

VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

FRIDAY
OCTOBER 13, 1978

Cleansing the GSA

Big government has a way of doing things in a big way. And it would appear that reports of bribery, fraud and theft affecting the General Services Administration will be no exception.

Government sources close to the investigation say that the GSA scandal is only the tip of the iceberg, that corruption in procurement could extend to other federal agencies. Assuming that GSA employees are not the only ones in government service who have their price, such a prediction should not be surprising.

Wherever the investigation may lead, President Carter has a duty to make sure that every appropriate government resource is brought to bear so that public confidence in the GSA is restored. Putting Robert Griffin, the GSA's former No. 2 man on the White House payroll after he was fired last July, was not a step in that direction.

In cases involving the public trust, prosecution should be swift and forceful. The fact that offenders may have friends in Congress, and the argument that they have been in government for many years, serve only to increase, not mitigate, the severity of the crime.

Grand Rapids (Mich.) Press

Republicans offer skimpy prospects

By DAVID S. BRODER

WASHINGTON — For Republican partisans, or the handful of people who care about the health of what used to be called the two-party system, there is one particularly worrisome note about the 1978 mid-term elections. It is the inability of Republicans to find and field nearly enough young, first-class candidates in the races where they have a chance to win.

There are three main reasons why Republicans have such skimpy prospects for a major recovery in the November elections. One is the ability of most incumbents (two-thirds of them Democrats) to convert the prerequisites of office into major campaign advantages.

The second is the failure of Republicans, as a party, to persuade the voters they will do a better job than the Democrats on the dominant issues of inflation and taxes.

And the third is the problem Republicans have had in finding worthy challengers for the contests they very conceivably could win. It is this third factor that has most eroded GOP hopes for a healthy rebound from its 1974 and 1976 defeats.

POLITICAL TECHNICIANS are aware of a basic change that has taken place in the dynamics of American elections in the past decade. With improved communications techniques (television, direct-mail, mobile offices, etc.) and

ever-expanding opportunities for constituent services, incumbent legislators have enormous built-in advantages for gaining re-election. They also enjoy an edge in raising campaign funds from the interest groups that want access to those who already have a vote on the issues they espouse.

For that reason, contests for Congress increasingly have centered on the "open seats," those in which retirements, primary election defeats or the pursuit of other office have taken the incumbents out of the race.

Politics

Republicans have been targeting such races — and with good effect. In 1977, they won four special elections where Democratic incumbents had stepped down — in rural Minnesota, in the Louisiana Delta, in Seattle and in the heart of Manhattan. In all of them, young, vigorous candidates were recruited to run. (All four, incidentally, are favored to hold their seats this fall.) Given the resources of money and campaign specialists Republicans can throw into such contests, there seemed every reason to think the pattern

would pay off in significant gains this year. There are 84 "open" contests in the November voting for governor, senator and representative, and two-thirds of those seats — 57 of the 84 — are now held by Democrats.

WHERE THE REPUBLICANS have able, aggressive, young candidates in these races, they are likely to do well. Rep. Thad Cochran (R), 40, of Mississippi has a good chance to replace retiring Sen. James O. Eastland (D). Rep. Larry Pressler (R), 36, of South Dakota is almost certain to take the seat of retiring Sen. James Abourezk (D). Richard Cheney (R), 38, of Wyoming, who was chief of staff in the Ford White House, is well in front in the race to replace Rep. Teno-Roncalio (D) as congressman-at-large.

The trouble for the GOP is that there aren't nearly enough Cheneys, Cochrans and Presslers to go around in a national election year. More typically, you find Republicans running a 59-year-old Jim Martin, who left congress 16 years ago, against a 38-year-old state Sen. Donald Stewart (D), for a vacant Senate seat in Alabama. Or a 66-year-old Jack Eckerd against a 41-year-old Robert Graham (D) for the vacancy in the Florida governorship. In Texas, where eight of the 22 Democratic House seats are open, Republicans will do well to win one of them.

In New Jersey, where one of the Democratic congressman is notoriously vulnerable, a Republican campaign official says, "We can win it — if we just can keep our own candidate locked up. He's worse."

