

VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION • TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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66th session: best of worst

The biennial fiasco known as the Texas Legislature ended its 66th session a few weeks ago and now it is time to sit back and assess the damage.

It would seem the congressmen Texans sent to represent them were more interested in representing the companies that greased their palms through lobbyists and campaign contributions.

One of the most obvious examples of business before the people was the raising of the interest rate ceiling on home mortgage loans from 10 to 12 percent. The loan companies stand to make about \$25,000 more in interest on the sale of an average home.

Another goodie was Senate Bill 359 that will allow auto dealers to charge \$25 to take care of the paperwork needed in buying a car.

Now let's assume your friendly local auto dealer has a really incompetent secretary and it takes her the whole working day to do the paperwork on one car. This means you are paying \$3.12 an hour for her to transfer title and all the other sordid things that have to be done to buy a car.

More than likely the secretary is not incompetent and can do the whole shebang in an hour. This will eventually put a lot of money in the pockets of the auto dealer.

There was no compassion for old people or anyone dependent on daily medication in the 66th legislature. They had a chance to allow pharmacists to fill prescriptions with the cheaper generic drugs instead of the expensive brand-name drugs. The bill bit the dust.

Getting a little closer to home, the legislature passed a bill making dock-side sales of beer illegal. This means no more kegs from the distributorship. Now you will have to go to a grocery, liquor, or convenience store for a keg. And pay a lot more for it.

This bill also stands to close down the Spoetzl Brewery, the makers of Shiner Beer. Spoetzl is the only Texas-owned brewery left in Texas. The brewery depends on dock-side sales to stay in business.

The bill will also allow beer companies to market beer in eight-packs of eight ounce bottles. This will give them more shelf space, and let them charge more for less beer.

The legislature also passed a bill to allow state universities to raise their student service fees to as high as \$60. Texas A&M raised its fee from \$20 to \$23.

Another bill that did not pass is nothing to laugh at, especially if you have to relieve yourself. The legislature killed a bill that would have done away with pay toilets in Texas. Keep your nickels ready.

Of course, not everything the congressmen did was bad.

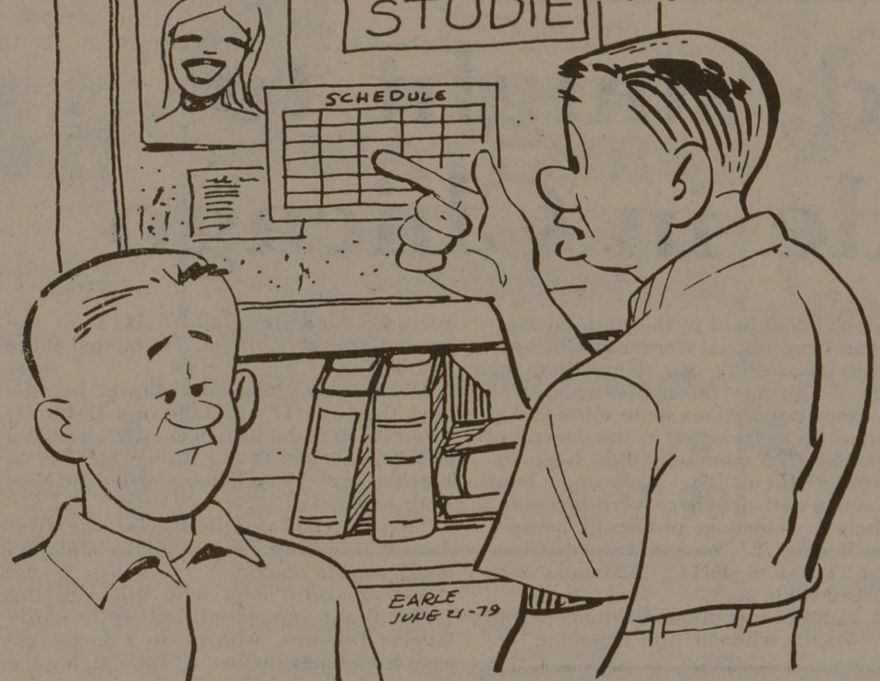
They did have the foresight to kill a bill that would let construction companies literally get away with murder. The bill said construction companies could not be held liable for defects in bridges.

The 12 Killer Bee senators managed to stop a bill that would have allowed a special presidential primary.

This bill would have allowed Democrats to vote for former Gov. John Connally, a Republican, and still vote in the democratic primary. In Texas you can vote either in the democratic or republican primary, but not both.

All in all, though, we should go to church Sunday and pray Gov. Clements does not call a special session.

