

VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

WEDNESDAY
JULY 26, 1978

TOP OF THE NEWS STATE

Lightning strikes twice

Lightning from thunderstorms along the Gulf Coast Tuesday struck a Port Arthur high school teacher mowing his lawn and also touched off a fire at a fuel storage tank near the Houston Ship Channel. Burt McGreevy, 45, a history teacher at Port Neches-Crovo High School, was struck by lightning as he mowed his lawn and was taken to a hospital where he was reported in stable condition. Lightning also hit a fuel storage tank at a Crown Central Petroleum Co.

Suit filed over jail conditions

The American Civil Liberties Union has filed a class-action federal suit in San Antonio complaining about conditions at the Bexar County Jail. Attorney Gerald Goldstein filed the suit Monday charging overcrowding, inadequate sanitation, poor kitchen facilities, poor ventilation and lighting and inadequate staff. "In general, the conditions of the Bexar County Jail are extremely inadequate, deplorable, dehumanizing, dirty, dilapidated and dangerous," Goldstein said.

Gramm opposes 'hidden tax'

Democratic congressional candidate Phil Gramm Tuesday in Dallas urged enactment of a constitutional amendment barring peacetime federal deficit spending which he described as a "hidden tax." In a speech prepared for the Executive Women of Dallas, Gramm said federal spending in excess of revenues fuels inflation, which in turn robs workers of buying power. "Inflation is our cruelest tax," Gramm said. "It is devastating to the poor and the aged, those who can least afford the strangling effects of the shrinking dollar."

Police testify against jailers

Six Houston police officers Monday testified it was common practice for city jailers to carry prohibited weapons such as pipes or brass knuckles to protect themselves. The testimony came as lawyers for former officer Roscoe Edwards opened their defense against misdemeanor charges he possessed brass knuckles. The charges arose from a March 18 fight with a police detective.

NATION

Quota abolishment suggested

A top administration official in Washington Tuesday said the government's steel trigger price system and quotas on beef imports should be abolished. Barry Bosworth, chairman of the Council on Wage and Price Stability, told a House Agriculture subcommittee that beef producers favor restrictions on imports just the same as U.S. steel producers want trigger prices to help protect them from foreign imports.

European flights stopped

National Airlines has quietly dropped non-stop European flights from New Orleans International Airport instituted with great fanfare just four weeks ago, but a spokesman said they may resume next year. Problems developed with the flight because of a delay in opening the airport's main runway, a national spokesman said. "Since we really couldn't promote the flight heavily until close to departure, we didn't get a lot of advance bookings," he said. "We're not getting enough new bookings to make a go of it."

No gas turns everything cold

Construction crews severed an eight-inch gas transmission line forcing more than 4,000 customers and hundreds of tourists to eat cold sandwiches and take cold showers, said a spokesman for the People's Natural Gas Co. Tuesday in Durango, Colo. No injuries were reported. He said 40 additional company servicemen were brought in from Kansas and Texas to assist in restoring gas to customers.

Party cake laced with pot

Officials in the Colorado Division of Employment said Tuesday they would take no action against a worker suspected of spiking an office party cake with marijuana, saying they couldn't find enough evidence. Ed Clark, Denver manager for the Division of Employment, said two persons who ate some of the cake became so sick they missed several days of work and another was taken to a hospital emergency room.

Venus 2 launch set

A spacecraft is set to be launched from Cape Canaveral Aug. 7, the first of two instrumented probes into the thick, hot atmosphere of the planet Venus. The craft is the second to be sent to Venus this year. Pioneer Venus 1 was launched May 20 and is now 15.6 million miles from Earth, due to swing into orbit around the cloud-shrouded planet Dec. 4. Space agency officials said Monday the new craft, Pioneer Venus 2, is due to arrive five days later after ejecting the four probes.

WORLD

Sadat rejects Begin's message

President Anwar Sadat in Cairo, Egypt rejected a message from Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin that reportedly called for a summit between them and summoned the National Security Council into emergency session on Wednesday. Sadat's rejection of the Israeli message, contents of which were undisclosed, coincided with Begin's first public offer to discuss Arab sovereignty of the West Bank and Gaza Strip following a five-year transitional period.

WEATHER

Partly cloudy skies with continued hot temperatures today and Thursday. Fair and warm tonight. High today upper 90s, low tonight mid-70s. High tomorrow mid-90s. Winds from the south at 10-15 mph diminishing tonight. 20% chance of rain today and 20% tomorrow.

THE BATTALION

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Anybody seen my Dalmation?

Editor's note: This editorial first appeared in the Battalion July 17, 1977.

He walks through the old screen door and lets it slam behind him. The hot afternoon air seems to follow him inside.

Hello wife, hello house, hello-with-a-hug baby girl. Why do sweat and dirt and grease smell so much worse all mixed together on a tired human being at 6 o'clock?

