

VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION • TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 8, 1979

Unlisted zip code is a must

By ROY BRAGG

Although I am listed in the staff box on this page as the city editor, my main function at this newspaper is that of Official Battalion Mail Clerk.

That means my boss gets fifty or so junk letters dumped on her desk everyday and she, in turn, dumps them on my desk. This is how the newsroom hierarchy works.

Fully 90 percent of the mail I read could be classified as "dogs" in every sense of the word. This is stuff I wouldn't send to my enemies.

These press releases are usually political nature and as a result are invariably short on honesty. They include news releases from various elected officials telling us how terrific they are. I may be a lot of things (just ask the people around the newsroom), but I am not that stupid, folks.

It wouldn't be so bad if these things were just badly written (which they are), but they're so boring.

I also get a lot of mail from the federal government. To tell you the truth, this is the stuff I hate the most.

The Environmental Protection Agency, for example, must have an entire office set up just to bother me. Everyday I receive reams of paper announcing public hearings in Washington over lignite coal plants in Wyoming or carbon mining operations in Louisiana. I wonder what the EPA would say if they found out I threw their press releases out of the second floor window without reading them?

Almost all of the political and federal releases I get must be written by some really mixed up public relations people. If they expect me to believe some of the stuff they send me, they probably think the John Carter On Mars series by E.R. Burroughs represent the "new journalism."

Of course, not all of our mail is as dull as that. I get some strange stuff, too.

On Monday, amidst the stacks of fan mail I receive from Washington and Austin, I found a letter from the One-Arm Dove Hunt Association of Olney, Texas (OADHAOOT for short).

The first question that came to the mind of several people in the newsroom was if it was a hunt for one-armed doves, or a hunt by one-armed men.

According to the accompanying pamphlet, the OADHAOOT was formed in 1972 when "Olney's Two One-Armed Jacks," (sic) County Commissioner Jack Bishop and Community Development Executive Director Jack Northrup decided, over a cup of coffee, to share their love of dove hunting with other amputees.

So, they formed the OADHAOOT. It is, the pamphlet says, "a salute to the citizenry of Olney." When I read that, I pictured a scene of about a hundred or so one-armed men in hunting jackets trying to hold their shotguns and salute the city limits sign of Olney. The whole idea reminds of a scene from a Fellini film.

The highly descriptive pamphlet continues: this year's OADHAOOT is scheduled for August 31 and

September 1. In addition to the dove hunt, there will be a "one-arm talent show, a dove dinner, a reading of one arm tales(?), and nice prizes."

Oh yes, I almost forgot the best part. There will also be a breakfast prepared by "Finis Ross and Friends" which is open to anyone. The cost of the breakfast is 10 cents a finger. Mmm-mm.

Of all the letters and correspondence we have gotten at the Batt, the best one has to be a 23-page booklet titled "From Thy Creator With Love" by Eugene Changey.

According to a biography of Mr. Changey on the backcover, he is 59-year-old bachelor and lives with his sister in Maple Heights, Ohio. It also says "with a mere Junior High School education, he has a Master's Degree in learning from Letters and Books dictated to him by his father, Almighty GOD."

The dedication of the book reads: "As Almighty GOD, I dedicate this Holy Book to the Editors and Publishers in the newspaper industry."

In the introduction, Changey relates to his reader (singular intended) that he is God's messenger and God talks through him.

"As Almighty God," the book starts, "I welcome you to Our latest book."

If all of this doesn't make you want to read the whole book, you might want to read some of his other books: "All Souls Are Mine", "Coexist or Obliterate" or "Time and Inequity Prevail!"

I can't wait till they arrive.

Backstairs at the White House

Powell blasts press coverage

By HELEN THOMAS

United Press International
WASHINGTON — Backstairs at the White House:

—Press secretary Jody Powell recently chided a group of out-of-town editors for belaboring press issues and White House coverage. With all the "momentous" events going on, he said that they should be more interested in quizzing him about the important issues.

"OK," one editor piped up. "I have a foreign policy question." He asked about U.S. policy regarding Israeli settlements on the West Bank.

"I'm not qualified to answer that," said Powell sheepishly.

—President Carter is not only demonstrating new leadership, he has chutzpah in the eyes of Washington observers.

Carter summoned ousted Energy Secretary James Schlesinger from Schlesinger's farm in Ohio, where he was relaxing for a few days after his removal, to conduct a

briefing for the Camp David "Domestic Summit" participants who were invited to a White House luncheon.

Schlesinger was not happy about giving up a few days off to handle the briefing.

