



# VIEWPOINT



THE BATTALION  
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

WEDNESDAY  
JANUARY 24, 1979

## 'Smilin' Jack' will be sorely missed

We called him "Smilin' Jack."  
That does not sound like the most respectful of nicknames for the chancellor of a university system. But it is.  
Dr. Jack Kenny Williams, it seems, has always been smiling. The relaxed openness of that smile pervaded his way of running a university system — and that system is the better for it.  
We have to speak in the past tense, because "Smilin' Jack" resigned Tuesday as chancellor of the Texas A&M University System.  
He is keeping his reasons to himself, at least for now. Rest assured it was a decision made neither easily nor in haste.

But it is much easier to remove the man than to remove the contributions he has made in dollars and sense.  
When Dr. Williams came to Texas A&M in 1970, he was following in the footsteps of another great man, James Earl Rudder. The two men may have never met. But Rudder would have few qualms about leaving "his" university to his successor. Dr. Williams took Rudder's dreams for this university system — and made them reality.

If ever a man lived who could compete with Rudder as a tireless worker, it has been Williams. It took two heart attacks in that short summer of 1976 to slow "Smilin' Jack's" pace — from a hard run to a steady trot.

There is little need to recount the leaps and bounds Rudder's fledgling university system has made during the eight years Dr. Williams has served as its chief overseer. It is probably the fastest growing system in the country in terms of people, money and national reputation.

Other men could have done it — but Jack Williams did do it, with that easy smile that couldn't help winning him new friends every day.

He startled many a Texas A&M student who looked up while walking between classes to see THE CHANCELLOR strolling across campus and chatting with students, like the teacher he has never stopped being.

The only specific plans Dr. Williams has announced include returning to teaching. If so, some university, perhaps Texas A&M, will gain a great teacher. But certainly Texas A&M will lose a great chancellor and a great friend.

We will miss you, dear friend.

L.R.L.

## Carter discovering limits to his power

By DAVID S. BRODER

WASHINGTON — As he begins year three of his presidency, both Jimmy Carter and the country he is leading have come to understand better the basic challenge of his presidency. While the verdict on his performance cannot be written at mid-term, the criteria by which he can be judged are becoming much clearer.

This is not a time of — or for — heroic leadership, and the President seems to know that. While he has occasionally allowed his speech writers to indulge in rhetorical flourishes, his natural instinct is to take a managerial — not a gladiatorial — view of the job.

In his second anniversary interviews with several journalists, Carter has been emphasizing the intractable nature of many of the problems facing America and the limited scope of his presidential powers.

For a man who, while campaigning, spoke with scorn of the "timid" leadership of his predecessor, he has been sounding a bit tentative himself. His comments on the inability of a president to reconcile a chaf to his people, or a customer to the prices

he must pay, reflect a growing consciousness of the constraints on his power.

The Presidents who have been judged heroic in the history books have been those who faced major crises and found ways of responding, who launched great new programs or enterprises, or who gave legitimacy to movements and forces that reshaped the country.

### Commentary

Carter's challenge is of a different and less dramatic character. It is, essentially, to try to halt the deterioration that has been taking place in the well-being of this society to stabilize a badly listing ship.

None of the setbacks the nation suffered in the past decade were crippling by itself. But in combination, they sapped the national self-esteem and self-confidence.

Vietnam undermined the American public's and the world's confidence in our foreign policy judgment and our capacity to fulfill our military commitments.

The oil embargo and the hammer-blows of inflation to the strength of the dollar

eroded the belief in the vitality and self-sufficiency of our economic system.

A series of shocks — from the assassination of one President to the forced resignation of another — caused massive damage to the credibility of our political institutions. Government came to be seen, not as an agent for bettering people's lives, but as an expensive, intrusive bungler.

In campaigning, Carter did not minimize the damage. He spoke sympathetically of the "hurt" the nation had suffered.

But he suggested that the wounds could be healed if only there were a President who embodied the decent, hard-working character of the American people, and he modestly allowed that he might be the man.

In these past two years, he has learned — or confirmed — what the example of Jerry Ford ought to have suggested: That decency and hard work are a good starting point, but they are not going to do the job by themselves.

Carter can claim some solid achievements in his first two years, particularly the improvement in the employment picture and the resolution of long-standing

impasses over Panama and China. But he has yet to slow or reverse the basic forces of erosion that he has found at work.

The dollar has weakened, inflation and the trade imbalance have increased, and the dependence on foreign-source energy has grown worse.

American power and influence have been unable to prevent adverse developments on Russia's southern border or in Africa. In those areas where we have taken the diplomatic initiative, such as the Middle East, Rhodesia and the U.S.-Soviet arms-control talks, our efforts are still frustrated.

