

# opinion

## Watt's remarks similar to Butz's

By Dick West

United Press International

WASHINGTON — Human reaction to new pesticides, drugs and other chemicals can pretty well be predicted by testing toxic substances on laboratory mice.

Too bad there isn't an equally reliable way of testing the toxic comments of interior secretaries.

Not that James Watt, the current occupant of that office, is the first Cabinet member to poison political wells with his sense of humor — if that's what it is.

Rumors that Watt gets his material from Howard Cosell are duly noted. It is, however, Earl Butz, the former agriculture secretary, who comes to mind when we cast about parallels and precedents to the controversy over Watt.

Butz, you'll recall, was obliged to resign after he was quoted as telling a racist joke — if that's what it was — aboard an airplane.

Granted that Butz's cabin on the aircraft was devoid of television cameras of the type that recorded Watt's witticism — if that's what it was.

Granted also that Butz may have believed he was speaking privately, whereas Watt presumably was aware he was appearing before a Chamber of Commerce audience.

Nevertheless, the political repercussion from the punch line was deemed even more adverse than the fallout of acid rains upon the plains of Canada. So Butz had to go.

At this writing, it appears that Watt has weathered the storm stirred up by his gaffe. His big mistake was applying such terms as woman, black, Jew and cripple to

the membership of a coal-leasing advisory board.

Had Watt been referring to the ticket-balancing qualities of prospective vice presidential candidates, his remark might have passed unremarked.

In their formative stage, presidential slates tend to be almost as diverse as the "Twelve Days of Christmas." It is nothing uncommon for nominees to be reported considering as their running-mates four calling birds, three French hens, two turtle doves and a partridge in a pear tree.

In that framework, Watt might have been marked down as merely making a bid for the leaping lords vote.

Now back to those mice.

The White House at first gave the impression it was reserving judgment on Watt until on the duration and intensity of the flap over his utterance became evident.

How much more politically safe it would have been for President Reagan's aides simply to say a final decision on whether Watt should resign was being delayed pending further laboratory tests.

Indeed, once the boys down at the lab have the capability of anticipating public reaction to Cabinet-level humor, there is no reason to expose mice only to jokes and off-cuff quips.

Various programs and policies, such as the ones being followed in Central America, also could be tested for political toxicity in advance.

If mice sampling increased aid to El Salvador, for example, engaged in an inordinate amount of squeaking, or developed malignant tumors, that proposal could be expunged before Congress was exposed to it.

## Reagan trip depends on political struggles

by E. Michael Myers

United Press International

WASHINGTON — President Reagan's decision to visit the Philippines in November will be based on the outcome of violent political struggles being waged in the streets of Manila.

The demonstrations against the regime of President Ferdinand Marcos have cost more than 10 lives. The crackdown by his security forces shows no sign of easing, and Reagan's security dominates all other considerations in allowing the one-day visit.