WHY THIS PROBLEM for the GOP? For one thing, the party is weak among young people. A Washington Post poll found voters under 30 prefer Democrats by a 3-to-1 margin, and that favoritism limits the ranks from which Republicans can recruit candidates.

And, as a Democratic campaign official noted, with a touch of professional sympathy, the Nixon administration, in its six years, "made no investment in the future stock of quality candidates. Nixon's legacy was the destruction of the whole 27-to-35-year-old range of aspirants, men and women who either refused to run for office in Watergate 1974, or were beaten when they tried."

Ironically, Richard Nixon himself has told recent visitors that it would be a "terrible reflection" on the GOP if its main contenders for President in 1980 were 67-year-old Gerald Ford and 69-year-old Ronald Reagan.

But the candidate problem for Republicans goes much deeper than the presidency. The GOP is just starved for talent at its roots.

1978, The Washington Post Company

Letters to the Editor

A&M shouldn't cut controversial program

Editor:

A PBS program interviewing persons from all walks of life who are homosexual was to be aired on KAMU-TV on Oct. 10. It was supposedly a very open and informative program allowing one to see a different side of the issue.

After I called to find out why the program wasn't shown, a station employee told me it was "unofficially" ordered canceled by President Miller because it consisted of controversial material. The program was aired on the regular PBS channel, which I don't get, to the rest of the country.

It seems that the purpose of an institution of high learning such as Texas A&M is not solely to educate persons in their respective fields but to promote awareness of social and political issues. Furthermore, it seems the head of such an institution should encourage knowledge of these matters pertinent to a rounded education, not ban them.

This issue is particularly relevant today with the equal rights movement. Those of us wanting a better understanding of the issue were denied the right to watch the scheduled program. At this period in my life, I find nothing more aggravating than to be robbed of the opportunity to make my own judgments.

— K. B. Humphreys, graduate student

Editor's note: According to a news release issued Thursday by the University, the program was not shown because the station received notification in advance that it contained offensive language, and was scheduled during a family viewing time.

Dr. Mel Chastain, director of Educational Broadcast Services at Texas A&M, was quoted as saying the program contained "pretty raw language" and no alternate time was available for showing it. There was no mention in the news release of Texas A&M President Miller issuing orders for the program's cancellation.

Worthless antics

Editor: I would like to compliment Andy Duffie on his excellent article in the Reader's Forum section of Tuesday's Battalion (Oct. 10).

For a student visiting a rival university, it doesn't take much for them to forge a bad impression that lasts a long time. Mr. Duffie's examples of the Corps stealing hats and bells from Tech band and Saddle-Tramps members made me recall only too clearly the embarrassing antics during last year's UT-A&M game.

The many good attributes of Texas A&M are easily overshadowed by a few bad incidents.

Stealing items from rival school's fans, footballers on Kyle Field, painted armadillos, etc., are pretty worthless and don't help our reputation a bit. Too often Texas A&M University, and all its students, has to answer for the immature acts of a few.

— Rich Carson, '81

Where's my ride?

Editor: We have heard many complaints about our University Police and we would like to add one more.

The police have a policy of transporting female dorm students back to their dorms from the parking lots across the tracks. This can be a very helpful service when performed properly — or when performed at all.

On the evening of Oct. 3, 1978, we were unable to find a parking space near our dorm. On our way to the lots across the tracks, we stopped at the University Police Station and asked to have someone take us to our dorm.

"Stand under the lights between the lots and I'll have a car pick you up," was the reply to our request. After parking our car, we proceeded and followed the instructions given us. For the following 20 minutes, we watched late-night joggers, turned down a few obscene offers, and watched many cars drive by.

Unfortunately, none of the cars we saw were University police. Finally, we returned to our car and drove to a friend's apartment nearby, parked our car there, and our friend gave us a ride home.

If we can't be furnished enough dorm parking, at least our police can drive through the lots across the tracks periodically.

As a casual drive through those lots at 10 or 15 minute intervals asking too much?

As the old saying goes: "You can't ever find a cop when you need one."

