



VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

MONDAY
MARCH 19, 1979



Oil conservation must be way of life

As Iran swings back into oil production, after a shutdown of more than two months, the United States and 17 other members of the International Energy Association (IEA) have pledged themselves to reduce oil consumption by 5 percent.

The IEA program hinges on whether the United States can actually curtail its thirst for petroleum products.

This country has been promising to reduce its oil imports ever since the Arab oil embargo of 1973. But imports last year were higher than ever, nearing 50 percent of total consumption. The European countries and Japan, which depend much more heavily on imports to keep their industrialized economies running, have never gobbled up oil like this country. Yet many in the United States are unconvinced conservation is necessary.

The government must find a way to impress American citizens that conservation is urgent. It hasn't done so yet.

Providence (R.I.) Journal-Bulletin



Reflections

Karen Rogers

Spring break: dawn to sign-off TV bore

Lack of funds and decent transportation (I hope my parents are reading this) kept me close to home in Houston during spring break with nothing to do but watch dawn-to-signoff TV. For those of you wondering what you might be missing on the tube, the following will ease your mind.

The typical morning starts with your choice of cartoons or religious shows (whatever gets you going in the morning is all right with me).

Then come shows like:

FATHER KNOWS BEST — In my favorite last week, Father fought the elements to collect plants for daughter Kathy's nature folder. If you missed this one, maybe you can catch it in a couple of weeks. If this show is rerun as often as the Brady Bunch and Gilligan's Island, you won't be able to miss it.

HAPPY DAYS — In one thrilling episode, Potsie and Ralph let Fonzie's dog Spunky get loose.

And in the afternoon, for those hard-core addicts — the soaps.

One channel offers 3 1/2 solid hours of human misery. The writers, however, must be talented. It's not everyone who can generate that much dialogue and not say anything.

Afternoon syndicates: Batman, Bob Newhart, Andy Griffith, Bewitched, the Beverly Hillbillies, it all comes in a 6 1/2 hour afternoon sandwich guaranteed to give you indigestion.

Now for my favorite: "Prime Time."

Among the shows to debut this season:

CLIFFHANGERS — This series presents three scenarios in which actors are left in precarious or compromising situations at the end of the hour (was that all it lasted?). The only suspense is whether the viewer will tune in next week.

PAPER CHASE — One of my favorites. It does me a great deal of good to see someone else sweating his way through a class. However, it was again preempted last week for another fictional work: Carter and Peace in the Mideast.

THE ROPERS — A spinoff from Three's Company featuring the ex-landlords Stanley and Helen. The bedroom humor continues. However, the only thing that I think will get up in this series is the viewer — to change the channel.

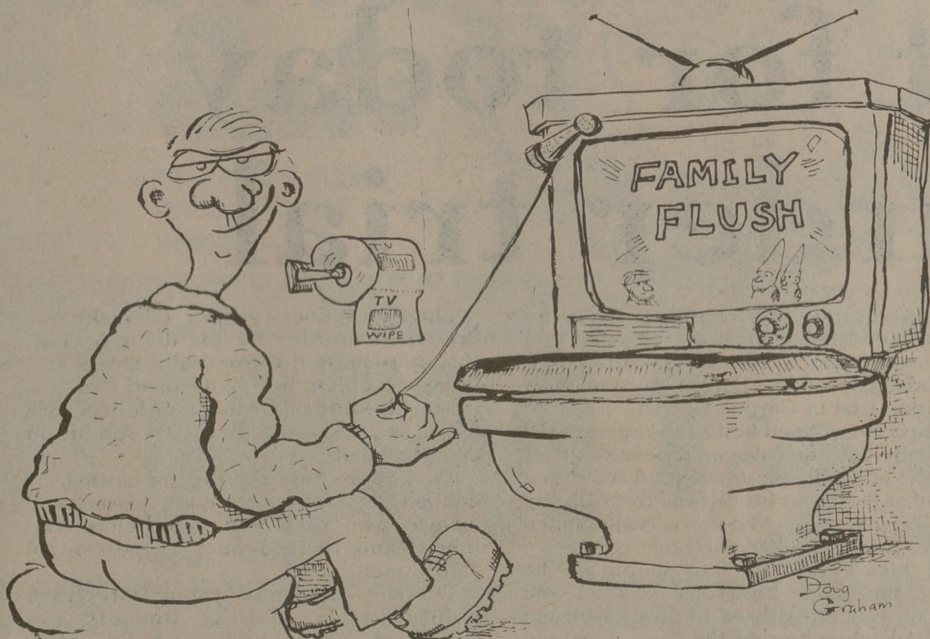
MRS. COLUMBO — In one episode, a ventriloquist murdered a puppet-maker at the urging of his "evil" dummy. Shades of Anthony Hopkins and the film "Magic." The only dummies here were the ones who tuned in.

