



# VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION  
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

WEDNESDAY  
MARCH 7, 1979



# TOP OF THE NEWS

## CAMPUS

Budget bid deadline March 30

Recognized student organizations wishing to request funds from bookstore profits must do so by 4 p.m. March 30. Budget request forms should be returned to the Student Finance Center. For more information, contact the Office of Student Activities, 221 MSC, 85-1133.

## STATE

Fuel adjustments cut bill pushed

The Texas Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now gave support Tuesday for a bill prohibiting utility companies from automatically charging consumers under the fuel adjustment clause. The bill would require gas and electric companies to negotiate their rate contracts to recover higher fuel costs. Under current law, utility companies can recover their higher costs for fuel by adding on a fuel adjustment charge to consumers' bills.

El Paso rabies epidemic feared

Public health officials said Tuesday they are bracing for a possible rabies epidemic in El Paso, similar to a 1973-75 outbreak that involved 380 animal cases in the region. Stray and occasionally rabid dogs are crossing the Rio Grande near the point where Texas, New Mexico and Mexico merge, officials say.

Texas fake \$ suspects charged

Three Texas men arrested in an alleged \$2 million counterfeit money and check case broken by the Secret Service last month have been bound over to a federal grand jury in Providence, R.I. They were arrested Feb. 23 in what officials called "the biggest money bust in the history of New England." The men were arrested in a Warwick parking lot raid that turned up \$1 million in bogus bills and \$250,000 in phony travellers checks. Agents said they later seized another \$1.1 million in counterfeit money and checks.

Granberry named ETSU regent

Dr. James H. Granberry of Lubbock, the 1974 Republican gubernatorial candidate, has been appointed to the Board of Regents of East Texas State University by Gov. Bill Clements. Granberry was nominated to succeed Cam F. Dowell Jr. of Dallas for a term extending to Feb. 15, 1985.

## NATION

Exxon to start gas rationing

Exxon USA Tuesday announced allocations of gasoline to its dealers, blaming the cutback on reduced supplies of crude oil resulting from the Iranian situation. Exxon USA said Tuesday that effective last Thursday the company began allocating gasoline volumes to its dealers, resellers and other wholesale customers at 100 percent of March bases. Exxon joined Texaco, Shell, Mobil, Amoco, Cities Service, Atlantic Richfield, Sun Oil and Continental in reducing gasoline supplies.

Striking cops fined \$600,000

A New Orleans Civil District Court judge fined the Teamsters-affiliated Police Association of Louisiana \$600,000 Tuesday for contempt of court in connection with a 15-day strike that canceled Mardi Gras. Judge Richard Carvey fined the union one day after freeing seven of its leaders and all 1,100 strikers from individual contempt citations.

Raging rig fire snuffed in Gulf

The raging fire on a drilling rig in the Gulf of Mexico 45 miles off the Louisiana coast was snuffed out Tuesday and searchers located bodies of several missing crewmen. Three bodies were found in the Gulf Monday within hours of the fire's start and as of Tuesday, five bodies were reported still missing. A coast guard spokesman said a stream of natural gas continued to spew from the Penrod 30 rig after the blaze was put out by a surge of water. He said the gas caused no water pollution and dissipated in the air.

What alimony ruling could mean

A Supreme Court decision on alimony probably will not affect women's ability to obtain alimony, but it could hasten the trend in state law toward equal treatment of men and women in child support and custody cases. The court Monday overturned an Alabama law that said a husband could be required to pay alimony, but exempted wife from the same obligation. A Women's Legal Defense Fund spokesman said that because most men earn more than most women when cases are judged on their merits, women will continue to go alimony. Eleven states other than Alabama have similar alimony laws but most of the others have neutral sex statutes on alimony.

## WEATHER

We will have fair skies and warm temperatures today with a high of 76, low tonight 47. Winds will be South Southwest at 5-10 mph diminishing to less than 10 tonight. No rain in the forecast.

## 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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## Don't reprimand upholding ethics

A student cheats on exams and is caught by a professor, who turns him in to the head of the department for disciplinary action. Dissatisfied with the "punishment," the prof tries higher channels.

Acceptable procedure — in the Texas A&M University Rules and Regulations.

But, in this case, it wasn't just a professor but a military officer who teaches classes at Texas A&M. He disapproved of how the cheating incident was handled, and pushed for further discipline.

Now that professor is facing censure because he went beyond military officials to inform University officials about what happened.

Capt. Joseph O. McNabb has been told he'll receive a written reprimand in his permanent record.

McNabb saw something that, as a professor and former Texas A&M student, he thought deserved further disciplinary action. Now he's being punished with a permanent mark against him for "overstepping his bounds."

