

Carter says 'don't worry'

By HELEN THOMAS

WASHINGTON — In his first two years in office, President Carter said repeatedly that he had restored trust and confidence in government. But in the past few weeks he has been struck by what he calls a "crisis of confidence" in the land.

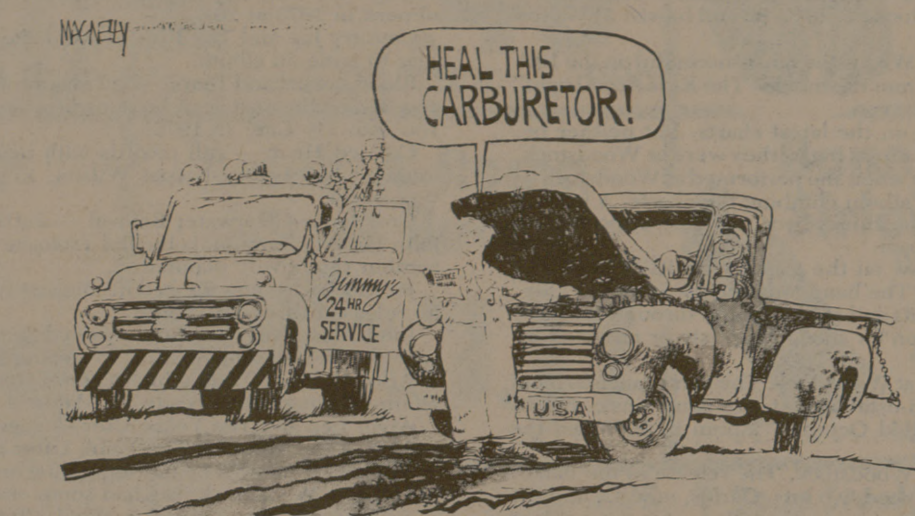
When he first came into office, Carter believed the national trauma of the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal were history and the country had survived with hope and optimism.

Lately, he has changed his tune. But says there is no "identifiable" reason why a "malaise" has hit the country and he believes it is unwarranted. And he disagrees with critics who blame him and question White House leadership.

Here is the question that was put to Carter during an interview with out-of-town editors recently and excerpts of his answer.

Question: "Mr. President, one of the topics you have touched on in your historic address to the nation had to do with national confidence. I am wondering if you still feel that you can provide that confidence. The polls have been brutal with you. It is perhaps the key issue in many peoples' minds, confidence in the White House, confidence in the administration, confidence in Washington."

Answer: "I think the lack of confidence is very broad. There is a lack of confidence of people in themselves. There is a lack of



confidence in what their quality of life will be in the future compared to the present and the past. There is a lack of confidence in many institutions. The press and the Congress are two, by the way, that are lower than confidence in the White House. And there is a lack of confidence in the president which does concern me very much.

"I believe the absence of confidence is unwarranted. Our nation is prosperous. Our nation is at peace. Our nation has a fine prospect for the future. Our nation is

the strongest on Earth economically, militarily, politically. Our alliances with our friends around the world have never been stronger. We have excellent and improving relations with the developing nations of the world.

"We have the highest reserves of energy of any nation on Earth. I think we have 24 percent of all the energy reserves known to mankind, whereas the OPEC countries all put together only have less than 5 percent.

"So there is no real identifiable basis for

an absence of confidence. But it is a fact that the people have not only lost confidence in themselves now and in the future, lost confidence in the institutions, lost confidence in our government, the free enterprise system, the press and so forth, but they have an increasing inclination toward divisiveness."

Furthermore, Carter said, "This is the first time in history that I know about when our country has been faced with discomfort or inconvenience or more tangible and far-reaching adverse impacts on human life, without having at the same time a threat to our nation that was cohesive in its implications."

He said this was not true during two world wars and the Great Depression when people were bound together with a common threat.

In his first campaign for the Presidency, Carter did not project a vision of lower expectations, particularly since his predecessor, Gerald Ford, was holding the line against any new initiatives on the domestic front.

But in his campaign for reelection — which to all intents and purposes is now under way — Carter will have to defend his own record, which he told the editors is a "good" one to run on. He also will have to lay out a blueprint for an America somewhat in retreat.

But opposition candidates are bound to make their promises for a golden future this time around, and will blame Carter for the current state of the nation.

Battling big business

Union mergers newest trend

By DREW VON BERGEN

WASHINGTON — Organized labor, faced with growing industry conglomerates and declining legislative power, is merging its forces to shore up the battle against big business.

The recent merger of two of the largest unions in the food industry — the Meatcutters and Retail Clerks — into a 1.2 million United Food and Commercial Workers International Union highlights an atmosphere of unity prevailing in the union movement.