JUST FRIENDS — Stars Stockard Channing as a newly divorced woman trying to make it on her own. I don't even consider this series a passing acquaintance.

Now for the good old standbys:

LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE — As one writer said, "Every time there's a dip in the ratings, they blind another child."

EIGHT IS ENOUGH — If they were talking about episodes, I agree. Every



episode contains a plot and a subplot. That way, you know the family will have to deal with two problems each week. You only have to deal with one — whether you have something better to do.

CHARLIE'S ANGELS — TV repairmen lost millions after they explained to set owners that it wasn't the picture that was jiggling.

FAMILY — This series ran out of plots so fast they had to sign a new little kid who lisp. Don't bother to "lithen."

THE WALTONS — This series ended after the Walton's cleared their mountain of timber and then dug it up to strip mine coal.

BENEDICTIONS — At last, the end of the day. And for that, I am thankful.

Letters to Dr. Miller

Shuttle system poor

Dear Dr. Miller:

This is my second semester at Texas A&M and I have some questions about the shuttle bus service. Both semesters I have purchased bus passes and relied heavily on the buses for transportation. Lately, some aspects of the system have become increasingly annoying. The buses (at least on the HOLLEMAN route) seem to always be jammed-packed, and I often end up being pushed and squeezed into the back of the bus. Many drivers, it seems, make it a game to see how many passengers they can fit into a bus, and often times this requires waiting 10 or 15 minutes for the bus to leave campus. Rumor has it that the underlying problem is that many non-payers ride the buses.

I would appreciate some answers to the following questions: Who, exactly, is that runs the shuttle bus system? How many people officially buy passes? Theoretically, are there enough buses for the passholders? Why aren't the rules enforced? How could they be enforced? Why must drivers wait 10-15 minutes before leaving campus? Isn't it against the law to overcrowd a bus?

I have more questions, but my point is that I don't believe the shuttle bus system is run as efficiently or fairly as it could be, and I would like to see something done about it.

If the students have any recourse in this matter, I would not mind helping out. I know that I am willing to pay my fair share for an efficient shuttle bus system, but I also know that I will no longer pay for an unfair and inefficient service.

—Bernie Gojer, '80

Dear Mr. Gojer:

I appreciate your taking the time to share your concerns about the off-campus shuttle bus service.

The service is provided through contract with Transportation Enterprises, Inc. (TEI) of Austin, Texas. The contract is negotiated and administered by the (Texas A&M) vice president for business affairs. Input to the local TEI management is provided through the University Shuttle Bus Operations Committee, composed of three students and five faculty-staff members. This committee reports to the vice president for student services.

This input involves the type of information you mentioned, including route and schedule planning, times and distances of routes, and meeting peak demands. All of these factors relate to the number and concentrations of students purchasing passes.

During the fall 1978 semester, 7,313 passes were issued; while this semester, 6,537 passes have been issued. The total ridership varies since some users purchase individual-ride coupon books and several passes are refunded each semester.

A constant monitoring of actual ridership counts indicates that there are enough buses to serve the users on each route provided everyone does not try to ride at the same time. For example, most buses coming to the campus between 7:00 and 7:15 a.m. carry less than 15 passengers. Spreading the ridership over the number of available buses helps maintain a reasonable cost to the student.

