

VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

WEDNESDAY
APRIL 11, 1979

TOP OF THE NEWS

CAMPUS

Engineering magazine to begin

The publishing committee of the Students Engineers Council is now accepting applications for editor for the new Texas A&M Engineering. The magazine is to be published quarterly by the College of Engineering. Any engineering student interested in applying for the position may contact Rick Griffith at 846-9706 for an interview.

STATE

Clements hires FBI No. 2 man

The FBI's No. 2 official, James B. Adams, is retiring next month to take a job with the Texas state government, in a move not related to allegations of perjury against him. Director William Webster announced Tuesday in Washington. Adams will become executive director of the Criminal Justice Division in the office of Texas Gov. William Clements Jr. An FBI spokesman said Adams' departure after 27 years is unrelated to a Justice Department investigation of charges he lied or withheld information about illegal bureau activities. The charges against Adams were made by Wesley Swearingen, a retired FBI agent, who claimed Adams covered up extensive illegal break-ins, wiretaps and mail openings in the 1960s and '70s. Adams, a native of Corsicana, Texas, was a state legislator before joining the FBI in 1951. He rose steadily through the ranks, and was appointed to the bureau's No. 2 job of associate director a year ago.

Drinking age may be raised to 19

The Texas Senate Tuesday approved 25-5 and sent to the House a bill raising the legal age for drinking alcoholic beverages from 18 to 19 years. Sen. Walter Mengden, R-Houston, accepted an amendment to the bill allowing 18-year-olds to continue to work in restaurants and stores that sell beer and liquor, but said 18-year-old drinking should be banned. Critics said the legislation is unconstitutional because it allows 18-year-olds to sell liquor but not drink it. Mengden initially attempted to pass the bill last week, but ran into opposition from senators who said its provisions would prevent teen-agers from working in grocery stores where alcoholic beverages are sold.

NATION

Talks continue in trucking strike

Negotiators in the 10-day nationwide trucking strike may be approaching a break in their bargaining deadlock, Teamsters President Frank Fitzsimmons indicated in Washington Tuesday. The 2.1 million-member union and the trucking industry resumed contract talks under the auspices of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service after a 10-hour session Monday. Chief federal mediator Wayne Horvitz said when talks recessed shortly after midnight that "some progress" had been made but that there was "a considerable amount of ground to cover." Sources close to the bargaining said the two sides reached basic agreement last week on major wage issues that would give the Teamsters a 28 to 30 percent overall boost during the three-year term of a new contract.

'Spy' ship watches missile explode

As a suspected Soviet spy ship watched, a Trident missile made a submerged launch 35 miles off the coast of Cape Canaveral, Fla., Tuesday from a submarine but was destroyed 30 seconds into the flight because it veered off course. "It probably was a Russian intelligence collection ship," said Cmdr. Walter B. Davis, head of Navy Operational Test Support on the Range Sentinel, an observer ship in the area. The Navy said the submarine was shaken by the shock waves, but there was no damage and no injuries. The Navy and Air Force both said they would have to study the launch before they could determine what went wrong with the first test at sea of the multiple-warhead Trident.

WORLD

Priest drinks poisoned wine

Don Giuseppe Mura, 39, the parish priest of the church of the Holy Cross at Pattada in northern Sardinia, sipped the communion wine before his congregation at morning mass, dropped the chalice, and clutched at his stomach. As he told police later: "The wine tasted bitter so I only drank a few drops." Police were waiting Tuesday for a chemical analysis of the poisoned wine as Mura recovered in a hospital.

Sea quake felt near Philippines

An earthquake measuring 6.9 on the open-ended Richter scale struck the South Pacific early Tuesday, but there were no reports of casualties or damage, the Philippine Geophysical Division in Manila said. The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center in Honolulu told the division the tremor originated from the sea in the vicinity of Taland Island 227 miles southeast of Davao Port City in the Mindanao region, Southern Philippines.

WEATHER

Mostly cloudy skies turning partly cloudy this afternoon. High in the 70's and a low of 60. 30% chance of rain today.