Since the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations merged in 1955, the AFL-CIO has promoted the concept of linking affiliates. Forty-one such mergers have occurred in the past quarter century, changing the face of many of labor's top organizations.

Prospects for more mergers appear likely.

The trend goes beyond the needs of individual unions to the heart of the 13.6 million member AFL-CIO as the prime representative of organized labor.

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Lane Kirkland, the heir apparent to President George Meany, said he did not know of any mergers that did not benefit all concerned.

"All of the unions involved are stronger, more efficient and more effective in the workplace, at the bargaining table, in the legislative halls and in the community," Kirkland told the founding convention of the UFCW.

Kirkland said such mergers were necessary to ward off attacks on the union movement: "Right-wing, anti-democratic forces, aided and abetted and bankrolled by corporate America, are engaged in what amounts to a holy war to destroy our unions, undermine our nation's laws and roll back the gains that workers have made," Kirkland said.

Frank Pollara, a leading AFL-CIO official on mergers, said economics of collective bargaining and organizing nonunion workers necessitates mergers. "A small union is at a tremendous disadvantage," Pollara said. "It costs money."

The largest union in the nation, with

about 2 million members, is not in the AFL-CIO. The Teamsters union was ousted from the federation in 1957 because of corruption charges.

Two more non-AFL-CIO unions — the National Education Association and the United Auto Workers — follow as the second and third largest in membership.

William Wynn, head of the new UFCW, believes both the Teamsters and UAW should be welcomed back into the federation. In fact, he believes the Teamsters never should have been ousted. While collecting organized labor into one affiliated federation may boost its lobbying clout on Capitol Hill and at the White House on national and international issues, more attention is being focused on merging individual unions for day-to-day operations and collective bargaining.

The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, with about 1 million members, has been successful in growing to the sixth largest union using merger as a major tool.

On the horizon are several more joint ventures, some in the final process of merger, and others just in the talking stage.

The most advanced involves the 13,000-member Wood, Wire, and Metal Lathers International Union joining the 775,000 member Carpenters union.

A referendum of the Lathers membership will be held July 28, then the merger is scheduled for completion at a convention in Atlanta in August.

The Lathers are faced with modern day technology that many unions — particularly those in the construction trades — see cutting into their membership.

Lathers installed the wooden slats and later metal mesh on which plaster was applied to make the walls and ceilings of most old buildings. With the advent of drywall construction, the trade dwindled.

"We are proud of our craft, our skills, and the long history of accomplishment," said Lathers President Charles Prodeur in urging the merger. "But we have to face reality. Our basic trade, which was founded on the use of lath and plaster, has all but disappeared."

Another new merger involves the UAW

and District 65, a 35,000-member independent union that includes such diverse workers as university employees, lawyers, editors, factory workers, and direct-mail companies. The Autoworkers executive board has approved accepting District 65

Letter to the Editor

So long A&M, thanks

Editor:

Well, my day has finally arrived (graduation) and so I take this time to reflect on my college journey. It was the hardest thing I ever undertook, trying to obtain a mechanical engineering degree at A&M. All I can say is that A&M is a great place to be from. For all those crybabies who didn't make it, my heart bleeds for you. It took me 5 years to finish, mixed with a

year and a half of work experience. I want to especially thank Ned Walton, assistant dean of engineering and the entire M.E. faculty. Believe it or not, I learned a heck of a lot from those guys and I'm proud to say I'm a Texas Aggie. In closing, I want to thank God, my family and friends for putting up with my determination to succeed. Highway 6, here I come!

—L.B. Tate, '77

Cabinet arrangement may be unproductive

By DEAN REYNOLDS

WASHINGTON — Will the administration's health package have a better chance to clear Congress now that Joseph Califano has departed as secretary of health, education and welfare?

Probably not. Patricia Harris, who has just assumed command of the nation's largest agency, will become the administration's chief legislative lobbyist for such things as the hospital cost containment bill and national health insurance.

Can she make a difference?

The answer again is, probably not. Based on Mrs. Harris' comments as she takes over from Califano, she and her predecessor share the same philosophy about health care and hospital costs.

So, there will most likely be no change in intensity when it comes to pushing the president's programs. So far, that intensity has produced little.

Much of the congressional bleating that accompanied President Carter's dismissal of Califano was seen as hypocritical. Many of the congressmen who professed to be outraged by the firing were the same ones who were working behind the scenes to gut the very legislation Califano was pushing.

Hospital cost containment has yet to come up for a vote in the full House or Senate.

It has been weakened by the House Ways and Means Committee and hasn't even made it to the full House Commerce Committee from that panel's subcommittee on health.

In the Senate, two committees also had to pass judgment on the bill. One, the Labor and Human Resources panel, passed it. The other, the Finance Committee, killed it — not exactly a clear show of support.