—Some say Former President Richard M. Nixon is moving back to New York at the urging of his wife, Pat.

He has purchased a penthouse on East 72nd Street and informed sources say the much publicized \$750,000 price is only the down payment. The nine-room penthouse is much more expensive than press reports first indicated, sources said.

Nixon may run into some old friends, and enemies, when he relocates in New York. CBS-TV correspondent Dan Rather, with whom he had problems during his presidency, lives only a half a block away.

CBS-TV anchorman Bob Schieffer also is a neighbor.

The betting is that Nixon will become active again on the Republican political front, but there are doubts that he will seek

public office again.

—Nixon's son-in-law, David Eisenhower, helped by his wife, Julie, is finishing his book about his grandfather Dwight D. Eisenhower. After its completion, sources say the Eisenhowers are planning to move to the Philadelphia area.

The sources say David is again flirting with the idea of running for Congress.

The move will put the Nixon-Eisenhower clan back on the East coast.

However, the Nixons are expected to keep their new luxurious \$650,000 seaside home at Cypress Shores in California as a retreat.

—Sources say that Nixon expressed surprise and "was appalled" when Susan Ford married a Secret Service agent, and told friends that he never permitted any close attachments to develop between his daughters and their agents.

Most of the agents, however, found Tricia Nixon Cox especially difficult during her recuse and anti-press days in the

White House.

—Pat Nixon's portrait is in storage in New York until her husband sits for his portrait. When the Nixon painting is complete, arrangements will be made to deliver the portraits in the White House.

Those who have seen the portrait of the former first lady say it is beautiful but there is a poignancy in her expression.

The portrait was commissioned by the White House Historical Association.

The association prefers to have a president sit for the painting while he is in the White House for authenticity, but that does not happen often.

—Rosalynn Carter's office is saying "no comment" to reports that she is being told to be more "low key" in order not to overshadow her husband.

Mrs. Carter traveled across the country in the immediate aftermath of the Cabinet purge and had to respond for her husband to the many questions asked about the shake-up.

Social Security 'benefits' questionable

The bureaucracy has done it again. Less than two years after Congress thought it had straightened out the Social Security system, inflation is again taking its toll on the monthly benefits of 35 million Americans.

Inflation is driving up the benefits faster than Congress anticipated. Meanwhile, the economic slowdown that began last spring threatens to shrink employment and revenues from the Social Security payroll tax.

The options for correcting the problem are grim. They include shifting money among the several Social Security funds,

giving beneficiaries less than a full cost-of-living increase (very unlikely with an election coming up) and paying part of it with general Treasury revenues coupled with a cut in the payroll tax.

A study published two months ago forecast the future Social Security benefits for the average worker in the year 2000. If inflation continues at its present rate, he would have to receive \$400,000 yearly just to survive. Granted, these figures are ridiculous, but it does indicate that it is time to study and perhaps revamp the Social Security system.

The monthly checks in most cases do not even cover the housing and food costs of the recipient. Those with hardships, especially medical problems, are faced with more red tape and delays if they are forced to apply to the state for aid.

By the time our generation is old enough to receive Social Security benefits, the system will probably no longer exist and the

government will have found another way to help those people who can no longer work. But judging from past experience, it will be no better than the present system.

Congress needs to take another look at the mandatory retirement age. If people were not forced to retire when they are still able to work, there would not be such heavy reliance on Social Security benefits.

—K.L.R.

Washington Answer Man takes a shot on shake-up

By ARNOLD SAWISLAK

United Press International
WASHINGTON — The Washington Answer Man has been hiding in a shrub over at the White House waiting for the storm to blow over and now is ready to report his findings on the Meaning Of It All at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.

Question: Sir, what will be the most significant result of President Carter's cabinet and staff reshuffling?

Answer Man: Although Hamilton Jordan as chief of staff will assign tennis court

times, he is not chief of the courts. The president is the chief and will continue to check that everyone is wearing proper tennis shoes.

Question: We get reports that Jordan's appearance has changed markedly since he became chief of staff. Is this true?

Answer Man: Decidedly so. Hamilton has adopted the dark blue, three-piece, pin-striped suit as the chief of staff uniform. He will not wear the vest on the tennis courts. However, he will wear dark blue, pin striped tennis shoes.

Question: Let's turn to the president's "crisis of confidence" speech. What positive results can be credited to the speech?

Answer Man: The White House has compiled a list of 12,876 good things that were said about America in the 12 hours following the president's speech. That does not include several thousand instances in which Americans said it was a good thing that the presidential election was only 15 months away.