Catch the news before supper, she says. So he heads for the ragged easy chair before the equally battered TV.

Just settling into the chair, he hears it, and lurches back to his feet. Heading out the way he came in, he half sees his wife's frustrated scowl and says "I'll call if it'll take long" as he pushes

through the door. This time a high, whining siren comes back in with the heat — a fire whistle falling from its highest pitch until it seems to have stopped, then blaring out again.

She watches the little red license tag on his pickup as he goes out the caliche driveway. "Volunteer Fire Department."

He may be back in 10 minutes or 10 hours or may be spending the night under an oxygen tent, overcome by smoke.

Why does a hot, tired man just home from work jump into his pickup to go fight someone else's fire? Or for that matter, why would a man make a living out of fighting, and waiting to fight, fires?

Maybe because some day that siren might be

for his house, his wife and baby. Or because that alarm may be for someone else's house or wife or baby.

Firemen are like flashlights. As long as we don't need them, we don't think about them. But let our house be burning or let the lights go out and they damn well better be there doing their job.

We so seldom thank firemen. But this is a good time, with almost 2,000 of them on the Texas A&M campus attending the Engineering Extension Service's Fire Training School.

So, gentlemen and ladies, we say simply "Thanks."

L.R.L.

Everybody's doing it

By LAURENCE McQUILLAN
United Press International

WASHINGTON — Peter Bourne's abrupt departure from the Carter White House, and the circumstances surrounding it, have left a cloud of suspicion and speculation about drug use by people high in the government hierarchy.

The affair set investigative reporters to delving into the thin gray borderline between public and private conduct.

They have turned up evidence that in these circles, recreational use is made not only of alcohol, which is legal, but marijuana and cocaine, which are not.

Washington

Bourne, the 38-year-old psychiatrist who helped inspire Jimmy Carter's aspiration to the presidency and shared his triumph, was gone within 36 hours after the Washington Post reported he used a fictitious name in prescribing the sedative-hypnotic Quaalude for an aide.

But that incident, initially, resulted only in Bourne's taking a leave of absence. The telling blow to his position as the president's confidant and adviser on drug abuse problems came when columnist Jack Anderson reported Bourne had smoked marijuana and sniffed cocaine at a Washington party.

The Washington Post and the Washington Star reported confirmation of that incident, although both quoted Bourne as denying he used cocaine.

Bourne was quoted in interviews as saying he knew of people on the White House staff who had tried the euphoria-producing white powder, commonly called "coke" and referred to as "the rich man's drug" because of its high cost.

White House press secretary Jody Powell told reporters he "had no knowledge" of such activity, saying: "I really have no way of knowing that sort of thing."

"Nevertheless," The New York Times reported in Saturday editions, "seven junior members of the staff said in private interviews that they do smoke marijuana

regularly during off-duty hours and that they were directly and indirectly aware of the use of cocaine by a few of their colleagues."

"All of the government aides said they had never used marijuana in the White House," the Times said, "and all insisted that their 'recreational' use of the illegal drug had never impaired their ability to function in their jobs."

In a separate story based on a survey of experts in the field, the Times reported: "The use of marijuana and other illicit substances, particularly cocaine, is so widespread among well-educated young professional people with high-pressure jobs that it is increasingly difficult to find any who have not at least tried them."

As for Bourne, he still is under investigation by police in Prince William County, Va., an outlying suburb of the nation's capital where the Quaalude affair began unfolding when 26-year-old Toby Long was arrested for trying to fill the prescription Bourne issued for a fictitious "Sarah Brown."