The cheating affair was poorly handled. It appears that the whole incident was not really the result of a massive cover-up — instead the problem was stopped at lower levels, complicated by poor decisions and kept from higher authorities.

Such a reprimand is no small matter in the military. It effectively ruins a person's military career — his chances for promotion, assignments and special programs.

A person who's solely an academician wouldn't receive such punishment. Pushing a point, as McNabb did, might offend some administrators, but no letter of reprimand would be put in a personnel file.

Capt. McNabb deserves commendation, not reprimand. His concern for the reputation of this university and its standards are admirable.

University officials should support McNabb and not allow his actions to be punished by the Air Force.

He is a good example of ethics in action. — K.T.

## The rhetoric of losers?

By IRA R. ALLEN  
United Press International

WASHINGTON — In the museum of campaign rhetoric, there's a whole new wing devoted to Jerry Brown — the inventor of platitudes that circle left, then right on tantalizing political winds.

A couple of stalwart Washington liberals with presidential ambitions — Sens. Adlai Stevenson, D-Ill., and Lowell Weicker, R-Conn. — seem to be grasping the contrails of Brown's instant cliches, harping and carping at President Carter's leadership ability.

They are worth noting because they are three entirely different personalities with different backgrounds and different approaches to politics. Yet all three sound

### Politics

frustrated by what they see in Carter. And all three are talking about it in terms that sound alien to the tradition of pithy American political sloganeering.

You don't hear them talking in two-word slogans like the "New Deal," "New Frontier," "lost prestige" or "the missile gap."

Brown talks about "rejuvenating the productive capacity of America." Weicker, says "the rhetoric in 1979 is nothing anyone will be elected on in 1980," but talks insistently about the need for "new leadership." Stevenson is talking of "new realities" and the need for America to become "a nation of builders and producers."

Weicker's call for "new investments, a tax structure that encourages business and lets it make profits so as to employ more people" is understandable from a Republican, even one in the party's liberal wing.

But Brown's and Stevenson's comments on the subject, almost identical, are surprising — almost shocking — for their seeming betrayal of the liberal tradition (and fathers) that fostered them.

Brown wants to create "a climate of investment necessary to maintain America's technological lead" and sees a constitutionally mandated balanced budget as a way of doing it. Stevenson worries that "we're losing our competitive position in the world" and need to "increase supply" to strengthen the economy.

Republicans never heard it so good. In their public pronouncements of late, all three keep talking about leadership, implying Carter's lack of it and their ability to provide it. Nothing about how to solve inflation, unemployment, the Mideast impasse, SALT, Sino-Soviet jitters. Just leadership, which most Americans really don't worry about from day to day.

Stevenson calls Carter's leadership "embarrassingly weak." Brown says the

presidency, like other institutions, suffers from "a great lack of public confidence." Weicker, ever blunt, says we should not only stop throwing money at our problems "we should start throwing leadership and talent at them."

That triple-barreled barrage is aimed at a man who promised to give us a government as good and decent and honest and compassionate as the American people.

Brown, Stevenson and Weicker, and others who express the same viewpoint, seem to be saying Carter is either deficient in goodness, decency, honesty and compassion, or that the American people are.

From a linguistic viewpoint, the three may deserve condemnation for fuzziness beyond the call of politicians. Take Brown's promise, for example, to study the problems and "come up with appropriate initiatives."

From another viewpoint, forget what they really mean and tune out the words. You will hear a sound common among losing politicians and small children.

Whining.

### 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

### Writing the editor

The Battalion welcomes letters to the editor on any subject. However, to be acceptable for publication these letters must meet certain criteria. They should:

- ✓ Not exceed 300 words or 1800 characters in length.
- ✓ Be neatly typed whenever possible. Hand-written letters are acceptable.
- ✓ Include the author's name, address and telephone number for verification.

Letters to the editor are printed as a service to our readers. Publication of a letter is never guaranteed. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters to remove grammatical errors and to avoid litigation.

Address letters to the editor to:

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

## Biting the bullet with both sides of the mouth

By DICK WEST

WASHINGTON — A book store manager once told me she frequently had customers ask for "a small Bible with large print."

Those specifications, with some modification, pretty well sum up congressional reaction to President Carter's stand-by plans for dealing with the threatened oil shortage.

Judging from statements I have seen, Congress favors gasoline restrictions that don't curtail the use of automobiles.

Since I couldn't begin to quote them all, let us consider the president's proposals through the eyes of Congressman Consensus. (That's Herman Consensus, not the Clyde Consensus you probably were thinking of.)

First, the Consensus view of gasoline rationing.

