

# VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION  
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

WEDNESDAY  
JUNE 14, 1978

## TOP OF THE NEWS CAMPUS Record enrollment set

A record 10,644 students enrolled for the first session of summer classes at Texas A&M University. The figure, which represents the fourth class day enrollment, is a 6 percent increase over the same time last year, Associate Registrar Don Carter said. Texas A&M set its previous summer school record last June with an enrollment of 9,986 students.

## STATE

### East Texas sheriff pleads guilty

Fannin County Sheriff Raymond Taylor abruptly ended his federal racketeering trial Tuesday in Tyler by pleading guilty to charges that could send him to prison for 30 years. After a short meeting with prosecutors during a morning recess, the East Texas sheriff agreed to plea guilty to bribery and related narcotics charges in exchange for the government dropping 13 counts of a 16-count indictment against him.

### Houston may hire LA policemen

The Houston police department has offered to hire 200 Los Angeles officers if they are laid off because of a California property tax reduction adopted by referendum last week, Chief Harry Caldwell said Tuesday. Caldwell said he conferred with Los Angeles Police Chief Darrell Gates by telephone about the idea, which arose after Californians overwhelmingly adopted a Proposition 13 June 6. Proposition 13 set a 1 percent ceiling on property taxes, reducing California revenue from \$12 billion to \$5 billion.

### Sleeping burglar escapes

An Austin couple was awakened early Monday by a rude, loud sound. The burglar who broke into their apartment had fallen asleep at the foot of their bed and was snoring. The startled tenant picked up a dowel rod and began shouting at the intruder, but the stranger didn't budge until police were called. When police arrived, the burglar had fled. Several blank checks and \$10 was missing from a rifled purse. An arrest warrant was issued for the sleeping burglar.

## NATION

### Search for murder suspect ends

A 10-month-long search for the man accused of killing three Girl Scouts ended with Gene Leroy Hart cursing his captors and telling them they would never prove him guilty, a state agent testified Tuesday. Larry Bowles, an agent for the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation, testified Hart, 34, called him an offensive name and told him at the time of his April 6 arrest authorities could not convict him. Bowles testified at a preliminary hearing came on the first anniversary of the 1977 sex slayings near Locust Grove, Okla.

### Escaped bull runs through city

A 1,500-pound black bull that charged pedestrians, frustrated police and dented cars Tuesday in an hour-long dash through Kansas City, Mo., was eventually killed by police. Police said officers fired on the animal which had escaped from the city's stockyards area. There were no injuries resulting from the bull's adventures. Pursuers watched as the animal leaped over a five-foot wall and through a downtown parking garage.

### U.S. studies Soviet proposal

American officials said Tuesday in Washington that they are studying a Soviet proposal for troop cuts in Central Europe that would leave both East and West with an equal number of forces. The proposal, the officials said, was offered by the Soviets in the Mutual and Balanced Force reduction talks in Vienna. The Soviet proposal, according to U.S. officials, would limit both sides to a total of 700,000 ground troops, and an overall ceiling for both sides of 900,000 for ground and air forces.

### Village fears trouble over march

Fearing violence will erupt at a June 25 neo-Nazi march, the village president of Skokie, Ill., has requested help from the National Guard. Albert J. Smith Monday asked for the guard's presence after the U.S. Supreme Court refused to halt the march. He also appealed for help from the Cook County sheriff's police, the Illinois State Police and seven or eight neighboring suburban police departments.

### UFO-spotting course offered

For \$50, Southeast Missouri State University is offering two hours of university credit and a scientific kit to help detect unidentified flying objects. Harley Rutledge, chairman of the school's physics department and a recognized authority on UFOs, said his week-long course that begins July 24, will include a field trip to Piedmont in southeast Missouri, the site of several reported UFO sightings in 1973.

## WORLD

### Victims of storm identified

Grief-stricken parents gathered today for a bus ride to despair—to identify their dead boys—victims of a violent storm that swamped their canoes during a school outing on a wilderness lake near Ville Marie, Quebec. At least a dozen boys between the ages of 12 and 16 and their teacher died in the storm on Lake Temiscamingue. Fifteen boys and three teachers survived the disaster.

## WEATHER

Partly cloudy skies today, tonight and tomorrow with warm days and mild nights. 20% chance of widely scattered thundershowers today, tonight & Thursday. High today low 90's, low tonight low 70's. High tomorrow low 90's. Winds from the southeast at 5-10 mph.