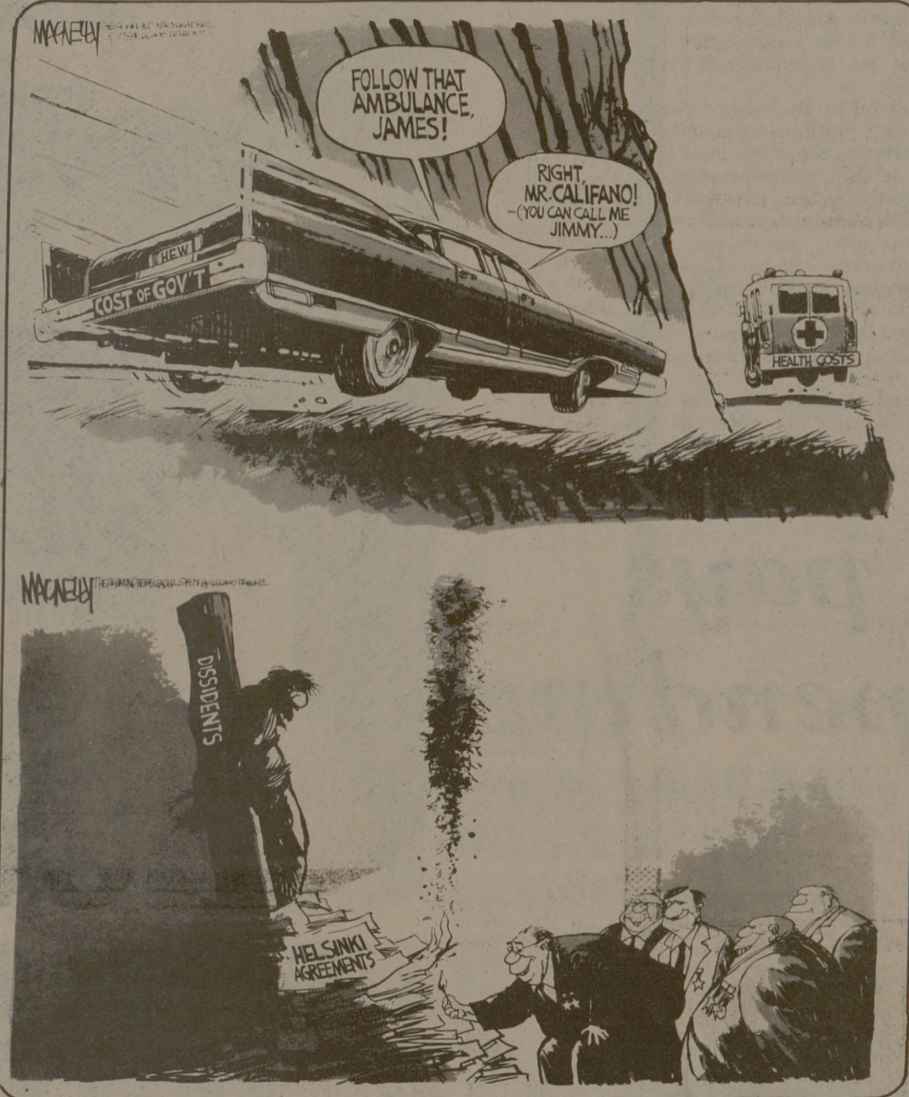
Bourne acknowledged using the false name to conceal the identity of aide Ellen Metsky, for whom the prescription was intended and for whom Ms. Long was trying to fill it. He insisted this was legitimate protection of doctor-client confidentiality and was not "legally or morally wrong."

In one of those twists of circumstance reminiscent of a night watchman's detection of the Watergate burglary, the Quaalude matter might never have come to light had Kathleen Watt, an inspector for the Virginia State Pharmacy Board, not been in the drugstore where Ms. Long took the prescription.

She became suspicious and called police.

Again, as with Bert Lance, one of Carter's inner circle has proven a deep embarrassment. But this time, in contrast to the drawn-out backing and filling before Lance resigned as budget director, the excision was quick and clean.

A top White House aide, reflecting on the Bourne matter, said: "It's probably best that he left. We could have all been dragged down again."



Working both sides

By LeROY POPE
UPI Business Writer

NEW YORK — The border regions of Mexico near San Diego, El Paso and Nogales are becoming increasingly important to American manufacturers.

The possibility that Taiwan ultimately will be absorbed into Communist China, and political frictions between Washington and South Korea and the Philippines raise questions about American firms manufacturing in those regions in order to hold down labor costs.

The steadily-rising cost of transporting goods from such far-off points to the U.S. market also is giving the American manufacturer pause. This applies to Hong Kong and other areas where there are no political concerns.

Business

Fast-growing San Diego, with a metropolitan area population that has spurred to 1.4 million because it has spurred a mecca for sun worshippers, is tremendously interested in expanding the "twin plant" concept of factories on either side of the Mexican border.

Howard Boysen, president of IMEC Corp. of San Diego, says the twin-plant idea helps both the United States and Mexico and enables a near-the-border city with a high jobless rate such as San Diego to attract labor-intensive industries by sharing the benefits with the Mexicans in nearby Tijuana.

Under the twin-plant concept, Boysen explained, the American manufacturer exports components to the Mexican plant for labor-intensive assembly then brings them back across the border. Boysen said more than 300 companies are engaged in twin-plant operation along the Mexican border,

95 in Tijuana alone. Jack E. Kay, who heads the border industries committee of the U.S.-Mexico Chamber of Commerce, estimates 50,000 jobs in plants in the United States depend on the twin-plant concept.

The American firms could not compete with Japanese and other Asian firms otherwise, Kay said.

Richard Davis, executive director of San Diego's Economic Development Corp., said reduction of freight costs as compared with Far East levels is only one advantage of assembling in the Mexican border towns.

"The time savings are great," Davis said, "and the Mexican plants are close enough so American executives can visit them freely."

Not all the Mexican border firms finishing or assembling goods for American companies are American-owned; many are Mexican firms working under contract. The advantages of the system are the same in either case.