The proposal seeks to put a cap on the annual increase in hospital costs. The administration first proposed a 9.7 percent ceiling, then raised it a bit, and now it sits around 11.6 percent. As inflation continues and the calendar marches on into fall, that ceiling may go even higher.

The bill would also carry standby mandatory controls for those hospitals that refuse or are unable to keep their costs within that ceiling. The Ways and Means Committee watered that idea down considerably when it decided a one-house veto could thwart any presidential move to impose those mandatory controls.

The question, then, is what difference can Pat Harris make? The answer is, probably very little.

Her appointment or, more accurately, Califano's ouster, could even hurt the administration's proposals. If Califano was anything, he was well-connected on Capitol Hill. He is, after all, a Washington veteran — unlike his former boss.

No one really believes that if Califano had wanted the department of education idea to die, it would have survived in spite of him. A congressman reportedly told the former secretary that one negative phone call from Califano could have finished the bill.

The bill may be finished anyway, but that's another matter.

STATE

Galveston fire slows ship traffic

Five men working on a barge-like overwork rig in Galveston Bay escaped without injury from a fire that threatened 13,000 gallons of diesel fuel and slowed ship traffic. Chief Petty Officer George Blocher said the fire started about noon Tuesday on the platform one mile east of the ship channel and 15 miles north of Galveston. Within minutes, Blocher said, the Coast Guard had two utility boats pumping water on the blaze and it was extinguished within two hours. The fire started in a "mud tank," which holds a drilling compound. No reason for the blaze was given.

NATION

Just say 'tannic acid, beertender'

Miller Brewing Co. has told the government it doesn't think Anheuser-Busch should be allowed to call its beers "natural" when they are made with things like tannic acid and chemically treated beechwood chips. In the latest round of a continuing regulatory agency war between the nation's top two brewers, Miller fired off statements from three nutritionists saying Busch's use of the word "natural" is deceptive. Busch's "highly processed, chemically modified and treated beers do not come within the accepted definition of 'natural,'" Miller said in a memo filed with the Federal Trade Commission. Miller, No. 2 brewer in terms of sales, has been at war with Busch for some time. Earlier this year Miller told the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Busch should not be allowed to call Michelob Light a "light" beer when it contains 134 calories. Miller's "Lite" beer has 96 calories. Earlier, Busch had complained to the FTC Miller was promoting its Lowenbrau beer as "imported" when in reality it was all made in this country. Miller later dropped the imported claim.

Slain FBI agent Oliver buried

FBI Director William Webster and agents from throughout the Midwest were among an overflow crowd in Metropolis, Ill., that paid final respects to Johnnie L. Oliver, their colleague who was gunned down in Cleveland. The Rev. Don Young, pastor of the Bible Baptist Church at nearby Paducah, Ky., eulogized Oliver Tuesday as a man "who stood in our place. He stood for what is right. Nearly 300 mourners crowded into the main chapel at the Aikins-Farmer Funeral Home and into two adjoining rooms and the foyer. Oliver, 35, married and the father of three small children, was shot to death last Thursday in Cleveland as he and five other agents attempted to arrest a federal fugitive, Melvin Bay Guyon, 19, of Chicago. Guyon, the prime suspect in the shooting, is the object of a massive search by the FBI as well as state and local authorities. Guyon is wanted on kidnapping, rape and armed robbery charges in Chicago.

'Robber' priest's trial continues

A hardware store owner Wednesday became the third person to testify before a jury in Wilmington, Del., that a Catholic priest used a pistol to rob a store. Carroll Reynolds reiterated before a Superior Court jury testimony he had given in the jury's absence Monday that the Rev. Bernard T. Pagano was the man he identified in a police lineup as the gunman who robbed Haverbeck's Hardware in suburban Wilmington last January. Reynolds said he had police turn the eight men in the lineup to the side so he could see their profile. Only then, he said, was he sure Pagano was the robber police nicknamed the "Gentlemen Bandit."

WORLD

Flood death toll up to 15,000

Now that the flood waters that inundated the industrial city of Morvi have begun to recede, authorities have revised the death toll to as high as 15,000. About 1,000 bodies had been recovered from the ruins of the northwestern city by Tuesday and rescue workers said many bloated corpses were still being rotting on streets and rooftops, in houses and temples. The death toll will be between 10,000 and 15,000," Vallabhai Patel, vice president of Gujrat state's ruling Janata Party, told reporters after inspecting the disaster site. Five days after the dam that released the water burst, there still were no reports on casualties and damage from a number of villages downstream from Morvi.

