



VIEWPOINT



THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY



Today will be remembered as John B. Connally Day in Floresville, Texas. Sunday, Connally and his wife Nellie celebrated their birthdays with an old-fashioned campaign rally in Floresville, southeast of San Antonio. Connally will be 62 years old today. Battalion photo by Lynn Blanco

Stumping for Prez

Here it is a year away from the New Hampshire primary and it's already time to run for President. It seems that Carter just got the job.

But John Connally, running for the Republican nomination is wasting no time. Already the pr material has come out promoting him and his strive for campaign donations. A press release complete with a glossy black and white photo came into The Battalion office the other day, plus a list proclaiming Connally's blue-ribbon committee of Houstonians sponsoring a Connally for President Reception.

Today's he's 62 and he's lined up a list of "who's who" Houstonians to host his birthday party. I noticed the list includes Oscar Wyatt, an old Ag who heads Lone Star Gas, and Michel T. Halbouty, an Aggie oilman. Then there's George Brown (Brown & Root), Dr. Denton Cooley, the heart surgeon, and a host of bankers.

It makes you wonder when you start running for the job. With the Chinese invading Vietnam, Khomini taking over Iran, our ambassadors being shot overseas — you'd think Jimmy Carter had enough problems.

Now add to that list — hanging onto his job. — K.T.

How to give to Uncle Sam

By DICK WEST

WASHINGTON — Once again it's tax time in the valley, folks — time for the annual dose of dissertations on how to cope with Form 1040 and ancillary quagmires.

You might think that after X number of years filing income tax returns people would finally get the hang of it. Yet the production of tax instructions remains one of America's fastgrowing industries.

Some revenue specialists, notably L. and M. Bloque, believe the rising demand for tax tips reflects concern among the filers that the government might not get all it has coming.

There are so many loopholes around these days that a taxpayer could inadvertently stumble into one that would deprive the government of badly needed revenue. L. Bloque told me during a visit to his office.

"Our particular tax service is especially designed to help the taxpayer avoid these loopholes and make certain he forks over his full share of the federal deficit."

With his and M. Bloque's guidance, I have put together some tax tips you might find helpful in your efforts to give Uncle Sam a break on your return.

DEPENDENTS — If you are supporting a ne'er-do-well in-law or some other shiftless relative, he is classified as a dependent under the tax code.

To avoid claiming that exemption, throw the bum out of the house and deny him any more handouts.

UNEARNED INCOME — Many Americans have cushy jobs in which they either are overpaid for the work they do, or else manage to goof off without having their wages docked.

The difference between what they are paid and what they really are worth is called "unearned income."

It is recommended that in filing your return you include a check for the portion of your income not actually based on productivity.

CAPITOL LOSSES — When capital losses decrease your tax liability, the net effect is to reward bad investments. In other words, Uncle Sam is paying for your dumb mistakes.

The only decent thing is to keep them until you die so that they will be subject to inheritance taxes.

MEDICAL EXPENSES — Visits to the doctor are considered medical expenses for taxpayers who itemize deductions. If, however, you can prove your visits were mainly social, you may pay taxes on the full amount of the doctor's bill.

For each visit, keep a record of what you talked about besides your illness, which, God knows, is a boring subject.

(Note: Certified hypochondriacs may avoid medical deductions by listing such expenses under "hobbies.")

BUSINESS ENTERTAINMENT — Although the three-martini lunch is a tax write-off, through a technicality it can be made non-deductible. The trick is to order only two martinis but make them doubles.

A&M should allow local clergy to teach

By W.C. HALL

Over a period of the past month, several articles have appeared in The Battalion raising the issue of courses in the Old and New Testament being offered for credit through the various student centers adjacent to the campus. These courses are taught by the local campus ministers and college credit is arranged through a college connected with that particular denomination.

This arrangement is a relatively new one. Until the early 1960s, these courses were offered through Texas A&M University and listed in the Texas A&M catalog. The campus ministers were treated as faculty.