Question: The speech also has given us a new word that seems to crop up everywhere. Can you explain what is meant by the "malaise" the nation is said to be suffering from?

Answer Man: Certainly. "Malaise" is a technical term for the toxic substance that is formed when mayonnaise is left out of the refrigerator after the jar has been opened. However, its use in this context is figurative; literally it would mean we are up to our eyeballs in rotten sandwich spread.

Question: How about some of the president's new energy proposals? Is the new energy mobilization board really going to be able to cut the red tape to speed up work on power projects and pipelines?

Answer Man: No question about it. Within three weeks of its creation, the new board will send out 21,925 forms and questionnaires to energy companies seeking ways to cut red tape. No later than six months after it opens shop, the new board will issue 41,275 forms, charts, tables and schedules demonstrating how it has cut red tape.

the small society

by Brickman



NEWS CAPSULES

STATE

Woodway tenants eligible for loans

The U.S. Small Business Administration — in what one official described as an unusual move — has declared the fireravaged Woodway Square apartments in Houston a disaster area, making victims eligible for low cost loans. The decision makes victims of the July 31 fire, which destroyed 324 of 1,086 apartments in the complex and damaged an additional 100, eligible for 3 percent, 30-year loans of up to \$10,000.

NATION

Estes gets two 5-year terms

Billie Sol Estes, who already has served 6½ years in prison after being convicted of bilking farmers and banks out of millions of dollars in a massive fraud scheme dealing with nonexistent fertilizer tanks in 1963, was sentenced in Dallas Tuesday to two five-year federal prison terms to be served consecutively. His sentencing Monday came on a July 11 conviction involving the fraudulent rental of oil field cleaning equipment. Estes, 53, did everything he could to avoid being ordered to prison again, telling the judge: "I have a problem. I live in a dream world."

Heavy drinking, heat cause deaths

A suburban couple found dead in their hot tub in Ventura, Calif did not just simmer to death. Medical examiners now say heavy drinking also played a role. When the bodies of Wesley La Roza, 58, and his wife, Helen, 53, were found side-by-side in their backyard spa May 15, the coroner attributed the deaths to heat stroke brought on by the 130-degree water in the spa. Their deaths were widely reported as the first fatalities attributable to the California born hot tub fad. The report said La Roza's blood alcohol content was 0.41 and his wife's 0.32 and they died of a combination of heat stroke, alcohol poisoning and heart disease.

'It's so easy to fall in water'

Larry D. Hendrick, 27, drowned a case of beer, stripped to his underwear and leaped into the Mississippi River Monday night in Memphis, Tenn., paddling manfully for the Arkansas shore in a daring swim for love. Ignoring life preservers police threw to him, Hendrick, from Amite, La., finally reached Arkansas, 4 miles downriver. Memphis police, who commandeered a barge to follow him, said he told them he did it for singer Linda Ronstadt "because I love her." Capt. Tommy Smith said Hendrick, who told them he drank a case of beer before braving the broad, muddy river, was taken to City of Memphis Hospital for "an emergency commitment."

Fire destroys gasoline in Ohio

Gulf Oil Co. officials in Toledo, Ohio watched flames subside Tuesday at a refinery storage tank and waited for the fire to burn itself out so they could more accurately gauge damage already estimated at more than \$1 million. More than 800,000 gallons of gasoline were ignited Sunday afternoon when lightning struck the tank, sending flames more than 100 feet into the air. The fire raged through Monday, but firefighters were able to prevent it from spreading to another storage tank 90 feet away that contained 3.2 million gallons of gasoline.

Priest's trial for robbery opens

The Rev. Bernard Pagano, 53, a Catholic priest, is accused of being "the Gentleman Bandit," who held up stores with a chrome-plated pistol and netted more than \$1,000, is charged with five counts of armed robbery and one count of attempted robbery. His trial opened Monday in Wilmington, Delaware with the questioning of prospective jurors. Pagano, meanwhile, has the support of his former parishioners on Maryland's Eastern Shore. They have collected about \$11,000 to help him prove his innocence. Pagano was transferred last June from his parish on Maryland's Eastern Shore to St. Patrick's Church rectory in Wilmington.

WORLD

Soviet official Konstantin Nikitin dies

The official Tass news agency said in Moscow Monday Deputy Soviet Interior Minister Konstantin Nikitin has died, but gave no details. He was 60. One of six deputy interior ministers, Nikitin had held his post since 1966. Tass said.

THE BATTALION

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