Slouch by Jim Earle



"AFTER LOOKING AT YOUR SCHEDULE, JETHRO, I CAN MAKE A COUPLE OF SUGGESTIONS AS TO HOW YOU CAN IMPROVE YOUR GRADES. I THINK I'D REDUCE 'FRISBEE THROWING' FROM THREE HOURS PER DAY TO LESS, REDUCE 'BANJO STRUMMING' AND DO AWAY COMPLETELY WITH FOUR HOURS OF 'GUM CHEWING.'"

Carter should try Truman comeback

By ARNOLD SAWISLAK
United Press International

WASHINGTON — We are now starting to see published suggestions that Jimmy Carter take the Lyndon Leap — announce that he will not be a candidate for reelection.

The logic behind this friendly advice (mostly from ultras of the conservative and liberal stripe) is that Carter is so low down in the polls and so far over his head trying to deal with the nation's problems that his best move would be to step aside and let both the Democrats and Republicans put forward their best candidates for 1980.

The first impulse of the president and his friends upon hearing such suggestions probably is indignation; but perhaps they should recall the response of Marine Maj. James Devereaux when asked during World War II what his besieged and outnumbered Wake Island garrison needed.

The doughy leatherneck was reported to have said, "Send more Japs." Carter might say, "Send more critics." Why? Because it looks from here as if there is a small but growing wave of public sympathy for Carter forming.

Americans certainly are unhappy about inflation and the energy crunch. But that does not mean, as Carter's opposition in Congress and in industry seems to think, that the president will get all the blame from the public.

The public, with reason, probably is hopelessly confused by the continuing battle between the White House and Capitol

Hill over energy. But it is a good guess that Americans are aware that Carter at least has offered a series of proposals, while Congress can't seem to come up with anything.

The same situation prevails on inflation. Carter has offered proposals for reducing the federal deficit and trying to persuade both business and labor to hold down price and wage increases. But liberals say more must be spent for social programs and conservatives demand more for defense hardware. And both unions and businesses seem to be looking for ways to evade the wage-price guidelines.

There is in this a perfect chance for Carter to run a Harry Truman type campaign — an appeal to the people to support the one person in Washington who is trying to represent them rather than some special interest. If people are starting to feel sorry for Carter, he might be able to convert that feeling into votes for the lonely little guy standing up to the big boys and catching a lot of flak for his efforts.

It would be strange to see Carter, after four years in the White House, running an "outsider" campaign once again. But Truman, who came to the presidency with more than a decade of Washington experience, managed to project the image of himself as a decent sort of fellow who was simply trying to do his job in the face of overwhelming opposition.

What came of that was Truman's 1948 "miracle" comeback. The conditions may be shaping up for Carter to try to duplicate it in 1980.

Warner's wife, wealth don't seem unusual to his Senate colleagues

By IRA R. ALLEN
United Press International

WASHINGTON — Freshman Sen. John Warner, R-Va., is not generally thought of as one of the Senate's political or intellectual heavyweights. But he is rich.

The one assessment of his talents that may remain beyond his term of service was coined by "Doonesbury" cartoonist Garry Trudeau who said he "lucked, married and bought his way" into the Senate.

It was a reference to Warner's getting a chance at the GOP nomination because of the death of the original nominee, his famous wife (Elizabeth Taylor) and his millions of dollars — many of which came

from his previous wife, (banking heiress Catherine Mellon.)

Whatever merit Warner will yet show as a senator, the circumstances of his arrival point out the truth of Doonesbury's caustic commentary. Many of Warner's colleagues were helped to their position of high visibility and power by marrying right or being the sons or daughter of famous and wealthy parents.

According to financial records already made public, the Senate has at least 23 and as many as 38 millionaires among its 100 members. And about a dozen of them, including Ted Kennedy, H.J. Heinz and John Danforth, are multimillionaires simply by virtue of their name.

Money and name seem to go hand in hand, even among those not so fabulously wealthy.

Consider these famous Senate names — Ted Kennedy, Russell Long, Herman Talmadge, Adlai Stevenson, Howard Baker, Harry Byrd, Alan Simpson and Nancy Landon Kassebaum.

They each had a famous father, mother or brother precede them in national political life, and all Simpson and Baker are certifiable millionaires — and they are not far from being one.

Kennedy's heritage needs no explanation. Harry Byrd took over the Virginia seat held by his father, whose fortune was in apple orchards and newspapers. Danforth has as much as \$17 million or so because his ancestors had the foresight to found the Ralston-Purina Co. Heinz, worth as much as \$20 million, has the good luck of looking at his name on ketchup bottles in the Senate restaurant and millions of other tables around the world.