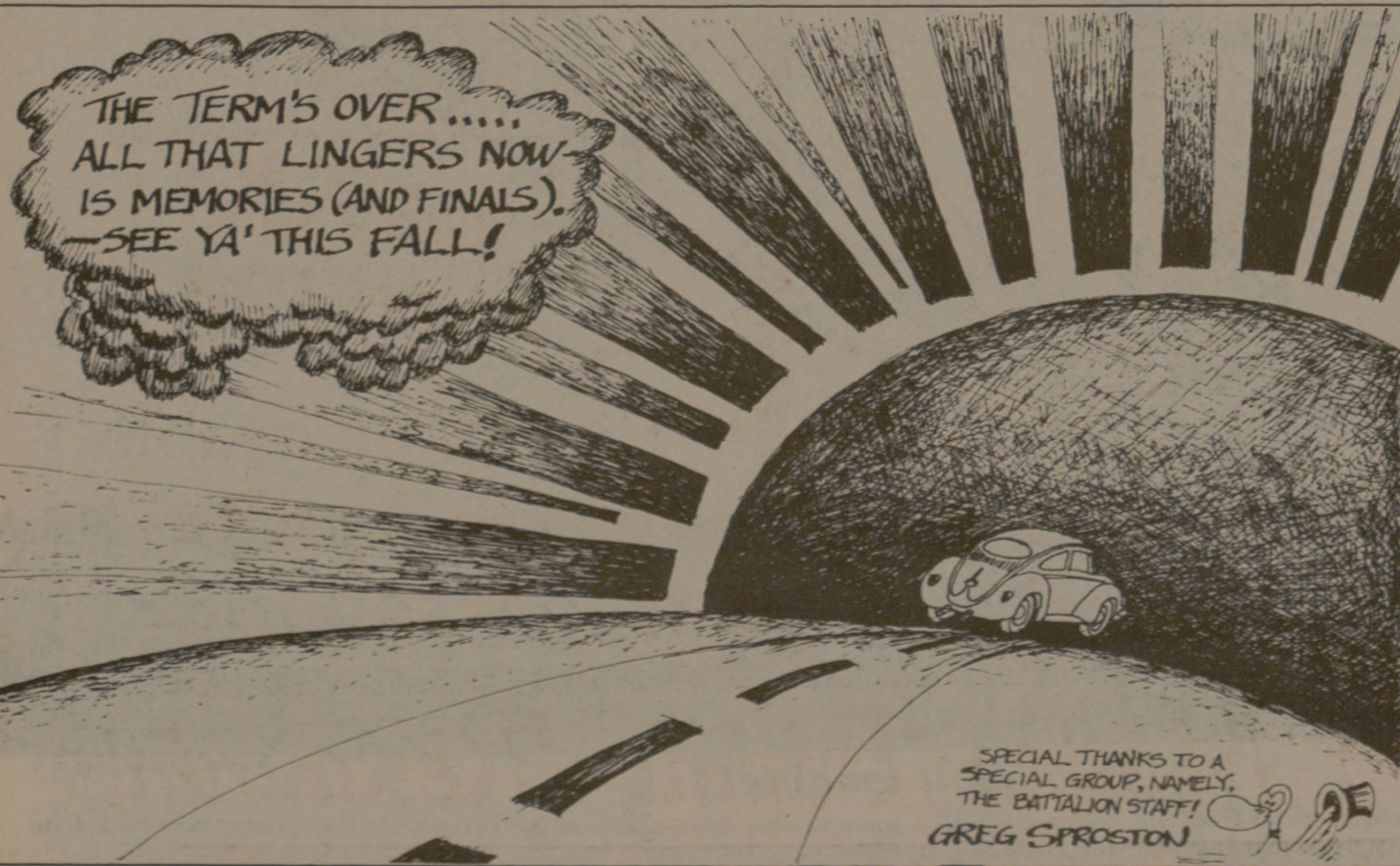
Dealer pays \$10 million for letters

A London dealer has paid more than \$10 million in New York for about 3,500 antique postal items in the stamp collection of a retired Wall Street financier. Some letters in the collection — signed by Presidents George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson and Abraham Lincoln — did not cost anything to mail. The chief executives used their free mailing privileges. "A great deal of taste, a great deal of knowledge and a great deal of money" went into putting together the collection, said Howard Fraser, chairman of Stanley Gibbons International, which bought the collection from Marc Haas.

Soviet planes collide, 150 killed

Two passenger planes collided in the air over the Ukraine Saturday night, killing about 150 persons including the 17 members of a Soviet soccer team, Soviet sources said Wednesday. The crash occurred near Dneprodzrzhinsk, 500 miles south of Moscow, the sources said. One of the planes was an Aeroflot jet carrying the Pakhtakor soccer team from Tashkent to Minsk to play Minsk Dynamo, they said. The newspaper Pravda Vostoka published a brief article in its Wednesday edition saying only that the team was killed in a crash, but giving no further details.

The newspaper's executive secretary said in telephone interview from Moscow that the story was carried on the paper's front page. The newspaper does not reach Moscow until several days after it is published.



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