In regard to rule enforcement and checking of passes, courtesy and cooperation between the users and drivers is necessary. Any driver who is discourteous or fails to operate a bus in a safe and lawful manner should be reported to one of your Shuttle Bus Committee representatives (Reed Hughes, 693-0417, or Chuck Wiuse, 846-3641) or to TEI management, 779-0812. Finally, the occasional time waited on campus is necessary so route schedules may be maintained as posted at the bus stops.

We constantly strive to improve the bus service. We believe, despite its deficiencies, it is a good service, particularly for the cost to the user (26 cents a day). Input from individuals such as you is most helpful. I encourage you to contact members of the shuttle bus committee if you have other ideas that might improve the service.

—Dr. Jarvis E. Miller
President, Texas A&M

Editor's note: This letter was submitted Feb. 6 but inadvertently failed to appear in The Battalion because the reply was not sent back to the newspaper, but to the author of the letter.

Letters to the Editor

Gymnasts need coach

Editor:

A few weeks ago, the Texas A&M Gymnastics Club competed in a men's gymnastics meet at Southwest Texas State University. It was the club's first competition in several years and we placed second of four teams entered.

Try to realize that we never practice the vault during our workouts because of space limitations and that we aren't allowed use of the beautiful floor exercise mat used by the women's team and you'll see that we did an amazing thing.

However, gymnastics is a difficult and tedious sport without a coach. All-America Kurt Thomas from Indiana State could never have gained national attention without years of expert coaching. We're not asking for chartered buses, matching gym bags, or a new spacious gymnastics room (although we hope the teams we competed with are sufficiently grateful for them). But a men's gymnastics coach isn't asking for too much.

It is an asset that many high schools, junior colleges, and universities in Texas have had for years. We've been told that Texas A&M "can't afford" it, but who would deny this to be the richest school in the state? Also, football and gymnastics can co-exist.

Oklahoma University has the nation's number one gymnastics team. Look up their football record if you've forgotten. At this time the only way Texas A&M will give us a gymnastics coach is if someone volunteers, without pay. Our club is funded from the same source as the wrestling club. We receive \$600 annually, enough for traveling expenses to five or six meets using our own cars.

There is more interest in men's gymnastics on this campus than is realized. At our next meet, when we shake hands with the coaches of the other teams, we'll again be hoping for the day when the great potential in men's gymnastics can be turned into a national power.

Gymnastics is an exciting sport to perform and to watch, and everyone at Texas A&M can benefit from it if we are only given the chance.

—Joel Weddington
Gymnastics Club President

Editor's note: this letter was accompanied by 19 other signatures.

Preachers, pros

Editor:

I am sorry that Rev. W. C. Hall feels personally offended by my comments and regards them as "name calling." Until the preceding sentence I had not used his name or that of any other minister. Nor did I intend to disparage religion in any way or to indicate anything but appreciation for the role that ministers, priests, and rabbis play in our society.

I am not an expert on the qualifications of ministers as ministers and I would not maintain that even the most eminently qualified of our professors is necessarily qualified to preach. I simply said that, as a group, ministers do not possess the particular qualifications we expect of those we hire to our faculty. And from Reverend Hall's recital of his own credentials, I see no reason to alter this generalization.

This is not a disparaging comment but merely a recognition that churches are not universities and ministers are not professors. These are different institutions and different professions. The training, orientation, objectives, and qualifications of professionals in the two fields naturally differ. Recognition of these differences does not imply that one is any better than the other. To say that a spoon is better for eating soup and a knife for cutting meat in no way belittles either.

Again, I urge our students to take advantage of every opportunity to strengthen their religious faith, including attendance in classes conducted by local ministers of the denominations of their choice. But I also urge our students to take university courses in philosophy and literature that deal with the great religious questions with which man has always been intrigued. Finally, I urge everyone not to confuse the two.

—W. David Maxwell, dean
College of Liberal Arts

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

Early registration of vets begins

Veterans attending Texas A&M University may begin signing up today for both summer school sessions with Jim Moore of the campus Veterans Administration office. Veterans wishing to enroll early should come by the VA office in Hart Hall. The office is open 8:5 Monday through Friday.