Politically, the cynicism of the citizens has not abated. Indeed, by one basic measure of alienation, non-voting, it has continued to worsen.

The President is only half way through this term, and the scarcity of dramatic accomplishments may say more about the nature of the times than it does about the limitations of Carter's leadership. It is well that everyone now understands how finite are the goals that are attainable. It would be even better if some of those modest goals could be met.

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### Letters to the Editor

## Basketball team still needs fans

Editor:  
It is not my intention to anger any of my fellow Ags, but I was surprised that approximately 1,200 tickets have not been distributed (as of 3 p.m. Tuesday) for Wednesday night's game against TCU.

I realize many students are disgusted because they were unable to draw tickets for Arkansas and Texas Tech, but I believe the real reason for the apathy is Monday's loss to t.u. Hopefully I am wrong. Possibly many do not wish to see a non-contending team like TCU.

After looking at the SWC standings in Tuesday's Battalion, it shouldn't be too difficult to realize that the basketball race is far from finished. Five teams have .500 or better records.

It is too soon to write off our Aggie team. More than ever before our players need fan support. A full house at G. Rollie White Coliseum Wednesday night will sure help our team rebound from Monday's defeat.

Beat the hell outta TCU.  
—Stuart Schroeder, '79

### Hedge too costly

Editor:  
In a community of more than 20,000 financially struggling college students, there could be very little difficulty disposing of \$27,000. For that amount, two students could attend UT for four years, all expenses included, A&M could pay someone's salary for a year, or buy several new vehicles — or put one to two foot hedge around the MSC grass to discourage its use.

In a little publicized part of a bill before the student senate, to be voted on Jan. 24, two of the senators propose to make memorialization of the MSC grass official. And to remind students and visitors that use of the grass is prohibited, a small boxwood hedge will be installed around the grassy areas of the MSC. This will cost an estimated \$27,000, which makes a slightly controversial issue into a major concern. This much money could certainly be put to better use.

Some of us will laugh about it, then forget it, because the money will come from somewhere. And it probably will. But this only perpetuates a trend at the University and across the country. One of spending large sums of money on frivolous, unnecessary and even opulent programs.

A university's main function is to provide students with the knowledge they will need to make a living and get along in society. With this in mind, spending

\$27,000 on a hedge to discourage use of grass which is seldom disturbed anyway becomes ludicrous and even infuriating. Memorialized grass may be a nice gesture, but this makes it a crude one.  
—Melissa Pitts, '79

### Corps acts as reps

Editor:  
In response to Miss Zentgraf's letter (Jan. 23) concerning TAMU's participation

in Gov. Clements' recent inauguration, I would like to assure her that she was indeed represented. As a Corps member, she can be proud that the organizations invited by the governor are affiliated with the Corps of Cadets. The Aggie Band, The Ross Volunteers, and Parson's Mounted Cavalry symbolized our university, as well as the military tradition in which she participates.

The strength of A&M lies in its unity and in the tradition that each student

reflects some aspect of that unity; thus, any single student or organization — regardless of race, military affiliation, or sex — represents our student body equally well.

Since all 30,000 of us could not be present in Austin on Jan. 16, Gov. Clements honored our university by inviting three of our larger campus groups. As a result, our individual interests may not have been represented, but the collective pride of the school was, indeed, well illustrated.

In closing, I hope Miss Zentgraf understands that just as the Aggie Band led the inaugural parade, so were all Aggies — men, women, former students, and faculty — truly in the spotlight.  
—Margot Noynaert, '80

### Step to the rear

Editor:  
This short note is directed to "Miss Overlooked." To start with, the Ross Volunteers, Aggie Band and Parson's Cavalry are not intended to include women (I know that really burns you up).

Second and most important, no! women at Texas do not and I hope, never will, take a back seat to anyone. However, "waggies" and "queers" will, no doubt, never be in the back seat but in the trunk at Texas A&M.  
—Christopher D. Stewart, '79

### Correction

The Reader's Forum section of Monday's Battalion incorrectly reported that the Memorial Student Center was dedicated in April, 1954. The student center was dedicated in 1951, not 1954.

### Readers' Forum

Guest viewpoints, in addition to Letters to the Editor, are welcome. All pieces submitted to Readers' forum should be:

- Typed triple space
- Limited to 100 lines
- Limited to 60 characters per line

## Memorializing grass no tribute to veterans

By JEFF O. BOGERT

This is in response to the myriad of letters regarding the official recognition of the MSC grass as a "memorial." I wish to respond to two points in the letter by J.W. Morrison: 1) the grass is "a memorial to all Aggies who have given their lives in defense of our country," 2) the best means of protecting this "memorial" is the erection of "at least one appropriately worded sign explaining the tradition" and "a small hedge around the perimeter of the grounds."

