

DICK WEST

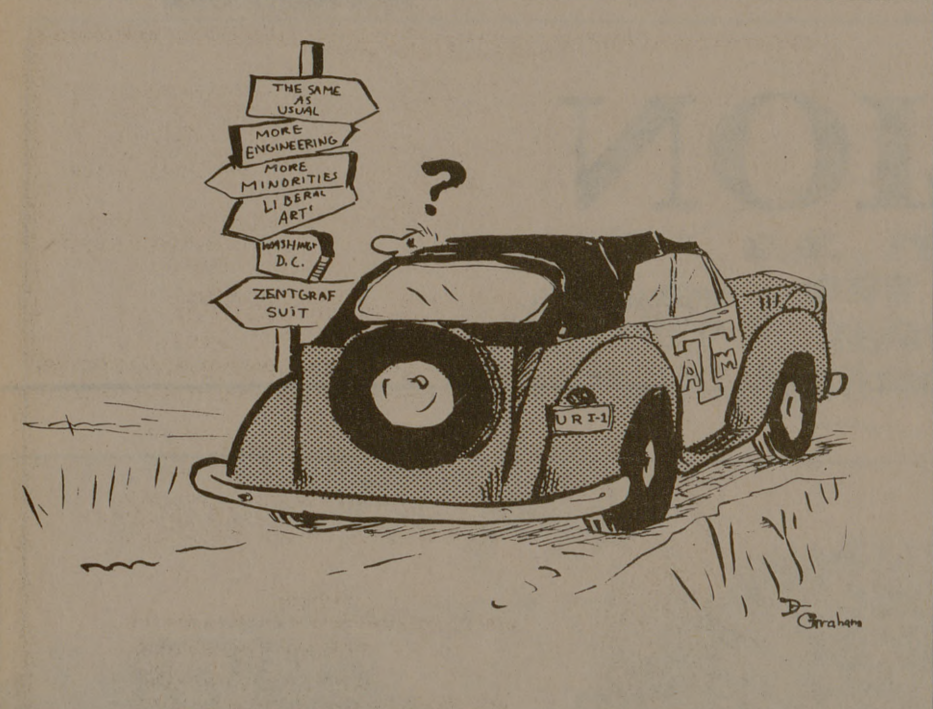
It opens cans, tells time, detects smoke and never needs winding

United Press International
WASHINGTON — I went into a store to see about buying a wristwatch for someone on my Christmas list.
 "Sorry," the clerk says, "we don't sell watches."
 "What are those things?" says I, pointing to a shelf laden with what appear to be timepieces.
 "Those are solid state digital chronometers," the clerk explains. "This particular model is called 'The Hamburger.'"
 "Why is it called 'The Hamburger?'" says I, who have a way of leaving myself open.
 "Because it has everything on it," says the clerk. "It has the hour, minute and second. It has the day, month and year. It has two time zones for the benefit of travelers. It has a lap timer for joggers. It has a

stop watch, a five-note alarm and a light for night visibility."
 "What about the temperature?" I ask.
 "Does it have that?"
 "If you want a chronometer with a thermometer, you will have to pay a bit more," says the clerk, naming a figure.
 "Does it also tell you the humidity?" I ask.
 "Sometimes it's more the humidity than the heat."
 "The only chronometer we have with a thermometer and a hygrometer also has a barometer," says the clerk. "Should you wake up in the middle of the night and want to know what the atmospheric pressure is, all you have to do is press the light button and the barometric reading becomes visible."

"That's all very well," says I, "but when you are talking about that kind of money it seems to me you ought to be able to ascertain the wind-chill factor as well."
 "Aha!" exclaims the clerk. "You are talking about a chronometer that records wind direction and velocity and combines it with the thermometer reading to calculate the cooling effect of moving air on the human body. We have in stock several models that include that feature. Would you like it with the Air Quality Index or without?"
 "With, by all means. I figure anyone who would want to know what time they were freezing also would want to know what time they were being polluted."
 "Speaking of air pollution," the clerk says, "is the person you are purchasing the

chronometer for per chance a smoker?
 When I reply in the affirmative, he suggests I might want to choose one that has a smoke detector connected to a five-note alarm.
 "Suppose, after setting the alarm for a certain hour, the person goes to bed with a lighted cigarette in his hand and the alarm immediately, waking him in time to avoid being burned to death," the clerk explains.
 I say, "Shopping for a wristwatch these days is more fun than a Roy Rogers bar. But I'm not sure I can remember the things that come with it."
 "You don't have to," the clerk says. "Just say 'gimme the works.'"



OPINION

So long — for now

The "we" of The Battalion will be me today, as it has been the rest of the semester. But this time I (Liz Newlin) will be saying farewell to the University — at least for a while.

During the spring I'll work for Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, in Washington. Sears, Roebuck and Co. sponsors a program for about 15 college journalists a year to work on congressional staffs. Next fall I'll resume my college education here.