With the social unrest created by the integration crisis in the 60s, the relationship between the University and the campus ministers became strained and the decision was reached not to continue the courses offered in Bible taught by the campus ministers. That policy continues in effect today.

Texas A&M and the University of Houston are the only two universities in Texas that have chosen to relate to the church in this manner. The matter of separation of church and state is not the basic concern in this matter as the Supreme Court has clearly set out the guidelines by which Bible courses may be offered in high school as well as on a college level in its historic decision regarding prayer in the public schools.

I find it difficult to believe that the University of Texas, Stephen F. Austin, Sam Houston State, and other state universities would engage in such a practice if it were academically irresponsible or if it created legal difficulties.

For my own information, I wrote to the University of Texas and obtained a copy of the guidelines by which the University works with the various church groups in this matter. In these guidelines, the university sets standards for the courses offered and teachers must meet academic standards set by the university.

It is a very responsible system and mirrors the kind of relationship that exists on

other campuses in Texas between a university and church. Many people at Texas A&M like to picture t.u. as a godless institution, but perhaps it would be well to see how they have worked together with the church in a responsible way in offering courses in religion.

Dean Maxwell of the College of Liberal Arts has made public statements in The Battalion challenging the courses offered here and has made aspersions about the academic qualifications of the local clergy in teaching these courses. Yet, he refuses to look toward any solution of the problem other than for the campus ministers to stop teaching these courses.

Reader's Forum

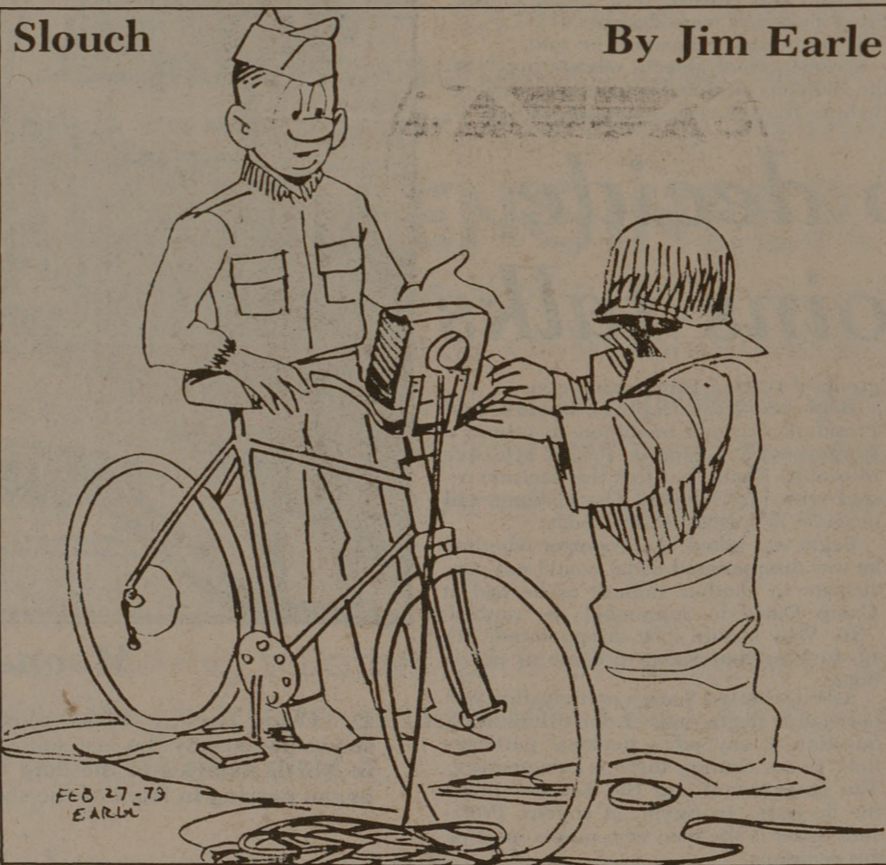
I am personally offended by Dean Maxwell's comments. He has not asked for a transcript of my grades or any other academic records which would give him knowledge to state in his letter to the editor that my credentials do not compare favorably with Texas A&M professors who teach in corresponding areas.