## THE BATTALION

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# Proposition 13 neither revolt nor cure-all

By DAVID S. BRODER  
WASHINGTON—The voters of California have approved the Jarvis-Gann property tax roll back initiative by an overwhelming margin, giving this humdrum political year the first shot of adrenalin it has received.

No sooner was the California victory in the bag than the backers of the tax limitation movement were proclaiming that the revolt triggered by California's outraged property tax payers would sweep the country.

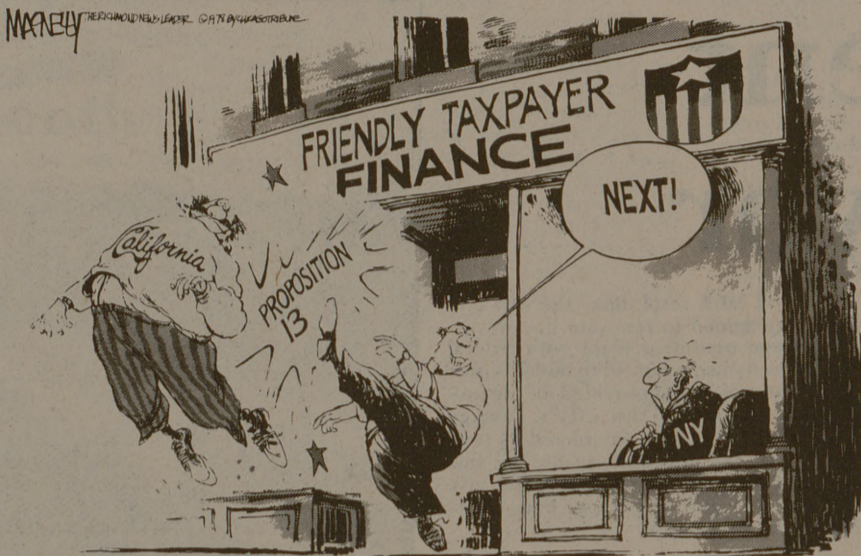
SIMILAR moves are pending in state legislatures or as possible ballot initiatives in about half the states. And with the impetus of the California victory, tax-limit advocates clearly sense that the moment is right for them to strike.

No one is likely to underestimate the significance of the vote. But there is some danger of exaggerating its meaning, and of rushing headlong into conclusions that are unwarranted.

The Jarvis-Gann initiative is the late-1970s equivalent of George Wallace's "send them a message" politics of the late 1960s. It is a protest against the growth of government and all its costs—bureaucratic as well as financial.

Bill Roberts, the veteran Republican California campaign consultant, was right when he told the Los Angeles Times: "Proposition 13 has less to do with tax reduction and more with people using it as a vehicle to express their unhappiness." Mickey Kantor, the Los Angeles Democratic lawyer-campaign manager, is right when he says it is the voters' way "of throwing a monkey-wrench in government."

LIKE THE WALLACE campaigns, it is a threat to both political parties. It puts Gov. Jerry Brown's presidential hopes under a cloud, at least temporarily, because he now faces a fiscal crisis as serious



as that which occupied New York Gov. Hugh Carey for the past four years. But, at the same time, it deprives the California Republican party of its strongest potential challengers to Brown, and its brightest hopes for the future. Assemblyman Ken Maddy and San Diego Mayor Pete Wilson, who might have worried Brown as opponents, were defeated in the GOP primary, in part because of their opposition to Proposition 13.

Jarvis-Gann was a poke in the eye to organized labor, minority groups, public employees, politicians, the downtown press and the self-styled public interest groups. It was, like the Wallace campaign, a win for the talk-show listeners and the folks who never attend Commonwealth Club lunches or League of Women Voters forums.

Like a lot of Wallace's populist rhetoric,

it was also a bit of a fraud. Behind the smoke-screen of helping the homeowner, it shackled the state government's ability to raise progressive corporate and personal income taxes, thus protecting the interests of the wealthy.

ONLY ONE-THIRD of its immediate benefits go to homeowners, and that portion is likely to decline over time, thanks to a wrinkle in the plan which opponents failed to make clear to California voters.

Under Jarvis-Gann, assessments can rise only 2 percent a year, until a piece of property is sold, when it is reassessed at market value. Homes change hands every seven years, on the average, commercial and industrial property, much less often. Over time, the homeowners will see their share of property tax burden increasing, while commercial and industrial property-owners benefit.