"If you're talking about a rationing system that conserves vital fuel, helps hold down the price, makes America less dependent on imports and reduces our foreign trade deficit while strengthening the dollar abroad, I'm in favor of it."

"But if you're talking about a rationing program that imposes hardships on commuters, adds to the government paperwork burden, interferes with our traditional freedom of movement and forces poor, elderly widows to walk 10 blocks for their weekly groceries, I'm against it."

I said, "I'm glad to see you're on top of the problem, Congressman. How do you feel about the prospective closing of gasoline stations on weekends?"

Consensus raised a hand to his heart.

"If you are talking about weekend closings that keep family members closer to home, cause people to rediscover the joys of neighborhood get-togethers, reduce the traffic death toll by taking cars off the highways and contribute to the fight against air pollution, I'm in favor of them."

"That's good to hear, sir," I said. Consensus clinched a fist.

"But if you're talking about weekend closings that deprive good citizens of much needed recreation, bankrupt amusement

parks, create unemployment at resorts and prevent city dwellers from escaping the urban environment to renew their spirits with refreshing drives to the country, I'm against them."

I said, "I can see you have thought the problem through."

I didn't get a chance to ask Consensus about mandatory temperature levels for public buildings. He was, he explained, late for an appointment with a Bible salesman.

MAGNELY ILLUSTRATION BY GARY GARDNER FOR CHICAGO TRIBUNE



### Letters to the Editor

## Car towing is no way to attract customers

It just takes one

Editor:  
The letter by Greg Jacobs on Feb. 26 was amazing. Who would have dreamed that one person could be so proud of his ignorance. I almost let it pass without comment, but I couldn't stand the thought that these ludicrous arguments may have convinced even a few non-science majors in addition to your editorial staff responsible for the cartoon beneath the letter. Silliness, sir, has no place in nuclear physics.

One of Mr. Jacobs' unbiased arguments concerned discharge of contaminated water from a nuclear reactor. A very real problem in designing reactors is neutron activation, whereby neutrons emitted from the primary coolant induce radioactivity in the discharged coolant, without actual physical contact.

Mr. Jacobs often refers to the dangers from fission by-products as being like radiation from a bottle on a laboratory shelf. The major danger with radioactive wastes is their escape from containment and inva-

sion of air, water, and food. How can one set up shields around Strontium-90 within bone tissue or Iodine-131 within a thyroid gland?

Plutonium-239, an extremely lethal product with a half-life of 24,000 years, requires 480,000 years before its radiation become innocuous. I strongly suggest that Mr. Jacobs refrain from swallowing even a spoonful of waste after 500 years, let alone a half pound.

Mr. Jacobs also appears to believe that radiation below a certain intensity is completely harmless. Envision, if you will, a room covered from wall to wall with machine guns, each of which are firing bullets in randomly varying directions.

And let's say their half-life is one hour — after each hour one half of the firing guns stop. Now, suppose there is a \$20 bill on the floor. At what time do you want to enter the room, find the bill, and try to leave before being struck.

Theoretically, a radioactive mass never loses its ability to cause cellular damage. It only takes on collision with the right

chromosome to produce incurable cancer. One bullet.

— Steve Peppers  
graduate student

### Show will go on

Editor:  
To the students of TAMU:  
The Basement Coffeehouse Committee would like to correct some misinformation printed in our advertisement in The Battalion on Monday and Tuesday. It said that the musical group Morning was to perform two shows, one Monday and one Tuesday.

The Monday show was canceled and rescheduled for Wednesday, March 7 (tonight) at 9 p.m. Tickets will be available at the door.

The Basement Coffeehouse Committee is responsible for the error; not the Battalion or any of its staff members. We hope we have not caused anyone any inconvenience.

— Ava King  
MSC Basement Committee

Editor:  
Your recent article concerning the towing away of vehicles, and quotes from Sparkey Hardee ("Hit 'em hard at first") is very upsetting to us here at Mr. Gatti's. Yes, as Mr. Gatti's. The undersigned makes a living with a large percentage of TAMU student trade. All of us who work here owe jobs (which are putting us through Texas A&M) to the fact that we have a student community.

It is inconceivable to me that any business would tow away a customer's car — or any student's car — for that matter, and charge him \$45 to get it back.

It is even harder to understand a business turning its "problem" over to any unscrupulous person(s) who have no feel for the community relations we enjoy here in Bryan-College Station with Texas A&M University.

I don't know if lawsuits are the answer, but I certainly do know that increasing the tow rate to \$75 is not. From all of us here at Mr. Gatti's — gig 'em Aggies!

—Ron Smestuen, owner  
Mr. Gatti's of Bryan and College Station