I am a member of Blue Key Honor Fraternity for my grades in undergraduate work from Lamar University. I completed my master's degree in theology from Perkins School of Theology at SMU and have studied at the Ecumenical Institute in Geneva, Switzerland.

If Texas A&M worked in a similar manner as other colleges and universities, Dean Maxwell would not only have access to my academic record, but would have the authority to decide whether I would be allowed to teach through the Texas A&M system.

I regret deeply the situation that exists here and wish there were other alternatives. It seems to me that it would be well for Dean Maxwell to address himself to the issues rather than to participate in name calling.

W.C. Hall, Jr. is the campus minister for the United Methodist Church in College Station.



"I THINK AN ELECTRIC HEATER FOR A BICYCLE IS NEEDED, BUT THAT POWER CORD PROBLEM WILL HAVE TO BE SOLVED!"

Letters to the Editor

Library move will accommodate students

Editor:

In his letter about the library move (Battalion, Feb. 23), Les Schlain asked several questions which deserve an answer.

It is the Libraries' intention that every effort be made to minimize the inconvenience to users. All persons will have access to the total library facility — existing and new — during the duration of the move.

There is not an urgency about the move, but there is a schedule which has to be given consideration.

To provide some background, the contract for the library addition includes not only building the addition but also some remodeling in the existing building. Part of the contract was a two-week period to allow the move from the existing building into the addition so work can begin on the remodeling. This was a condition on which Spaw Glass bid on this project.

When bids were let for the move, a specific timeframe was a part of that bid which went to Beard Transfer and Storage Co. A delay until May would mean the moving firm would have a labor problem since this is the busiest time of the year for them.

In scheduling the move, every effort has been made to do it in a way that will cause the least inconvenience to the users while giving consideration to the contractual commitments of the University. Because the move will now be spread over a two-month or longer period rather than two to three weeks, all services and materials will be available to users at all times.

Services will be moving to new locations but should not be inaccessible for more than one to two days. Although the collection will be in a state of flux, all parts of the building will be open to gain access to those materials. Every effort will be made to assist users to find whatever they need.

—Irene B. Hoadley
Director of Libraries

1 vote for solar

Editor:

All of the nuclear wastes for the next 100 years could be stored in one building the size of the Astrodome. A coal power plant releases more radioactivity into the atmosphere than a nuclear plant.

Far more people die from black lung than from radiation sickness. Unfortunately, when the electric company people decide to build a new plant, they cannot yet ask "should our next power plant be nuclear or solar?"

—Bill Elme, '82

Clarification

Prairie film is the trade name of the epoxy-pebble material referred to in an article, headline, caption and cartoon in Monday's Feb. 26 Battalion. Prairie film is the accurate name for the product despite common reference to the walkway substance as "prairie film."

Editor:

In David Eppes' letter (Feb. 19) he said that he knows that nuclear power is safe. If this is true, why won't private insurance companies cover more than \$82 million in damage claims (less than 2 percent of the U.S. government Brookhaven report's \$7 billion estimate of total damages resulting from a reactor accident)?

Why does the Price-Anderson Act state that the government will supply only \$478 million in additional coverage, bringing the total coverage to \$560 million or only 8 percent of the damage estimate?

Why, on Feb. 2, 1976, did three management-level nuclear engineers from general electric's nuclear energy division resign their posts saying they felt that "nuclear energy represents a profound and irreversible threat to life on the planet?"

Why, in June 1976, did the government finally declare a moratorium on the linking of new nuclear power plants?

These figures (1977) show that the safety of nuclear power production is highly questionable; although the utility companies would have us believe otherwise.

No matter what low level of risk society may somehow deem acceptable, the nuclear engineer, working with people and machinery which are not infallible, can never attain it.