To be sure, it takes some political acumen to reach the Senate, but often it's a matter of accumulating the money first.

TOP OF THE NEWS

STATE

FBI denies search for killer

FBI spokesmen in Houston, San Antonio and Washington Wednesday denied reports they were searching for a "suspect" in the Houston area in the May 29 assassination of U.S. District Judge John H. Wood Jr. in San Antonio. "There have been no arrests, and to my knowledge, there will be no arrests today," said FBI spokesman Otis Cox in Washington. One report said Houston police broadcast a bulletin about 11:30 p.m. Tuesday ordering the apprehension of a man described as a "suspect in the Wood murder." But Cox said it amounted to a "routine" check by agents; that the man named in the bulletin was not considered a suspect and no warrants were issued nor arrests made.

List of Tech possibles growing

Less than two weeks after Texas Tech President Cecil Mackey accepted the top post at Michigan State University, a list of possible successors is growing. Texas Tech regents have yet to formulate the criteria by which the new president will be selected, but the names of two men figure prominently among those being discussed to replace Mackey. Dr. John Bradford, dean of the university's College of Engineering, and Dr. Gerald Thomas, president of New Mexico State University at Las Cruces, have been suggested as possible successors, confidential sources say.

Bandido arrested in El Paso

A member of the Bandidos Motorcycle Club surrendered to federal marshals in El Paso Wednesday and was released on \$10,000 bond on a charge he lied to federal officials in the investigation into the assassination attempt on U.S. Attorney James Kerr at San Antonio last Nov. 21. James Eugene Hicks, 37, surrendered in the company of his attorney, former El Paso Mayor Bert William. He was the second El Pasoan arrested in the past week on perjury charges in the Kerr investigation.

Estes' lawyer says LBJ got cash

An attorney for Billy Sol Estes told a federal judge in Dallas Tuesday he had proof that the former Texas financier paid \$10 million — money the government claims he owes in back taxes — to late President Lyndon B. Johnson. G. Brockett Irwin argued the government was in error when it said Estes owed the back taxes as a consequence of his fraudulent dealings of the 1950s and early 1960s. Irwin then told District Judge Robert Hill his client had retired that debt by making payments to Johnson. The government claims Estes conspired with a business associate, Raymond K. Horton, to conceal assets from the IRS at a time Estes still owed \$10 million. Horton is a codefendant in the case.

NATION

N.J. birth called 'medical first'

Doctors at Beth Israel Medical Center in Newark, N.J., say it's a medical first. Patricia Isla, 30, suffered three heart attacks and shock while pregnant, had her baby delivered by Caesarean section, then suffered a fourth heart attack and underwent four coronary bypass procedures. Mrs. Isla of Stanhope, and her two-year-old daughter, Vanessa Lee, were in guarded condition Tuesday at the medical center.

FBI captures 'wanted' fugitive

FBI agents Wednesday arrested Willie Foster Sellers, 45, one of the bureau's "Ten Most Wanted" fugitives, at an Atlanta airport and charged him with committing bank robberies in five states since breaking out of jail in Atlanta two years ago. He had been brought to the Atlanta jail from the maximum security federal prison at Marion, Ill., to appear as a witness in a bank robbery trial. Since he and an accomplice escaped the jail, Sellers has been charged with bank robberies in Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Missouri and North Carolina. The FBI said Sellers would be returned to a federal prison based on his earlier conviction.

McDonnell challenges order

The manufacturer of the troubled DC-10 will ask a National Transportation Safety Board judge next week to overturn a government order grounding the wide-bodied jet. The hearing in Los Angeles on June 25 will be the first of its kind involving an airplane grounding order, the Federal Aviation Agency said in Washington Tuesday. McDonnell Douglas Corp., manufacturer of the jet, may call witnesses and present evidence in its effort to reverse the grounding order issued June 6 by the FAA.

WORLD

OAS ministers to meet today

Prompted by the United States, hemispheric foreign ministers will meet in Washington today to seek a political solution that will stop the bloodshed in Nicaragua's civil war. A Dominican Republic-style collective military intervention by inter-American peace-keeping forces was ruled out Tuesday by the State Department, which stressed the need for a "peaceful political solution." At least a dozen hemispheric foreign ministers were expected for the Organization of American States meeting at U.S. request. It could result in a call on the Nicaraguan combatants for a cease-fire, and may also include a proposal for sending a high-level multi-nation peace mission to the area.

THE BATTALION

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