Kay estimates that almost 90 cents of every dollar paid in wages to the Mexicans recrosses the border to buy American goods, transportation or financial services.

The twin-plant concept appears to be valuable only in products with a labor cost factor of 50 percent or more, and with an import duty of less than 25 percent.

Mexican law makes considerable concessions for plant ownership and import duties on machinery and supplies for the border zone plants compared with plants in the interior of the country. But foreign firms cannot own land in the border areas.

American law limits levying of the import duty to the "value added" to the raw components shipped to Mexico for assembly or finishing and brought back.

Letter to the editor

They're back

Editor: Oh boy, the fireboys are back in town. I'd forgotten how much fun it is to have these rude whistlers and yellers, not to mention leering stagers! Makes it a pleasure to ride your bike around campus.

These people should try to remember that to us they are representing all firefighters, and they're certainly not making a very good impression. It's one thing I won't miss next summer.

— Lynn Pitts, '79

Translation please

By DICK WEST
United Press International

WASHINGTON — One of the biggest cultural treats of the summer is being provided by the first U.S. tour of the Performing Arts Company of the People's Republic of China.

The troupe already has appeared in Washington and New York and finishes up in Milwaukee and Los Angeles.

American audiences seem greatly to enjoy the music, dancing and costumes, but some westerners have trouble following the story lines of the operas and ballets, which tend to be somewhat propagandistic.

The trick, I discovered, is to ignore the Chinese political themes they are trying to portray and relate what is happening on the stage to something you are familiar with.

One spectacular dance, for example, is called "Militawomen of the Grassland." As described in the program notes, "A detachment of militawomen carry out cavalry exercises on the grassland in China's Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region while patrolling the frontier." Yes.

I suppose it would be possible to read something of that sort into the dance. But I found it more meaningful to think of the dance as "A team of liberated women play tennis matches on the grass courts at Wimbledon to celebrate Billie Jean King's victory over male chauvinist Bobby Riggs."

It was much the same with an aria from

the opera "The Red Guards on Hunghu Lake."

"In this aria," according to the program, "a guerrilla heroine in the Hunghu Lake area of Hupei Province tells about the miseries of the local people in the old days and expresses her determination to devote herself to the cause of people's liberation."

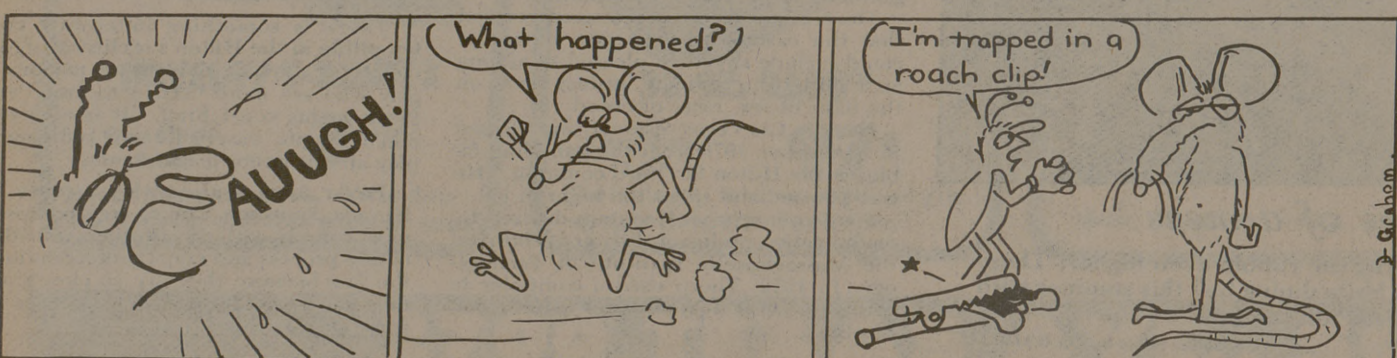
I suppose lyrics like that hold Chinese audiences in thrall. But in the English summary, the aria sounds a bit tedious. I could appreciate the soloist's vocal gifts more deeply by imagining her as singing something less like this:

"A cheerleader for the Miami Dolphins tells about the miseries of Florida football fans after a playoff loss to Oakland and expresses her determination to root the team into the Super Bowl next year."

In another dance, or so the program avers, "A group of Tibetan girls help a soldier from the People's Liberation Army wash clothes and the latter helps them fetch water. The dance compares the relationship between the army and the civilians as that between fish and water."

That wasn't the way I saw it at all. In my mind, "A group of Baylor University coeds volunteer to serve as hostesses for a tea dance at the Waco USO. But this is the day the U.S. Army is staging a \$2 million firepower demonstration for President Carter at Fort Hood, and only one soldier shows up for the dance. The dance compares the relationship between the army and the civilians to that between Andy Young and political prisoners in the United States."

FEEM



By Doug Graham