This has been an interesting semester, though not a terribly exciting one. Here are a few observations:

Texas A&M University is growing and — sometimes reluctantly — changing. That creates problems, but the institution seems to be dealing with them.

One of the most serious problems facing A&M is how it will define the "university" tag it took in 1963. Does it want to be a university, or a technical school?

As a land grant college, A&M's responsibility has three parts: education of students, research, and extension service.

The emphasis seems to be turning toward two parts of the triad, research and extension (especially on the international scene). That's where the money is, and where President Miller's background is. It's natural he thinks that's important, but that approach can leave out the traditional purpose of a university — teaching students the liberal arts.

Generally the College of Liberal Arts is not complaining — because of progress made the past few years. But the current rumblings could erupt, especially if programs there are ignored.

Texas A&M faces other challenges as well. The difficulty in recruiting minority students — and the current lack of them — is the one that may cause A&M the most trouble from the government. Women are finding their place here, but some rough spots remain, as letters to the editor illustrate.

Even with these problems, the institution still does a lot of good.

Texas A&M is at a turning point. I hope it turns for the better.

Iranian crisis aids Carter's rise in polls

By DAVID S. BRODER

There are relatively few matters on which John B. Connally and Edward M. Kennedy agree. But in the space of a few hours, one day last week, they uttered strikingly similar interpretations of President Carter's sudden surge in the public opinion polls.

As is his habit, Connally used language that was blunter than need be, calling Carter's improvement in the polls "an aberration."

It is not aberrational. In fact, both Kennedy and Connally noted in their comments to groups of reporters and editors, international crisis — particularly those threatening the loss of American life — almost always calls forth at the outset a feeling of patriotism and a sense of national unity that causes people to rally around the President.

Every professional analyst of public

opinion has made the point that it is that surge of spontaneous patriotic sentiment — as much as of public disapproval in which he had been floundering for months.

What both Connally and Kennedy said was that once the hostage situation is resolved, inflation, high-interest rates and the woes of the economy will once again be uppermost in people's minds, and, as Connally put it, "Carter's polls may fall as they've risen."

There is an obvious element of self-interest in those predictions, because both men are seeking the job Jimmy Carter holds. But the fact that they have their own motives for discounting Carter's remarkable resurgence does not, by itself, prove their skepticism is ill-founded.

To the contrary, there are valid reasons for thinking that time may prove them right.

The upheaval taking place in Iran — of which the hostage situation is part — does worsen the economic problems facing this country and the rest of the industrial world. Oil prices are going up again, and oil sup-

plies can more easily be disrupted. That means more inflation and a greater risk of recession, and those are the forces which were dragging down Carter in the polls.

There is not certainty how long this course of action will be able to contain the growing frustration in the American public, whose nerves are being rubbed raw by constant repetition of provocative and disturbing television scenes of the smug jailers and the tense captives in what was once the American embassy in Tehran.

There is a point at which a policy of patience will verge into a failure of will, and self-restraint will be perceived as a confession of impotence.

This crossover point may be weeks away — or only days. But it is particularly perilous for a President like Jimmy Carter, who has been seen, far too often in the last three years, as a man of good intentions, incapable of achieving important objectives.

Finally, even if the hostages are released, Carter will almost certainly policy choices which are acutely painful and politically difficult for him.

The focus on the 50 Americans — erly our first concern now — in some obscures the historic import of what is opening. The most important counter-vital portion of the world — the Persian Gulf — is sliding ever further toward national chaos and demagogic Americanism.

The likelihood is growing that to counter this fundamental threat to national interest, there will have to be increased deployment of American troops in the Persian Gulf region — either or methodically, to contain the crisis or suddenly, to deal with a crisis.

It is not going to be easy to be the post-Vietnam President to order an American military deployment, and to go against Carter's instincts, even more would against those of other men, to deliver that message to the people.

The hardest tests — and the toughest times — of his presidency lie ahead in the coming months. Today's poll importance compared to that of previous years is a reflection of the crisis.

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LETTERS The 12th man will not miss the 13th man

Editor:
 This letter is addressed to the 13th Man, those people, who maintain a majority rule, at Texas A&M, who care not for the 12th Man.

Let me first clarify the differences by comparing and contrasting the two. Both appreciate Aggie traditions; the 12th Man by his understanding, learning, and participation, making his purpose the advancement of Texas A&M 100 percent, win or lose. The 13th Man has no understanding, no learning, and participates in only the important events — watching Bonfire burn, and humping it at the game, with his hat on — he cares less about Texas A&M, The Spirit of Aggieland, and backs A&M only when they win.

I have graduated, and as I look back at my five years at this great institution, I

treasure more than just the excellent education I received; I value the friendships and acquaintances I acquired; I hold close the tender emotions I felt at Silver Taps and Muster; I cherish the moments of brotherhood I shared with the 12th Man, experiencing Aggie traditions to the fullest.

All these have made me proud to be an Aggie, all these but the 13th Man.