Feds tax breaking

A House subcommittee has begun work on legislation that would give members of the House and Senate a \$50-a-day income tax deduction to help offset the cost of living in Washington. The bill would cost the government an estimated \$2.5 million a year in lost income tax revenue.

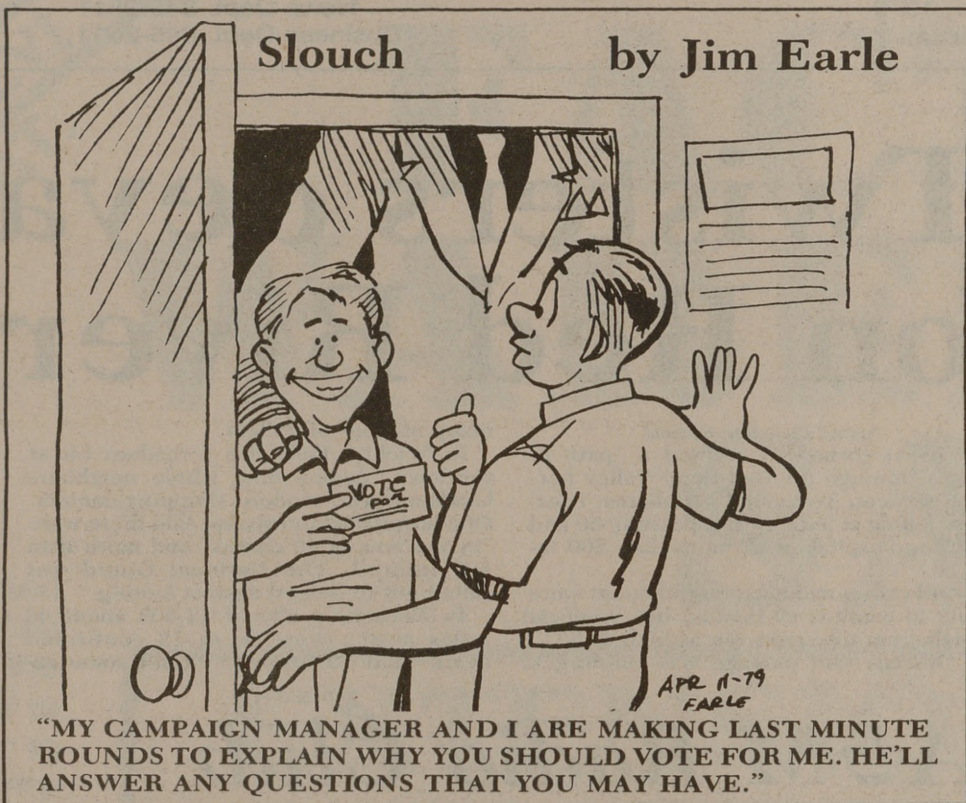
The \$50-a-day deduction would be allowed when Congress is in session, including weekends, recesses of four days or less, and when a member attends committee hearings even though the full House and Senate is not in session.

It was only two years ago that Congress voted itself a \$12,900 annual pay raise, raising members' wages to \$57,500 a year.

The Senate in 1977, senators agreed to limit (senators') outside income to \$8,625, or 15 percent of the annual salary. On March 8, the senators voted 54-44 to suspend the ceiling and they will be able to make \$25,000 in honorariums, at a maximum of \$2,000 a speech, plus other outside earned income.

Members of Congress deserve a decent standard of living, but too much emphasis on their own pay problems will soon set them apart from their constituents — who cannot pass legislation to counter the effects of inflation. If the 7 percent guideline limit on raises is to prevail for the rest of the nation, it ought to cover congressmen, too.

Dallas Times Herald



Carter and Congress: More troubles?

By STEVE GERSTEL

WASHINGTON — After two years and some months in the White House, neither President Carter nor those who surround him fully understand just how sensitive Congress is.

The perfect way to make members of the Senate and House boil is to treat them as toilers in a lesser branch of government. To be sure, the administration has made great strides in patching up White House relations with Congress since those first disastrous months. It was all-out war then and Carter had hardly an ally on Capitol Hill as the newcomers stumbled around.

