

Slouch By Jim Earle



"Now is the time!"

The upcoming trial of Harrison Williams

By STEVE GERSTEL

WASHINGTON — At high noon on the third of December, the Senate is going to put Sen. Harrison Williams in the dock. It's going to be ugly.

Most senators, without question, must fervently wish that something would happen to spare them the ordeal of putting Williams on trial.

Yet, there appears to be nothing that can allow them to avert this extremely onerous assignment.

Senate Republican leader Howard Baker seems committed to go ahead even though it means the extension of a session that has already run much longer than he had hoped.

And Williams appears intent on fighting to the finish, showing no signs of exiting with grace.

Pete Williams is far from the first to go on trial before his colleagues — charged with misdeeds and tarnishing the Senate.

Yet, in some ways that will have no bearing on the outcome, Williams' case is different from others in recent times.

First off, the recommendation of the Ethics Committee is that the New Jersey Democrat — a veteran of 23 years in the Senate — be expelled. That is the ultimate punishment of the Senate.

No senator has been expelled since the Civil War, assuring Williams a sordid footnote in history.

The Senate censured Sen. Thomas Dodd, D-Conn., and condemned Sen. Herman Talmadge, D-Ga., but no one sought to kick them out.

Dodd was found guilty of mingling personal funds with campaign contributions, a practice frowned on by clean-hand politicians.

Talmadge had his wrist slapped for a biz-

zare series of financial transactions, including stuffing money into his overcoat pockets.

Even in those two cases, the stigma of Senate punishment was so great that both their political careers were ruined. Neither could win re-election.

The charge is more grievous against Williams — conspiracy to obtain money for a titanium mine in which he would acquire an interest. He was caught in the ABCAM web.

The evidence, much of it on videotape, was good enough so that a jury found him guilty. The Senate needs even less proof to hang him — and cares naught whether he was a victim of FBI entrapment.

If the proceedings appear to be a Senate vendetta against an unpopular colleague, the impression is wrong.

Williams, a recovered alcoholic, is generally known as an unspectacular sort who is (or was) quite popular with his peers.

Little known to the general public, despite his many years in the Senate, he never crashed the limelight — either by choice or fate.

Williams was a down-the-line Democratic liberal. Like others of that genre, he was a vote for the Great Society programs and the advancement of civil rights. If he was in labor's pocket, so were the others of like thinking.

In contrast, Dodd and Talmadge were loners with few friends in the Senate.

If the Senate had been of a mind to punish for punishment's sake, Talmadge and Dodd were better candidates.

With the start of the trial rapidly approaching, Williams has little choice left. He could resign, sparing himself and the Senate the agony. Or, he can go the route.

Either way, it strongly appears that Williams' long career in the Senate is all but over.

The senator from Hocus-Pocus

By DICK WEST
United Press International

WASHINGTON — Ever found yourself wishing you could instant-replay a conversation to take advantage of the clever remarks you thought of too late?

You can if you are a U.S. senator. Senators, operating ex post facto, occasionally polish previously uttered remarks so they appear in print as bon mots that flowed trippingly from the tongue.

Better yet, a senator also can unsay something.

Should he decide a previously uttered remark was better left unspoken, he can recall the utterance and have it appear he never said it.

These miraculous powers of speech, not granted to ordinary mortals, are bestowed on our lawmakers by the Congressional Record, official transcript of House and Senate proceedings.

On a given day last week, for example, journalists auditing the school prayer debate could have sworn they heard the Sen-

Ernest Hollings, D-S.C., address Sen. Howard Metzenbaum as "the senator from B'nai B'rith."

They further were under the impression that Metzenbaum, who actually comes from Ohio, characterized Hollings' geographical reference as "bad taste," whereupon the senator from South Carolina apologized, explaining it was "only in fun."

But in the printed version of the debate captured for posterity by the Congressional Record, there was no mention of Hollings and Metzenbaum speaking in this manner.

These utterances were treated exactly as though they had been wasted on thin, desert air. Did our ears deceive us? Was there present in the Senate the same "sinister force" that erased 18 minutes of the Watergate tapes?

None of the above.

The explanation can be found near the end of the legislative day when Senate Republican leader Howard Baker obtained unanimous consent to have the aforementioned utterances "deleted from the re-

cord."

Even after surgery, however, there was still plenty of meat for the archives.

Among the senatorial utterances that were preserved in perpetuity was Baker's official notification to the Senate that Sen. Alfonse D'Amato's 19-year-old daughter Lisa had set a new world's record "for time spent in a shower."

Miss D'Amato, according to Baker, stayed in the shower "121 hours and 12 minutes nonstop."

"I want to extend the Senate's congratulations to Lisa and her local water authority," Baker said.