As a graduate, Class of '78, tradition would have it that I did not need to extend myself past the student state. However, as in previous years, I was filled with the enthusiasm of the 12th Man; and when Bonfire time rolled around, I helped the 12th Man cutting, hauling, stacking, forfeiting my time for the Spirit of Aggieland. Where was the 13th Man?

At 7:30, November 30, I went to Duncan Field, proud to be an Aggie, knowing the

12th Man would be there too. All those hours of toil and strain, sleepless nights, and brotherhood, stood majestically. The 12th Man was there, so was the 13th Man. Where were they before? Yet now, they too proclaimed, "This is my Bonfire."

As the 12th Man looked on in amazement, the 13th Man proceeded to do its usual job of destroying the image of A&M. The drunken euphoria that the 13th Man made of Bonfire ruined my evening. As one of the most valued traditions of A&M went up in flames, the 13th Man mocked it by carrying all forms of alcohol, bottles and cans, kegs and quarts, in to the most sacred of our traditions. Where was the 13th Man? He was there in full force and as the 12th Man, past and present, looked on, the 13th Man was tearing down all that A&M stood for.

I left in disgust, hoping to return to the 13th Man had left. He never did. At 2:00 a.m., certainly past the 13th Man bedtime, I returned only to find that creature still very much around. Beside the mass of garbage, bottles, beer cans, the like, the 13th Man had passed out and there, made "passionate" love by stack, had driven its cars and trucks close "to better see her burn," and continued to laugh at all the 12th Man's for.

Now that I have left A&M, I will not lot with me; traditions, spirit, memories good times and bad. One thing I will not and will be glad not too, is the thought seeing the 13th Man, in its pathetic destroying Texas A&M.

— Tommy Bruns

the small society

by Brickman



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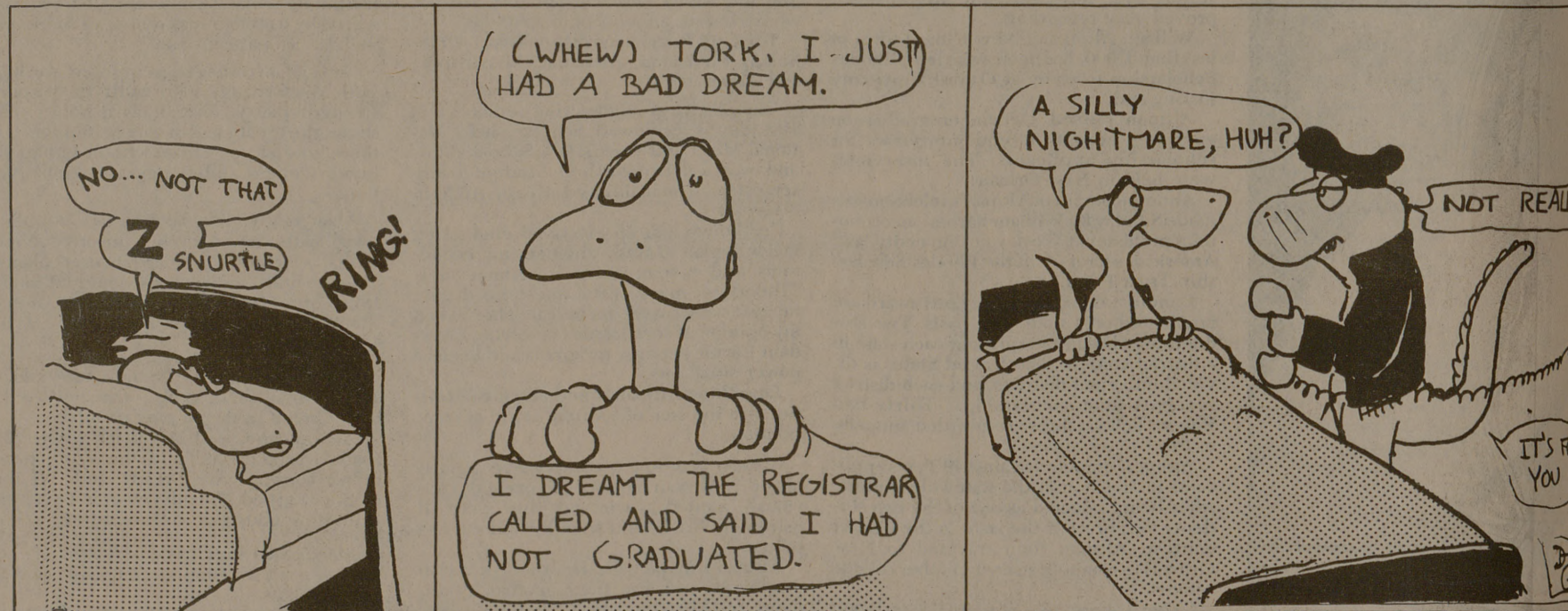
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THOTZ



By Doug Graham