

VIEWPOINT



THE BATTALION TEXAS A&M. UNIVERSITY **FEBRUARY 16, 1979**

Talk with Dr. Miller

Silver Taps for suicides?

Dear Dr. Miller:

Today we learned a very disturbing fact about our school. We were told at a floor meeting by our resident adviser about a film to be shown in our dorm. The subject of the film is to be suicides.

We were told that there were four suicides that went unreported to the public last year. It is commendable that the administration is having this film shown, but

this does not excuse the fact that the public was not informed.

Death is not a pretty thought, but it is not something that we can hide away in a closet. Sooner or later we must accept our responsibilities and deal with this fact.

Is it not tradition for Silver Taps to be performed for all Aggies who have died? Are we too busy trying to keep an angelic image of ourselves which we never had to honor these Aggies? Let's start running this instituion in the 1979 tradition and

—Donald McDonald, '79 Brian Black, '81

Dear Mr. Black and Mr. McDonald:

not that of the 1876 Dark Ages.

I received and appreciated your letter concerning the so-called unreported suicides and the Silver Taps ceremony. Let me respond separately to each

In the case of any death, the appropriate law enforcement agency and the coroner's office are involved in the investigation. The results of these investigations are public, and all of the news media have access to this information. The University does not have control of the investigations nor the information resulting from such investigations. There is no way that such information could go

The second question related to Silver Taps. The Silver Taps ceremony is held as soon as it is feasible during the fall and spring semesters for individuals who at the time of death were presently enrolled as students at Texas A&M University. The policy concerning Silver Taps does not make mention of nor relate in any way to the cause of death. Any information that you received to the contrary is erron-

Whatever you heard about unreported suicides is fiction and not fact. - Jarvis E. Miller

President, Texas A&M

By Dick West

Mythical creatures ...

WASHINGTON — After more than a year as a \$17.50 hardcover bestseller, the book "Gnomes" is now out in a \$9.95 pa-perback edition that already has 500,000

copies in print. In case you haven't read it yet, here are some excerpts from a publisher's blurb that will give you an inkling of what you

have been missing:

"...a mock sociological history of the gnome ... a colorful, fully-illustrated exploration of the life, habits, legends and philosophy of these small folk ... charming

Humor

and fanciful ... a captivating exercise in makebelieve proves once and for all that gnomes exist

Further, the book reveals such things as 'the natural enemies of gnomes (trolls, snotgurgles, etc.) and a male gnome's

preference in a mate (plump)."

If your fantasy threshold is as low as mine — that is, if even minimal exposure to talk about "wee people" leaves you somewhat queasy — the above passages may give you the qualms.

But you've got to respect those sales figures. If they don't prove that gnomes exist, they certainly prove there is a large market for books about figments.

Fresh off the press is one called 'Faeries," and just as sure as God made little green leprechauns there will be a spate of other spinoffs.

Maybe this means the time is ripe for a book about the mythical creatures known as lobbyists.

In the years I've been exercising my responsibilities under the First Amendment to keep an eye on Congress, I have heard innumerable stories about lobbyists. And while I never believed they really existed,

I must say they sound a good bit more interesting than trolls and snotgurgles.

According to Capitol Hill folklore, lobbyists lurk in corridors, chambers and dim recesses where legislation is being formulated. They are said to possess supernatural powers that can be used either to grease the path of special interest bills or to bottle up unwanted measures in com-

Legend has it that in even numbered years they flitter about the country sprinkling campaign contributions on candidates who have earned their gratitude.

But woe be it unto lawgivers who do something to win the enmity of lobbyists. For then they purportedly turn off the golden spigot and bedevil the ingrates with whispering campaigns.

Should you try to catch them in the act, however, they are said to skip through tax loopholes and vanish.

The whole concept of lobbyists is so far-fetched it can only be a myth. Nevertheless, should someone prepare a charming and fanciful volume on their life, habits, legends and philosophy, including details about their natural enemies and mating preferences, vast royalties would surely roll in.

Carter prepares to start the race

By HELEN THOMAS **UPI** White House Reporter

WASHINGTON — President Carter's closest emissaries — his family and White House aides — are fanning out to test the waters for his reelection plans.

To forestall inevitable judgments that

whatever he does from here on in will be from a political rather than a presidential standpoint, Carter is delaying the an-

nouncement that he will run again.

But Tim Kraft, his personal political honcho in the White House, has been taking the temperature in Iowa where got his first big boost in the 1976 race. Kraft was in Des Moines, where he apparently still found a lot of loyal Carter supporters, but who had many gripes to get off their

As for the family, the Carter children, Chip, 28, and Amy, 11, went skiing in New Hampshire last weekend. As the most politically oriented of the first family offspring, Chip, told reporters, "We're sit-

ting at the go-line."

He expressed the view that his father

should announce within the next couple of months to get his campaign going full

Rosalynn Carter, perhaps even more politically minded than her husband, has stepped up her contacts and White House receptions with special interest groups that can have political clout.