Jarvis-Gann is like the Wallace campaign in one final respect: It is not likely to travel well. As John Shannon of the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations has pointed out, "It would be difficult to duplicate in most other states the factors that have given the Jarvis-Gann approach such strong support in California."

Those factors include an overburdened property tax, a big state treasury surplus, a rapid increase in the overall tax burden and an exceptionally fast growth in residential property values. Jarvis-Gann is, as Shannon points out, "an extremely drastic" tax-limit measure, and as such, probably not the wave of the future.

But it is a symptom of an important political force. Since 1970, 14 other states have adopted limits on local tax authority and four states have imposed limits on state spending growth as well.

IT WOULD NOT be surprising to see a widespread adoption of the Tennessee and New Jersey formulas, which, in essence, say that government spending can grow no faster than the state's economy is expanding; the public sector cannot increase its slice of the total pie.

But this is a somewhat more modest goal than President Carter has set for himself—without prompting by a Proposition 13—when he aims to reduce the federal government's share of the gross national product from 22.6 percent to 21 percent.

It is a big victory for conservatism to have the public policy debate centering on the rate at which the scale of government should be reduced—not expanded. But it is not quite the revolution which some have seen in the wake of Proposition 13's passage. Reports of the death of the welfare state are, to borrow a phrase, exaggerated.

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# PUC wants 'fighting mad' Texans

United Press International  
AUSTIN — Texas' Public Utility Commission is looking for people who are angry about their electricity bills and don't want to take it anymore.

DESPITE THE VAST resources of natural gas in the state for generating electricity, many Texans' utility bills are among the highest in the nation and state regulators are looking for something to do about it.

"I think if anybody in the country can do it, we can," said Al Erwin, a former reporter serving on the pace-setting commission.

The commission opened a special hearing Monday to consider alternatives to present procedures for setting the price of electricity.

Information gathered at the hearing — expected to last three to four weeks — will be studied by the state regulatory agency and included in a report to the 1979 Legislature.

Experts predict some consumer groups may be surprised at the potential impact of popular rate relief measures such as "lifeline" rates.

Lifeline rates — calculated to provide a minimal amount of service to the elderly or poor at discounted prices — do not always benefit the needy, Erwin said.

Chief beneficiaries when such a system was instituted for electricity rates in California, Erwin said, turned out to be wealthy residents of Palm Desert — a rich suburb of Palm Springs — who vacationed away from their homes much of the time.

"THEY WERE TRYING to help poor people but they wound up subsidizing Palm Desert homeowners," Erwin said. "The assumption that low income equates with low usage is not always correct."

Erwin said the commission looked at the potential impact of reduced rates for minimal electricity use in considering prices to

be charged by Central Power & Light of Corpus Christi.

"In CP&L it was the beach homes on Padre Island that would have benefited," he said.

Erwin said he hopes the hearings will increase public awareness about problems in establishing rate structures and complications hindering efforts to slow increases in bills.

"It's really sort of our responsibility to tell everybody the price of electricity is not going to go down," Erwin said.

Conservation efforts may reduce the bills of individual consumers and changes in rate structure may shift the burden of utility costs somewhat but the cost of producing power is going to continue to increase, Erwin said.

PROSPECTS FOR re-distributing the costs among utility users are the central issue in the hearings — sessions state officials hope this may lead to some innovative proposals for revamping rate-making.

Representatives of the U. S. Department of Energy will participate along with organized consumer groups such as ACORN (Association of Citizens Organized for Reform Now), CASE (Citizens Associated for Sound Energy) and the Dallas Energy Task Force.

Testimony by utility company experts is expected to take most of the first week.

Representatives of the federal government, large industrial and commercial electricity users such as Dow Chemical Co. and J. C. Penny Co. are slated to testify the second week.

Spokesmen for consumer groups and representatives of individual cities such as Houston, Dallas, San Antonio and El Paso and the Texas Municipal League also are expected to appear the week of June 19-21.

Private individuals, and representatives of any other group, business or organization interested in participating will have a

chance to present their views during the week of June 26-28.

"We determined that the public should have the benefit of hearing all expert testimony before being asked to speak, so individuals would have the benefit of addressing specific subjects brought up by the utility companies and other formal parties," said Commission Chairman George Cowden.

LIBERAL LEGISLATORS demanded the study of alternative pricing procedures in hopes that the commission could come up with some method of providing relief to residents of areas such as South and Central Texas where electricity rates have skyrocketed in the past five years — jumping as much as 10-fold in many instances.

