of property was reported stolen in rural sections of the state in 1976 and less than \$5 million was ever recovered.

"AND THE AMOUNT reported probably only represents a fraction of what was stolen. Farmers and ranchers are probably the world's worst about reporting thefts," he said.

Emerson said one major problem in Florida is theft of tires from tractor trailers left parked overnight in citrus groves. "We're talking about 18 wheels. They're ripping off tires like it is going out of style."

He said the proximity of ocean ports enables criminals to have a piece of machinery aboard a ship sailing to Central or South America before the theft is even discovered.

Most farm equipment is not identified with a serialized number, making it extremely easy for the criminal to pass off stolen goods and difficult for law enforcement agencies to trace it to the original owner.

The AFBF and Craig Beek, director of the Iowa Bureau of Investigation, have developed a nationwide "owner applied number" system. It is a 10-character number that is stamped on the equipment to identify the owner. The numbers are fed into the National Crime Information Center computer.

**OTHER FARMERS ARE** mixing identifying strips of confetti in with their grain.

## Remembering Robert Kennedy

By DAVID S. BRODER

WASHINGTON — It is ten years ago this week that Robert F. Kennedy died, and the memory of that slim and beguiling man refuses to fade. Countless times these last ten years I have caught myself thinking, "How Bob Kennedy would have loved this! Wouldn't this infuriate him? Wouldn't that have made him laugh?"

What is it that makes one politician, of the many who have moved across the stage, so cherished? Not the intimacy of the relationship, for it was not of that character in my case. But the sense that he was — or, more accurately, was becoming — someone very special, calls him back to mind.

He was the most paradoxical of people. A damnably difficult man to interview — given to long pauses, vacant stares, fingernail-drumming, almost anything but the conventional give-and-take of journalist-and-public official.

He rebelled against the formal constraints of that stylized transaction, as he did against many other conventions. But in ordinary conversation, he was something else — loose, funny, angry, outrageous and infinitely variable.

His distinguishing quality was his capacity of what can only be called moral outrage.

"That is unacceptable," he said of many conditions that most of us accepted as inevitable — so long as we and ours were spared their damage. Poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition, prejudice, crookedness, conniving — all such accepted evils were a personal affront to him.

As his vision widened, from its early concentration on organized crime and labor racketeering to the social problems of this and other lands, his moral energy was not — like most others' — diffused and weakened. It was a weapon he brandished afresh on each occasion, startling a roomful of smug medical students one day, challenging a television panel the next. It was a force he could not discipline — did not want to discipline — and at times, it drove him to exhaustion and incoherence.

What made him something other than the strident scold he could have been were two other qualities — a love of life, of dogs, children, family, friends and fellow-creatures, and a gift of unforced, self-mocking humor.

On a trip through California in the au-

tumn of 1966, he was, in each succeeding speech, drawing a sharper line between his own growing condemnation of the Vietnam war and the policies of the man who had succeeded his brother as President. The tension within him and in his entourage was reaching the breaking point.

He was in a packed field house at Sacramento State University, the emotion of the student audience at the point of igniting. A young woman rose from the audience, shouting, "Senator, sign my petition, please. She forced her way forward — the audience and the press all expectant."

"What is it?" he asked.

"It's a petition to the Post Office Department to send Christmas packages to the soldiers in Vietnam postage-free," she said. He signed with a flourish, and, in the same instant, said to the crowd, "Another courageous decision." No one else, I think, would have found quite that way to break the tension.

He cared passionately about his family, his country and this world — and was prepared to play his part in the drama of

his times, no matter what it might be or what it might cost.

He wrote in the book he published in 1968: "Every generation has its central concern, whether to end war, erase racial injustice, or improve the condition of the working man. Today's young people appear to have chosen for their concern the dignity of the individual human being. They demand a limitation upon excessive power. They demand a political system that preserves the sense of community among men. They demand a government that speaks directly and honestly to its citizens. We can win their commitment only by demonstrating that these goals are possible through personal effort. The possibilities are too great, the stakes too high, to bequeath to the coming generation only the prophetic lament of Tennyson:

"Ah, what shall I be at fifty,  
Should nature keep me alive,  
If I find the world so bitter,  
When I am but twenty-five?"

He was 42 when he died, and his legacy allows no lament.

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## Inside the 'world's richest club'

By STEVE GERSTEL

United Press International

WASHINGTON — Members of the Senate now have suffered for the first time the harrowing agony of laying bare their personal finances. Nobody got hurt.

The forms, which senators were required to fill out and then make public, were designed in such a way that not even a certified public accountant could figure out the exact worth of any individual.

**Washington Window**

Senators only had to list the value of specific holdings — their home, stocks, land and others — by category.

Category IX, as an example, had to be used for any holding between \$2 million and \$5 million.

But there was no way to tell if that IX holding represented \$2 million or \$5 million or somewhere between those two figures.

Most senators took advantage of this bit of camouflage, although a number made public their exact assets and their exact liabilities. A few even attached a copy of their income tax returns.

If the form was designed primarily to provide the public with information that could disclose actual or potential conflicts

of interest — as it was — it either failed or none exists.

It finally devolved into a gossip columnist's delight and a race to see who the richest senator might be.

Predictably, the forms showed there are a number of multi- and multi-millionaires in what has been often described as the "world's richest club."

The consensus seems to be that the richest senator is either one of two freshmen — Sen. John Heinz, a Pennsylvania Republican, or Sen. John Danforth, a Missouri Republican.