Despite the very noticeable improvement, however, Congress is still being left out in the cold at some critical junctures. That can only hurt Carter in the months ahead.

The latest example occurred in relation to the Israel-Egypt peace treaty — an achievement for which Carter received almost unanimous praise from members of Congress.

But according to both Senate leaders, Democrat Robert Byrd and Republican Howard Baker, Carter never mentioned

and military steps to enforce the treaty under certain conditions until it was signed, sealed and delivered.

What made Baker furious and what irritated Byrd was not the content of the agreement. What set them off when it became public knowledge was that no one had bothered to inform them.

Baker's contacts with the administration have been dwindling recently.

He laughingly attributes the lack of communication to his call for a special prosecutor to investigate the Carter family peanut business. It may also be that he is gearing up for a run at the presidency.

Nevertheless, Baker said he attended two White House briefings on the peace treaty and the "Memorandum of Agreement" was never mentioned. The same thing happened to Byrd, Carter's key man in the Senate.

Alfred Atherton, the chief American mediator in the Middle East, disputes the point made by Byrd and Baker.

"We had a continuing process of consultation with the Congress during the negotiations," Atherton said. "There are no secret agreements or commitments."

The chances of Byrd and Baker succumbing to joint amnesia being negligible, the question is with whom did the State Department consult.

And why — if there was a "continuing process of consultation" as claimed by Atherton — were Byrd and Baker left out.

There is more involved in this than niceties.

Congress is going to have to appropriate the "price" for the Egypt-Israeli peace and the failure of the administration to be exact on the cost from the beginning has already

ranked some members of Congress.

And past that, Carter faces the most difficult foreign policy fight of his administration when he sends a SALT II treaty to the Senate for ratification.

Carter's memory cannot be so short that he has already forgotten that without Byrd and Baker there would have been no ratification of the Panama Canal treaty.

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

Commentary

"Memorandum of Agreement" until it was signed, sealed and delivered.

This "Memorandum of Agreement," which does not have to be ratified by the Senate, promises Israel that the United States could take diplomatic, economic

Texans should heed Proposition 13 trial

By GORDON WILHELM

The people who live in Texas have not felt the impact of Proposition 13; we have only watched from a distance. What have been the effects of the Howard Jarvis-Paul Gann proposition? Jarvis and Gann are co-authors of Proposition 13 that passed in California on June 6, 1978.

Reader's Forum

The essential elements of the bill are as follows:

—It slashes maximum property tax rate to 1 percent of the full cash value (1975-76 assessed value) of real property.

—Assessed values may not be increased more than 2 percent per year except on property that changes hands.

—At the state level, the majority vote is replaced by a two-thirds vote requirement for new or increased taxes. New taxes based on the value or sale of real property are banned.

—No new substitute taxes can be levied at the local level unless approved by two-thirds of the "qualified voters."

The proposal has slashed \$7 billion from current government spending. But the loss isn't as big as it really looks. The state of California had a fat surplus of \$5 billion to help curb the deficit, at least for this year.

The state of California is now in a state of limbo, using the surplus as a crutch. What happens when the state surplus is gone? The people will have to make decisions on what programs or facilities offered now will be cut back on. Choices like, is a park worth more than a library or is a museum worth less than a senior citizens' handicraft program?

Cutbacks have already been felt in the public schools. Summer schools were closed in the Los Angeles system. This cutback alone shut out 260,000 students and put 10,000 full-time employees on unpaid summer vacations. School districts are the biggest dollar losers. Some \$3.5 billion, nearly 30 percent of total revenue sources, was lost to Proposition 13.

San Diego is contemplating a shutdown of one-third of the city parks and has laid off 38 city-planning staffers. Alpine put its entire 21-man fire department staff on notice, including the chief.

The money shortage will progressively get worse as years go by. Proposition 13 limits property

tax to a 2 percent increase a year while inflation rages upward at 6-10 percent per year.