The case for nuclear energy is very weak, especially when alternatives are

available. The government is finally beginning to realize this with its federal income tax deduction allowances for the installation of solar energy systems and other energy saving devices, solar energy is cleaner, safer, and potentially more abundant than nuclear energy. I believe that the U.S. government should subsidize solar energy research at least to the extent that it has subsidized nuclear energy research, because I believe that solar energy can meet the energy demands of the United States without any of the dangers inherent to nuclear energy.

—Anthony A. Everett

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 60 characters per line
- Limited to 100 lines

TOP OF THE NEWS

CAMPUS

Town Hall seeks 'Good Ags'

Town Hall is on the lookout for "Good Ags." Today, Wednesday and Thursday the Town Hall Committee will be searching the campus for one "Good Ag" each day. The lucky Aggie who proves his "goodness" by an act of good will toward an unidentified Town Hall confederate will get two reserve seat tickets to Friday's Johnny Rodriguez concert.

'Close Encounters' to be shown

Cepheid Variable has announced that "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" will be shown this weekend instead of "Patton." Showtimes are Friday at 8 p.m. and Saturday at 10:30 p.m. in the Rudder Auditorium. "Patton" was scheduled to be shown Friday, but Cepheid Variable was offered a special release of "Close Encounters" to be shown only at this time, said Gena Casas, chairman of Aggie Cinema.

STATE

Murder trial witness testifies

A prosecution witness testified in Beaumont Monday that mass murder defendant Linda May Burnett offered \$50,000 in insurance money to anyone who would kill her former husband. Burnett, 31, is accused with her boyfriend, Ovide Joseph Dugas, of killing Bishop and Esther Phillips of Winnie; their son, Elmer, of Woodward, Okla., his wife, Martha, and their son, Jason.

NATION

Oil spill closes ship channel

The collision of an 80-foot towboat and the outbound tanker, Gulf Oil, Monday spilled 600 barrels (about 28,000 gallons) of gasoline into the Port Arthur Ship Channel, forcing the Coast Guard to close the area to ship and highway traffic to prevent an explosion. Twenty miles north, near Beaumont, the portion of the same waterway known as the Neches River Ship Channel remained closed after the Sunday collision of two tankers that sank one.

New Orleans police vote urged

City leaders in New Orleans Monday urged police union negotiators to allow striking officers to decide by secret ballot whether to continue their 10-day walkout past Mardi Gras. Meanwhile, 870 state troopers and National Guardsmen equipped with loaded M-16 rifles have been patrolling city streets. Mayor Ernest Morial says 645 persons have already been arrested in just four days by the state troopers and National Guardsmen.

Ark. highway shootings reach 18

A woman told police Monday a rifleman fired a bullet through her windshield as she drove along Interstate 40, then ran up a hill and into some nearby woods. Police said it was the 18th such incident along the central Arkansas highway since Feb. 6, when United Press International reporter Judy Danielak was shot and killed as she drove home from work.

WORLD

Planes blast Rhodesia guerrillas

Rhodesian warplanes sweeping across 1,200 miles of enemy airspace successfully blasted a major black nationalist guerrilla camp in Angola Monday in the most far-reaching attack of the war, military officials said. A spokesman said the attack, the most extensive yet in the 6-year-old war, was part of Rhodesia's strategy to lash out against insurgents to prevent their interference in elections scheduled for April.

Fighting affects few in Peking

Peking's 7.5 million residents this week showed few signs they were even aware that a quarter-million of their countrymen are engaged in heavy fighting at the Vietnamese border. Mingling with the crowds were thousands of soldiers, but except for guards at official buildings, none carried weapons and most were apparently more interested in buying clothes and food.

WEATHER

Partly cloudy and warmer temperatures. High 73° and a low of 44. Winds will be traveling Easterly at 5-10 mph and a 30% chance of rain.

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.

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, \$55.00 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request. Address: The Battalion, Room 216, Reed McDonald Building, College Station, Texas 77843.

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