The tribute is now enshrined in history and will remain a part of Senate business down through the ages, or long after someone has showered 121 and 2 minutes.

As the father of daughter who also monopolized the bathroom, I can appreciate D'Amato's role in the accomplishment. If Baker had referred to the senator by New York as "the senator from Jacuzzis," might have no record of the feat.



It's your turn

Accusations about program untrue

Editor:

This letter is in reply to the absolutely false accusations by Gerald Brock in his letter to the editor published Tuesday in reference to the International Students Association Program "U.S. Policy and Central America."

First of all, the "Unified Revolutionary Front" (DRU) did not have a representative on the program panel. This individual was representing the "Democratic Revolutionary Front" (FDR) which is the opposition front created in El Salvador.

It is evident from Mr. Brock's letter, that when Dr. Melville discussed the various ways in which human rights are being violated in countries like Guatemala and El Salvador. Mr. Brock believed this constituted Marxist-Leninist propaganda. The only propaganda in the program were anti-communist pamphlets arbitrarily distributed, without consent of the local presenter. The program was intended to bring to the audience the different perspectives related to the conflict in Central America. That was clearly accomplished.

The fact that Mr. Brock did not like the opinions expressed by some of the panel members, does not mean that they provided misinformation. Misinformation is to say that certain people are Marxist-Leninists in an attempt to hide the fact that they are concerned with the violence and the profound socio-economical problems facing these countries.

It is true that some students did not agree with what some of the speakers had to say; this was very clearly demonstrated by insulting, threatening and pushing people around once the meeting was over. This only shows your their lack of education and respect of other people's feelings.

I was very sad to see this happen, mainly because now I can understand how bad the situation really is down there.

Eduardo Valdivia
Village Green

One life is enough

Editor:

Ags, when you go to awe at the immense bonfire, please stand back a safe distance. The bonfire can collapse faster than a crowd can move and does so without warning. We are fortunate that nobody has been trapped beneath the flaming logs so far. Please keep the bonfire death toll at a minimum.

One life lost for burning Aggie spirit is already too many.

Glen Gardner '84

Different is OK

Editor:

This weekend visiting the TCU campus we came across an article in the TCU student newspaper entitled "Aggies are a different sort." Paragraph after paragraph the Horn Frogs cut down the Aggies and our tradition-oriented school. Aggies aren't weird, we are just a step above the rest. We think they have the wrong word for Aggies, we're not "stupid," we're just one of a kind. How can they even call us stupid when we

have one of the top Engineering Schools in the nation. To top that off, all Texas A&M Medical students who took the Med exam this year before entering intern passed every section; this has never been done by any university. After all, what do you call an Aggie two years after graduation? BOSS.

As for the incident in the press box the question of objectivity, why not mention the lack of objectivity in this TCU article. Is this what TCU calls objectivity? Journalism.

And what about Rev? There is a chance of Reveille attacking as there is getting a wart from a Horn Frog.

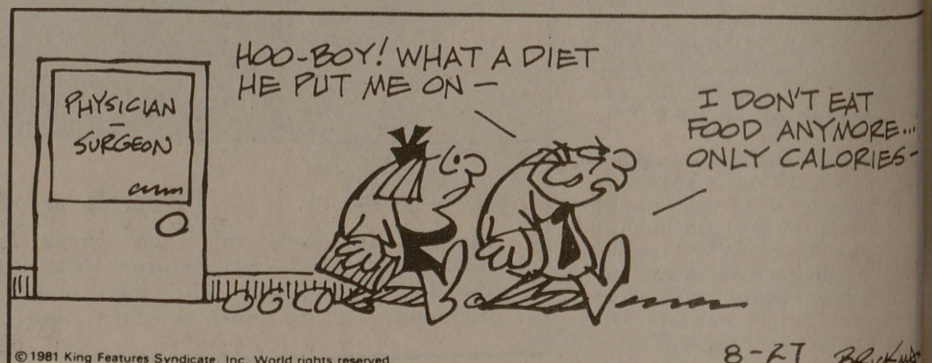
As for our "buzzheads," sorry Frogs, there is no comparison to your cheerleaders and our yell leaders. Who else can stand the sidelines and have as much control over 30 thousand people as TAMU Yell Leaders do?

Without A&M's traditions and military background A&M would be just another SWC school. We have no desire to be anyone else. Yes, Aggies are of a different sort, but of a BETTER sort.

Holly Wright
Sally Stone

the small society

by Brickman



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The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Communications.

Questions or comments concerning any editorial matter should be directed to the editor.

LETTERS POLICY

Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length, and are subject to being cut if they are longer. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length, but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must also be signed, show the address and phone number of the writer.

Columns and guest editorials are also welcome, and are not subject to the same length constraints as letters. Address all inquiries and correspondence to: Editor, The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843.

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