Kraft's White House office, set up many months are her her Carter's achieved.

months ago, has been Carter's political command center. At some point after he announces that he is running again, Carter

Washington Window

will have to establish his personal campaign headquarters and it appears that Evan Dobelle, the Democratic Party treasurer, will be tapped as campaign man-

Top aide Hamilton Jordan, who managed Carter's campaign in 1976, would

president should lay low until all of the potential candidates come out in the open. The most prominent of possible opponents, Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., is playing a coy game.

He says he is not going to run. But he is acting like a candidate, vocally and visibily, mostly on the attack against White House positions. He is enjoying the game, appearing to believe that he can have the nomination if he wants it.

Kennedy supporters believe that the Chappaquidick chapter in his life is over and that it is no longer a factor — as it was in 1976 — in his political future. Others observers are not so sure.

Gov. Edmund Brown of California is acting like a candidate and his supporters strongly indicate that he is in the race. He has a strong following in his state, but not so loyal a constituency among the old line Democratic politicians. White House

aides seem to take it for granted that he will challenge Carter.

A new face on the horizon — Sen. Adlai

E. Stevenson, D-Ill. — in recent soul searching interviews, expressed his disenchantment with Carter's presidency, and with his own political career. Now it appears that he is not turned off about politics, but is making the familiar sounds of a presidential candidate, and may try to succeed where his father, Adlai Stevenson, failed.

How strong a bid Stevenson can mount remains to be seen. But he is a late starter and does not have the national following presidential nomination twice in the 1950s. that gave his father the Democratic

With only two years in the presidency, Carter is finding that the honeymoon is over. As with all presidents, yesterday's achievements are dwarfed by the prob-lems of the day.

But for all that, Carter has a major political plus — his incumbency. Challengers could be viewed as spoilers. At the same time, he has ultimate faith in himself, as a peanut farmer who overcame the "Jimmy, who?" label.

Letters to the Editor

Fill it up with maroon and white

Editor:

It has just come to my attention that a drastic change is about to affect an important piece of Aggie heritage. The only ma and white service station in the WORLD, the Texaco on University Drive, will become green and red by executive order of the new district man-ager for Texaco in Ft. Worth.

This new manager is NOT an Aggie, nor is he an Aggie fan (though possibly a T-sip

Apparently he is of the opinion that we Aggies do not deserve to be unique, even at something so minor as the color of a gas station. However, as far as I'm concerned Aggies ARE unique and I would like to see the maroon and white stay as it is. Besides, unnecessary spending for paint will only

be passed on to the consumer.

Come on Ags, show that you care. Write to Texaco and let them know you love the maroon and white. We dare to be unique: Texaco, Inc.

P.O. Box 5555 Bellaire, Texas 77041
—Ricki L. Holliman

Secretary — Poultry Science Department

Show more respect

We wish to complain about the conduct of the residents of Crocker Hall last Tuesday night following Silver Taps. The guys decided to hold a "silver crapper" in the Keathley-Fowler-Hughes quad. This conduct was unseemly, and disrespectful to their fellow Ags, especially the girl the Silver Taps was held for.

It is even more disrespectful because the "silver crapper" is a parody of Silver

Taps.
Silver Taps is a solemn occasion observed by dimming the lights and keeping noise to a minimum. This is done in recognition of the death of a fellow Aggie and should be maintained the entire evening. We hope that in the future they will show the same respect they would desire other Aggies to display if the Silver Taps had to be held for one of their friends.

—Cathy O' Connor, '80 Susan Clerihew, '80 Valerie Rivera, '80

Editor's note: A "silver crapper" is a term for a pseudo-somber ceremony held for those who receive "Dear John" type

No Taps ettiquette

Thotz

I just got back from Silver Taps an I'm mad enough to write my first letter to The Battalion. I saw a CT sergebutt (junior) wearing a uniform with an Ross Volunteer cord who left his hat on through the whole ceremony and a CT sergebutt in Squadron 12 who had the gall to wear a sweatshirt and shower shoes! Not to mention all the non-regs who wore sweat suits and jogging

Ags, Silver Taps is a memorial service, one of the best traditions this school has. You won't find anyone who'll argue about that. It doesn't take 10 minutes to put on

Head Coach

Ignore him, Bleauchip.

Sign and I'll get ya

even ... even ...

The whole school loves yo!

a new car, fame, cash,

a harem of girls...

Bleauchip, my boy! Ready to sign this ol'

some nice clothes. Come on, Ags. Let's show a little more respect. -Sam Melton, '80

Work for students

letter of intent?

This is a response to the Feb. 12 Battalion article on coupon books. We were disappointed to learn of the opposition to the 'People Book' by campus organizations. Apparently, the People Book is the better coupon book since more students have been using People Book coupons. There are more coupons in the People Book, and it is possible to have more than one book,

The discounts offered in the People

Book are generally better than those in the Student Government book. Local merchants also prefer the People Book since they are willing to pay \$150 per page for the People Book opposed to \$75 per page for the Student Government book.