The local units of government are of course the real losers. The schools were mentioned before, but another visible cutback is seen in the Los Angeles Police Department, which lost \$17.6 million of its current budget. It now operates with 353 fewer police officers; 445 civilian employees were given notices.

Meanwhile the fire department had to reduce its fire crews sent out on trucks from five to four because of a \$10 million budget cut.

In neighboring Orange County, where this year's budget is about \$34 million less, virtually all county programs have been cut. Forty social and mental health workers were laid off along with personnel in other county programs. Libraries have been open less during the week and closed on Sundays and Mondays.

To look another step further into Proposition 13, from the property owner's point of view, we see that a change was needed. Ten years ago the average annual property tax for a single family home in California was \$362. But values have risen so fast that in 1978 the tax paid on the average home in California was \$811. Proposition 13 will roll back taxes for single family dwellings to an average of about \$400.

The passage of the proposal allows for savings of 50-60 percent in property taxes for owners of any real property. According to the Los Angeles Herald Examiner, Dodger Stadium was assessed in 1975 at \$24.4 billion. Based on the Proposition 13 figures, the Dodgers would be levied a tax of \$244,220, approximately \$1 million less than in 1978.

Although the reaction pours in from opponents and proponents of the bill, we here in Texas can look at it as an experiment knowing that right now it has no effects on us. If it works, we may try it; if it doesn't work, it was no loss to us. Right now though, local governments and taxpayers in California have some real tough decisions to make on how their tax money is allocated.

Is the police department more important than the fire department? How much money does it take for upkeep of a city park? Are county hospitals and health centers really needed? How much do we cutback on education?

We as taxpayers in Texas may or may not be faced with these decisions, but we are fortunate we can just stand back and watch from a distance the Proposition 13 experiment in California.

Gordon Wilhelm is a junior recreation and parks major at Texas A&M.

Letters to the Editor

Education overlooked Photo safari best

Editor:

The Battalion's articles concerning the problems in the College of Architecture were invaluable. Unfortunately there are similar problems in at least one other college, specifically the College of Science. Decisions are being made with an apparent disregard for student welfare.

A specific example is the treatment of Dr. Andrew T. Young. Dr. Young is one of the top three or four planetary astronomers in the country, according to Dr. Carl Sagan, a distinguished professor of astronomy from Cornell University. Dr. Young is no longer a faculty member at A&M.

Why? His change of status was not due to deficiencies in his research. His works were cited over 80 times in 1977 alone. His change of status was not due to inadequacies in his teaching. The student evaluations of his teaching were consistently above average. His change of status was not due to long-term policy. The physics department doesn't have a permanent head to set such policy at present.

Apparently Dr. Young's situation is due to administrative whim rather than concern over the overall standards of the University. This is a disgrace. We were led to believe that Texas A&M was established by law as an educational institution of the first rank.

It is sad that the students have to point out these problems, but the faculty is afraid to do so. The fear that our faculty members have of the administration was illustrated last fall in The Battalion articles concerning the new Architecture Building. The professors who criticized the building were afraid to be quoted for fear that doing so would jeopardize their careers. Many of our professors in the College of Science have the same fears.

This letter is not meant as an attack on A&M and its traditions. It is, instead, a sincere attempt to develop the free flow of thought so that the Aggie tradition of providing a first-rate education can be upheld.

—John E. Pearson, '81
Dave Crisp, grad. student in California.

Editor's note: Dr. Young is currently a research scientist at Texas A&M. This letter was accompanied by 50 other signatures.

Clarification

Some lines were accidentally left out of an article in Tuesday's Battalion about the A&M Consolidated School Board.

The corrected version reads:

In other business, the board approved the "concept" of the high school curriculum changes that include additional health courses, English as a second language, pottery and basic guitar.

Herman Brown, one of the new trustees, protested the board's involvement in curriculum changes, saying it is "a matter that should be worked out between teachers and administrators."

Trustee Bruce Robeck reassured him that the board was approving only the concept and that the changes would be handled by the administration.

The Battalion regrets the omission.

THE BATTALION

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