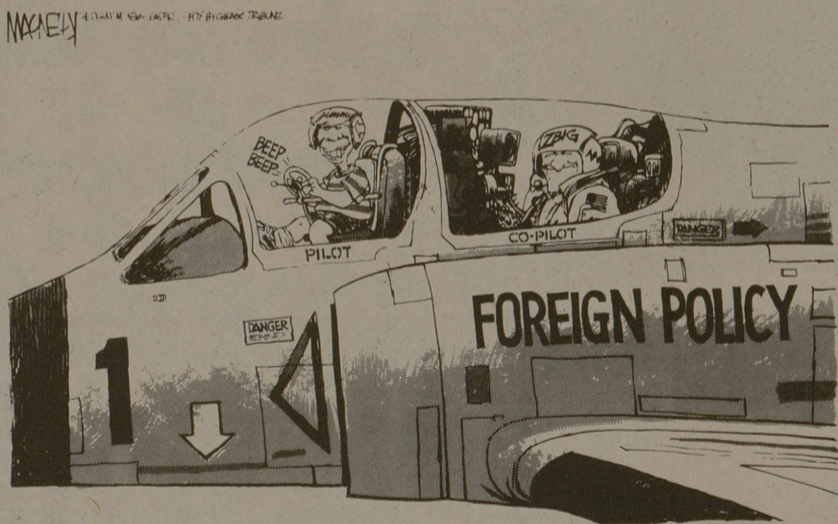
One frequent suggestion to reduce prices for electricity used during off-peak times is certain to be discussed, although

utility companies are indicating the plan might not be feasible in Texas because heavy summer air-conditioning use keeps many systems operating at near capacity for far too long every day to allow adequate time for off-peak usage.

The utility commission, created in 1976, may have to rehash many of the precedents it has set on rate making such as disapproval of declining block rates that make electricity cheaper with each additional amount consumed.

State regulators also hope to get public input on what types of rate structures are acceptable to Texas consumers.

"There are some things we have thought about doing that are just not palatable to the public," said John Cunningham, the hearing examiner who will preside at the sessions.



# Today fingerprints — tomorrow cowlicks?

By DICK WEST  
United Press International  
WASHINGTON — One of the worse curses that could befall a boy child of my generation was being born with a cowlick. Some girls had cowlicks, too, I suppose, but in their case it didn't much matter.

Girls of that day wore their hair either long or frizzed. If long, the strands were heavy enough to overcome the upward and outward thrust of the cowlick. If frizzed, the cowlick was incorporated into the overall convolutions.

## The Lighter Side

Boys were not so lucky. The style of that period required that small boys have short, slicked-down hair. With a cowlick, those terms are mutually contradictory.

There was no way in God's world a closely-cropped cowlick could be slicked down. No amount of water, oil, adhesives or coagulants would cause a cowlick to follow the contours of the scalp.

It takes, as a matter of fact, two dictionaries just to define cowlick. And even the combined meaning doesn't quite catch it.

One dictionary I consulted rendered it thusly: "a projecting tuft of hair that will not lie flat." The other construed it to be "a lock

or tuft growing in a different direction from the rest of the hair and usually turned up or away as if licked by a cow."

The classic cowlick does indeed project, refuse to lie flat and turn up or away. But the part about it growing in a different direction from the rest of the hair is woefully singular.

A cowlick does not grow in a different direction. It grows in different directions. It takes at least three tangential routes from the thatch's mainstream.

All of which mean, in the case of small boys, that the victims of cowlicks were

forced to spend miserable hours enduring the rigors of their mothers' determined but vain attempts to brush their hair down in the back.

Some mothers, in fits of desperation, even applied dabs of spittle to the wayward locks. We now know, perhaps, why these anguishing exercises were foredoomed.

According to the Agriculture Department, two veterinarians recently have established the cowlicks on horses are both highly individualist and apparently permanent.

The department says equine cowlicks,

called whorls, are like human fingerprints in that no two are alike. It says the whorls form a trichoglyph, or hair picture, that holds promise of becoming a new identification technique.

A press release containing this information does not mention human cowlicks. Obviously, however, that is something the FBI may want to look into.

It may be that a child born with his head in a whorl is exhibiting a uniqueness that no amount of maternal brushing can eradicate. If so, criminals will need to wear wigs to avoid leaving hairprints.

by Doug Graham

## FEEM