— Sharon Youngblood, '81
Terry Gale, '81
Mary Lindsey, '81

Staying alive

Editor: Hat's on to Mr. Saad's rash suggestion that everyone should endure any and all events at Kyle Field bare-headed.

It seems that there must be a conspiracy afoot to see how much an Aggie will go through to attend a football game.

Ice chests are no longer allowed in the stadium. And of course there's always been the good old tradition of standing up the entire game and half of the half time.

Now someone (perhaps a member of a tightly knit organization) is proposing that we risk having our faces rot off from skin cancer thirty years from now by leaving

our heads unshielded from the weather. After that proposal is firmly established as yet another tradition, we'll be able to see who has enough spirit to remain on their feet after an afternoon of dehydrating under the blistering sun.

I'll admit I'm painting this picture a bit dramatically, but I, for one, care less for having my nose turn into an oversized red chili pepper in early fall and into an ice-block in winter. If a dome is build over Kyle Field and climate control installed, I'll be glad to remove my hat.

Don't get me wrong. The 55 soldiers who died for our country should be revered (paying homage to three dead dogs is another matter), but not at the expense of the present students' health.

It's great to have respect for the dead, but couldn't we have a little respect for the living?

— Dale B. Crockett, '80

Domed insight

Editor:

Sean Petty attempted to find out why UH won't play A&M at Rice Stadium, in an article appearing in Wednesday's Battalion (Oct. 11) Although the UH sports information secretary was rude in her answers, her reply to Petty that the Astrodome is UH's home field should have been sufficient. The question is ridiculous in the first place and we're getting tired of people around here wondering why Houston won't play their home games in someone else's backyard.

Since 1965, the Astrodome has been UH's home field. In 1976, Houston was forced to play all but one home game in Rice Stadium as part of the Southwest Conference's fraternity-like initiation policy (punishment no doubt for UH's audacity of wanting to join the conference). According to policy, the visiting SWC team had its choice of where to play UH the first two years of UH's membership. The first year, every team except TCU chose Rice Stadium over the Astrodome.

In effect, UH played eight games away that year. Do you think they want to do that again?

Granted, the ticket situation is bad, but it's really no worse than what the Arkansas and Texas game will be this year. And the extra revenue UH would make playing in a larger facility is not worth forsaking home field advantage. And the Astrodome is a home field advantage — UH had to play their "home" game against Rice in Rice Stadium in 1976. Would A&M play a home game in Austin because Memorial Stadium holds more people? I don't think so.

We hope this does a better job of insight than what Mr. Petty did. But, we really don't think it makes any difference to our football team where we play UH. We're going to beat the hell outta Cougar High anyway.

— Kyle Harper, '82
Kevin Hudson, '82

Slouch by Jim Earle



"I WISH YOU LUCK ON LEARNING TO DIP SNUFF. JUST BE SURE THAT YOU DON'T SWALLOW IT! I SAID . . . ARE YOU ALRIGHT?"

TOP OF THE NEWS

CAMPUS

Piano recital planned Monday

Texas A&M University's Classical Piano Group will present a piano recital Monday in Rudder Forum at 8 p.m. The group, open to all Texas A&M students, faculty and staff will play classical pieces ranging in style from Baroque to contemporary. Since its inception last semester, the club has aided members who need rare piano music, instruction for playing, or a place to discuss topics about the piano. Lyn Reyna, a Bryan piano instructor, holds a piano workshop with the group twice a month. The piano recital is the first major event sponsored by the club. Admission will be \$1. Tickets can be bought at the MSC Box Office and at the door.

Band group donates \$5,000

A \$5,000 check for a portable reel-to-reel tape recorder, a tutoring fund and a spring concert was given to the Texas Aggie Band director Lt. Col. Joe T. Haney by the Texas Aggie Band Association. The former students' association presented the check during a mini-reunion before the Texas A&M-Memphis State game. More than 300 former bandsmen and their spouses registered at the reunion. The group included a representative from the class of 1913 and Col. E.V. Adams, former director of the Texas Aggie Band. The next regular TABA reunion is planned for 1979.