Since the Student Government coupon book is not a profit making venture, it is difficult to see just what the big threat is from the People Book. What is so bad about letting the two coupon books coexist on-campus? After all, isn't the free enterprise system

based on competition? Let's see the MSC bureaucracy work for the student's best interest. Keep the People Book on cam-

By Doug Graham

—Mike Dishberger, '79—Debbie McLean, '79

Some dude at your school questioned my greatness, man, my poise, my power, my blindin' speed my humility. loud-mouthed & punk's head on a platter!

TOP OF THE NEWS STATE

Drug bill may save Texans cash

A bill designed to save Texans millions of dollars in drug costs wintroduced to the Texas legislature in Austin Thursday by Sen. Ch Brooks, D-Pasadena. The Texas Drug Product Selection Act won allow pharmacists to select therapeutically equivalent drugs in place of more expensive brand-name drugs when filling prescription Brooks said the bill, which does not require pharmacists to substin but give the consumer the right to insist that the prescription be filed as written, will probably pass because it is similar to one recently proposed by the Food and Drug Administration and the Federal Trade Commission.

Two selected for retrial jury

Two jurors have been selected in the capital murder retrial of Ignacio Cuevas, accused of murdering a Huntsville prison librarian during an escape actumpt that left three others dead. The first juror, a 28-year-old food broker, was chosen in Houston Tuesday an another, a 47-year-old oil company employee from Pasadena, w. chosen Wednesday. Attorneys have predicted it would take a mon to select the jury. Cuevas was convicted of murder and sentenced death in a 1975 Houston trial. The conviction was overturned la December by the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals on grounds improper jury selection.

Clements names more to boards

Gov. Bill Clements Thursday named Bob J. Perry of Nassau Bayt the State Banking Board and William Terry Bray of Austin to the Texas Board of Human Resources. The governor also made appoin ments to 11 other state commissions. Perry, 46, replaces Sam I Carter of Temple and will serve two years. He is president of Pel Homes of Houston. Bray, 39, succeeds Jamie H. Clements of Templand will serve six years. All Clements' appointments must be a proved by the Senate.

NATION

Arkansas road shootings persist

Motorists are avoiding interstate highways in central Arkansas the wake of a rash of highway shootings Gov. Bill Clinton has terme the "worst tragedy" in recent history. One person was killed in Nor Little Rock and three others injured in the past two weeks in the shootings. Clinton pledged to have state law enforcement office work to find a suspect in the snipings.

Flood to be prosecuted again

Justice Department officials have decided to again prosecute year-old Rep. Daniel Flood, D-Pa, on bribery charges that left aju deadlocked and forced a mistrial in the first attempt at conviction sources in Washington said Thursday. The decision to seek a secon trial was based mainly on reports that the deadlocked jury favore convicting Flood by 11-1 on five bribery and three perjury coun Sources insisted that FBI investigation of possible jury tampering in the first trial was not a major factor in the decision to again prosecute the 16th-term House member.

Califano refuses to ban Darvon

HEW Secretary Joseph Califano Thursday turned down a reque that he ban the drug most commonly sold as Darvon, but issued warning that it should be "prescribed and taken only with extreme care." He said the department would keep the drug, propoxyphe under strict scrutiny, however, with a decision to be made by Ju on whether to ban or restrict prescription refills. Ralph Nadel Health Research Group had asked Califano to either ban Darvon an imminent hazard, or have it put under refill controls. Naders group said the drug, the third most often prescribed drug in the country, is causing accidental deaths.

WORLD

Some Arabs boost oil prices

Abu Dhabi raised the price of its light crude oils by 6 to 7 pero Thursday as a reaction to the skyrocketing spot market price of cruo oil caused by the upheavals in Iran, formerly the world's secon largest oil-exporting nation. Both Qater and Iraq also were reported to have decided on price hikes. The United Arab Emirates new agency said the new prices were effective at once. It said the increa is to compensate partially for the huge differential between the Or ganization of Petroleum Exporting Countries price and the free market, where prices are now between \$6 and \$7 higher.

Elizabeth arrives in Bahrain

Queen Elizabeth and her husband Prince Philip arrived in oil-rich island of Bahrain, Thursday after an overnight voyage on Persian Gulf aboard the royal yacht Brittania. The queen was greet by the Emir of Bahrain and other officials. Thousands of Bahrain citizens lined the docks. The queen thanked her hosts for ditional Arab hospitality" before leaving Kuwait on Wednesday.

Cloudy, windy, and cold with a low this morning of 28. Him today 45 and a low Saturday morning of 35. Wind warning are in effect with winds gusting at 25 mph. 60% chance of rain today and 70% Saturday.

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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