It is not my intent to single out a "pro grass" letter. I merely find it is typical of certain attitudes displayed by both sides of the great grass debate.

### Readers Forum

This attitude causes me to question, just where the hell do any of you get the mandate to speak of the dead? And only the dead of WWI and WWII? There were two others I know of and the last wasn't that long ago! But we aren't supposed to talk about it.

Well dammit I am! I served six years in the Navy (1971-1978) and had the unique privilege of "defending my country" from the vantage point of Yankee Station. I know some guys that came back almost whole in mind and body and a few that didn't. I think memorializing some grass is a very cheap-shot cop-out. Apparently it is easier to recognize the sacrifices of the dead than the living.

Jeff O. Bogert is a sophomore at Texas A&M.

# TOP OF THE NEWS LOCAL

## Brazos VD Clinic hours changed

The Brazos County Health Department is changing hours of the free venereal disease clinic. The clinic will now be held on Monday from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. and will continue to be held from 8 to 9 a.m. on Thursday and Friday mornings. The clinic is for the testing and treatment of VD. Service is free and confidential.

## STATE

### Gov. Clements leaves for Mexico

Despite protests from Mexican-American legislators, Gov. Clements Tuesday departed on a 24-hour trip to Mexico City to confer with Mexican President Jose Lopez Portillo on illegal alien energy, drug trafficking, and the proposed "tortilla curtain." The Arnold Gonzales, D-Corpus Christi, criticized Clements for inviting a more representative group of Mexican-American leaders to a pre-trip conference Clements held on Monday and for advocating possible return to the bracero program with Mexico. The bracero program — employed between 1951 and 1963 when Congress killed it — allowed Mexican nationals to enter the United States and perform farm work. The bill required the braceros to be paid 90 percent of the average farm wage in the state in which they were employed or 75 percent of the national average, whichever was lower.

### Bullock calls report a 'crook'

Comptroller Bob Bullock labeled a Travis County grand jury report which alleged he had tried to hinder an investigation of the comptroller's office "a crock of stuff." Bullock says the report was designed to disgrace him. He is asking his attorneys to determine what legal response he can make. The grand jury in its final report said Bullock had thwarted its investigation of his agency by failing to supply requested documents, screening employees who were called to testify, and using his agency's knowledge of investigation procedures to hamper the grand jury's investigation.

## NATION

### Police arrest 12 in car theft ring

Albuquerque, N.M., police say they may have broken up a major car theft ring operating in New Mexico and Texas with the arrest of eight persons and the confiscation of 13 cars. The arrests, police said, culminated a four-month investigation involving several law enforcement agencies. Police recovered 12 of the vehicles in Albuquerque and one in El Paso. They believe the auto thefts occurred mostly in Texas and New Mexico.

### INS lowers march-leader's bond

While Immigration and Naturalization undercover agents check the status of several Iranian protestors' visas in the San Antonio area, one such protestor awaited word for the seventh day Tuesday on whether he will be able to leave jail on reduced bond. Hosein Jahanfar, 29, was arrested by INS officers last week at the end of a two-hour march and rally he led. At a Friday hearing Immigration Judge Arvid Boyes lowered Jahanfar's bond from \$40,000 to \$5,000 but defense attorney Robert Shivers said Monday "that's still \$3,000 more than they ever put before on an out-of-status student. Jahanfar's visa expired Dec. 14 and he did not re-enroll as a college student in the spring semester.

## WORLD

### Tractorcade visits Mississippi

The American Agricultural Movement's nationwide tractorcade began its slow trek through the rolling hills of east Mississippi Tuesday enroute to Washington where a rally is planned to protest national farm policies. Mississippi farmers with close to 100 tractors and support vehicles joined the heavy equipment parade which originated in Fort Worth earlier this month. The Texas leg of the movement consisting of more than 325 tractors and support equipment crossed the Mississippi River at Vicksburg early Monday.

### Shah may cancel visit to U.S.

The shah of Iran began his second week in exile Tuesday in Marrakesh, Morocco, surrounded by elaborate security precautions. He originally was scheduled to remain only two days before proceeding to the United States where his son is receiving flight training and his sister, Princess Shams, and 92-year-old mother already have arrived. But there was speculation the shah would prolong his stay in Morocco and he might delay or even cancel his trip to the United States. The shah, anxious to keep open the possibility of an eventual return to the throne in Tehran, is said to be hoping to spend most or all of his time in friendly Moslem countries where he will be treated as a chief of state.

## WEATHER

Clear and cold through Thursday. High Wednesday near 50 low early Thursday upper 20's.

## THE BATTALION

### LETTERS POLICY

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.

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Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the editor or of the writer of the article and are not necessarily those of the University administration or the Board of

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