That should not be surprising.

John Heinz, the third, is the heir to the Heinz ketchup, pickle and other stuff fortune.

The Danforth fortune derives from Purina Ralston, which keeps animals well fed and, obviously, allows Danforth to eat well too.

Danforth is probably somewhat ahead of Heinz due to a \$3 million loan that Heinz made in 1976, which he lists as an asset.

He loaned the money to his own campaign committee to help him get elected to the Senate and campaign committees are notorious for their inability to pay back.

Financially, it was a rotten loan. Politically, it was excellent.

The most curious form advanced was the one filed by Sen. John G. Tower, the mini-sized Texas Republican.

According to the report, Tower owns

absolutely nothing. No home, no stocks, no land, no savings. His liabilities are three personal loans which at the most would total \$15,000.

An addition to the form filed by Tower shows, at least, that the senator is not homeless. His wife owns "our dwelling," Tower said, and he has no control or knowledge about her professional or business activities or "her separate estate."

Another interesting sidelight, which shows that the rich also have troubles, can be found in the form filed by Sen. Harry Byrd, D-Va.

Byrd, a millionaire, had to borrow \$25,000 from Shenandoah Valley National Bank — at 9 per cent interest — to pay his income taxes.



## TOP OF THE NEWS CAMPUS

### Graduation invitations on sale

Texas A&M University students who plan to graduate this summer may order graduation invitations in the Student Finance Center on the second floor of the MSC. Invitation orders will be taken Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. until June 16.

### Economics workshop this month

Teachers and administrators from across Texas will be at Texas A&M University June 5-30 for a summer workshop on the American economic system. The workshop is sponsored by Texas A&M's Center for Education and Research in Free Enterprise. It will host approximately 50 participants from Texas school districts.

## STATE

### Villa's widow to visit Laredo

The widow of Mexican revolutionary Pancho Villa will leave her Chihuahua, Mexico home to visit Laredo June 7 to celebrate her 86th birthday, Felix Garcia, local director of the Texas Good Neighbor Commission announced yesterday. Luz Corral Villa was invited by Garcia, who flew to her home and visited her during the Memorial Day weekend.

### Effects of paraquat to be studied

The National Institute of Environmental Health has made a grant for Dr. Miguel Medina, associate professor of pharmacology at the University of Texas Health Science Center, to study the effects of the highly toxic herbicide paraquat on the lungs of marijuana smokers. Paraquat, used to destroy marijuana crops in Mexico, has caused much concern to American smokers recently because it purportedly has a direct and damaging effect on the lungs.

### Memorial Day deaths decline

Fewer persons died on Texas highways during the long Memorial Day holiday period this year than did the same time last year, the Department of Public Safety said Monday. The number was just about average for any long summer weekend, the department added. According to the DPS, 36 persons died on the state's highways during the 78-hour Memorial Day traffic death count. Forty-three died last year during the Memorial Day holiday weekend and in 1976 51 persons died.

### Texas stays neutral

Texas took a neutral stand yesterday on whether the Supreme Court should grant the request of an indigent inmate facing execution that the justices appoint a lawyer to prepare his appeal. Billy Hughes, convicted of murdering a Texas highway patrolman, sent a simple letter to the clerk of the Supreme Court last week requesting appointment of a lawyer. The Supreme Court has steadfastly refused such requests for a lawyer to prepare an indigent's appeal to the high court, although in some cases it appoints counsel to present arguments for an indigent whose appeal already has been accepted for consideration.

## NATION

### Gleason hospitalized for tests

Entertainer Jackie Gleason, complaining of chest pains, has been hospitalized in Chicago for the second time in a week for tests. Gleason's ailment forced a cancellation of the stage production "Sly Fox" at the Blackstone Theater. Gleason had the lead role.

### Investigators looking for source

Medical investigators hope to find the source of an outbreak of Legionnaires' Disease in Bloomington that killed three visitors to the Indiana University campus and infected four more. The first investigator from the federal Center for Disease Control was scheduled to arrive yesterday to begin the search, requested by university officials once the Atlanta-based center could confirm the disease during the weekend.

### Court against ambulance chasing

The Supreme Court, in separate opinions yesterday, cracked down on so-called "ambulance chasing" by lawyers. Ruling 8-0 in the case of a Cleveland, Ohio, lawyer suspended indefinitely for soliciting two personal injury cases, the court said it is constitutional for bar associations, with state authorization, to punish such actions.

### CAB proposes less regulation

The Civil Aeronautics Board, launching a new experiment in reduced federal regulation, proposed yesterday that the airlines themselves be allowed to decide whether to serve a particular route. The CAB said it plans to try the new approach for the first time this summer in creating nonstop routes between the Oakland, Calif., International Airport, an under-used field across the bay from San Francisco, and up to 15 other cities across the nation.

### Arizona rockslide kills man

A rockslide at the ruins of the Navajo National Monument, the largest Indian cliff dwelling in Arizona, scattered a campsite with debris, killing one man and injuring two others. The National Park Service said a geologist would be called to investigate Monday's slide.

## WEATHER

Mostly cloudy early this morning becoming partly cloudy in the late morning and remaining through Thursday. High today near 90, low tonight upper 60s. High tomorrow near 90. Winds from the southeast at 15 mph. 20% chance of thundershowers this afternoon.

## THE BATTALION

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