LOCAL

Fire destroys plants at hut

Forage samples being used in research projects and a plant dryer were destroyed in a fire at a Texas A&M University hut at Highway 60 and FM 2815 at 7:15 a.m. Thursday. Professor Joseph Schuster, head of the range science department, said it would take about two years to replace some of the samples and equipment. He said the fire appeared to have started in the dryer. The forage samples were the biggest loss, he said. Schuster said the fire was discovered by two professors who were on a field trip. The two tried to call the College Station Fire Department, but couldn't find a working phone. Schuster said the call was made with a CB radio by a passerby. One end of the building was heavily damaged he said. Lt. Dwight Rabe of the College Station Fire Department said three pump trucks were sent to the blaze and about 2,500 gallons of water, all carried in the pump trucks, were used to extinguish the fire.

STATE

Hunger-striker force-fed again

Condemned murderer David Lee Powell, whose 13-day hunger strike at Huntsville prison was broken Monday by prison doctors, was being force-fed again Wednesday after refusing to take solids, Texas Department of Corrections officials said. Powell, 27, facing death by injection for fatally shooting an Austin policeman, had refused all nourishment in an attempt to commit suicide by starvation until prison officials ordered him force-fed Monday. He then resumed eating voluntarily. Officials have used a tube through his esophagus into his stomach to feed Powell.

U.S. Hispanic leaders in Houston

More than 1,000 Hispanic leaders from throughout the country have gathered in Houston for a conference on families and goals for Spanish speaking peoples during the next two decades. Federal officials and Chip Carter, the president's son, are expected at the three-day National Hispanic Conference, which began Thursday. "This conference is occurring when a lot of policies are going to have to be made in correcting the inequities, deprivation and other societal deficiencies of an important part of our population," conference spokesman Roy Harris said Wednesday. "The Carter family has shown special interests in our Hispanic communities and the goals of the conference," said conference director Rodolfo B. Sanchez. Today Carter will present the Community Service Youth Awards to a young Hispanic man and woman.

Crane falls in Dallas Centre

A spectacular accident Wednesday knocked holes in the exterior walls of three floors of the distinctive diamond-shaped glass, concrete and aluminum One Dallas Centre, scheduled to open in December, when a 10-ton crane fell 27 stories, crushing to death Kenneth Carl Branch, 37, of Tyler. Federal, engineering and insurance company investigations are under way. The crane, one of two in place for months atop the structure, was hauling a huge bucket of cement toward the roof when witnesses said they heard a crack and saw the crane bend and crash to the ground. A traffic light had stopped a line of cars about 100 feet away seconds before the accident.

WORLD

IRA bombs train; woman killed

At least four bombs exploded on a crowded Dublin-to-Belfast passenger train Thursday, killing one person and injuring 32 others, two seriously. Police blamed the Provisional Irish Republican Army for the bombings that rocked the train two miles from Belfast's busy Central Station. Police said an anonymous telephone caller warned them that 10 bombs on the train were timed to go off when the train pulled into the station at 10:30 a.m. The train was late and the first bomb exploded two miles from the station. The passengers disembarked before three more bombs exploded, police said. The injured were rushed to hospitals nearby; most were believed suffering from burns and minor cuts and bruises.

WEATHER

Cloudy with fog turning partly cloudy with a slight chance of thundershowers and a 20% chance of rain. The high will be in the low 80s and the low in the low 50s. Winds will be S.E. 5-10 mph increasing to 20 mph.

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.

Address correspondence to Letters to the Editor, The Battalion, Room 216, Reed McDonald Building, College Station, Texas 77843.

Represented nationally by National Educational Advertising Services, Inc., New York City, Chicago and Los Angeles.

The Battalion is published Monday through Friday from September through May except during exam and holiday periods and the summer, when it is published on Tuesday through Thursday.

Mail subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester; \$33.25 per school year; \$35.00 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request. Address: The Battalion, Room 216, Reed McDonald Building, College Station, Texas 77843. United Press International is entitled exclusively to the use of reproduction of all news dispatches credited to it. Rights of reproduction of all other matter herein reserved.

Second-Class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.

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