NATION

Wyoming firm in oil probe

The Crude Co., an oil firm based in Casper, Wyo., has been under investigation by the Justice Department in connection with a probe of crude oil prices, the Casper Star Tribune reported Sunday. The investigation is part of a larger examination of alleged overcharges, said the newspaper, quoting Mig Schaff, a U.S. House subcommittee on energy and power staff member. The alleged violations involved selling so-called "old oil" — or crude produced before 1973 — for higher "new oil" prices. Overcharges could total \$2 billion, Schaff said. Bob Smith, vice president of the Crude Co., reserved comment. "We don't choose to have any comment until we've had a chance to review the situation." The investigation of The Crude Co. was probably begun, Schaff said, because of its association with Summit Gas Corp. of Houston, another firm under investigation.

Carter campaign audit continues

The Federal Election Commission has yet to complete its audit of President Carter's 1976 campaign finances, the FEC said Saturday. No deadlines are involved, but the FEC said the audit was to have been completed as soon as possible. Because of confidentiality requirements, commission officials refused to state at what stage the 2 1/2-year-old audit is. They would only say it is expected to be completed soon. The Washington Post quoted sources as saying the Carter campaign committee had a problem obtaining documentation for items questioned by the commission.

Carter, advisers ponder oil prices

Cabinet-level advisers are preparing to give President Carter several options for removing federal controls from domestic oil prices at his Camp David energy meeting today. Despite its billion-dollar inflationary impact, some type of decontrol may come as soon as this spring, White House officials said. One plan under consideration would eliminate price controls June 1 on 26 percent of the nation's crude oil and phase out controls on the rest through Sept. 30, 1981, officials said. Existing laws allow Carter to follow such a route without seeking congressional approval. Preliminary estimates show such a phased decontrol plan might cost consumers \$1 billion next year and as much as \$15 billion when all controls are gone, officials said.

Park cross-examination begins

Tongsun Park, the South Korean rice merchant who testified he handed former Rep. Otto Passman, D-La., almost \$200,000 in cash, returns to the witness stand today for what could be a full week of cross-examination. Park has been granted immunity and is the government's key witness in the conspiracy, bribery and tax evasion case against Passman. The former representative promoted numerous United States rice sales to South Korea but denies receiving anything from Park. The trial enters its third week Monday with Passman attorney Camille Gravel trying to undercut Park's testimony about cash payments and watch purchases intended to disguise the transactions as business deals.

WORLD

China offers to begin peace talks

Chinese Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping (Teng Hsiao-ping) said Saturday he was "satisfied" with China's four-week invasion of Vietnam and Hanoi offered to begin peace talks Friday. Deng attended the first Peking performance by the Boston Symphony Orchestra and told reporters at intermission, "I'm satisfied," with the month-long border war launched to "punish" Vietnam for its invasion of Cambodia. Deng also said that the 100,000 man invasion force had withdrawn "entirely." Both sides have claimed military victories in the fighting. China said its capture of several northern provincial capitals "smashed the myth of Vietnam's invincibility" but Hanoi said it had forced China to withdraw.

New Mideast treaty criticized

Opponents of an Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty from Moscow to Beirut condemned the pact Saturday and one report said Palestinian guerrillas planned to revive the Black September terrorist gang that carried out the Munich Olympic Massacre. Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasser Arafat cautioned the treaty would have "grave repercussions for the destiny of the Arab and Islamic nations." Arafat arrived in Jordan Saturday for talks with King Hussein, a move seen as further evidence of the growing rapprochement between Jordan and the PLO. Diplomatic sources said Hussein had agreed to back Arafat in opposing the treaty and in invoking sanctions against Egypt.

WEATHER

Overcast skies, partly cloudy and mild with a 70% chance of rain today decreasing to 40% tonight. High today 79, low tonight 66. Winds S.E. at 15-20 mph.

THE BATTALION

| MEMBER | |
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