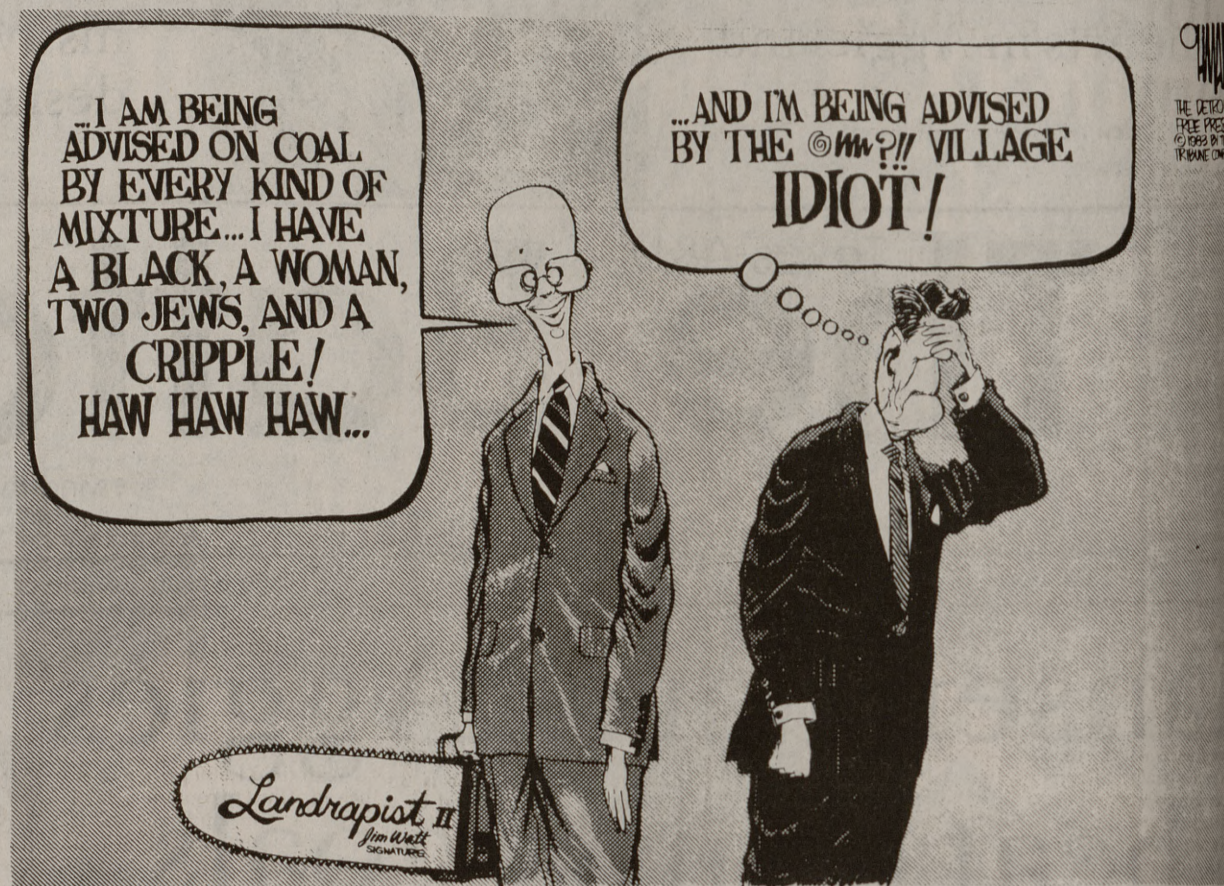
Reagan's possible reluctance to leave town if Congress is still in session notwithstanding, chaos in the streets of Manila or a poor security environment will be the basis of the judgment on going ahead with the visit or canceling it.

It's understood the visit could not go forward if the Marcos regime is definitely implicated in the assassination of opposition leader Benigno Aquino, or if it blocks an objective investigation of his murder. The administration wants to avoid any action that would further weaken Marcos if a verdict is still out on his regime's possible role in Aquino's death. And a premature, poorly reasoned cancellation, without a definitive answer on Marcos' complicity, could still amount to a judgment of culpability.

Another consideration is the vital U.S. security interests in the Philippines, Clark Air Base and the Subic Bay naval facility. These bases are strategic American assets along the sea and air lanes of Asia. No longer does the United States have such assets in Vietnam — they are ports to the Soviet navy now.

A Reagan visit to the Philippines can be judged by Marcos's opposition as American support to the embattled leader. If an anti-American regime ultimately comes to power in the Philippines, Clark Air Base and Subic Bay may go with Marcos. The United States has seen this before. President Carter's administration supported the dictatorial shah so long that support doomed any chance of possible accommodation with the radical Islamic revolution that seized control of Iran.

Years of support for the Somoza regime in Nicaragua, despite Carter's condemnation of his human rights record, helped poison relations between Washington and Managua and opened the way for a Cuban and Soviet presence on the mainland. Washington has expressed its confidence that the Marcos government will properly investigate the death of Aquino, shot to death by a reputed criminal on his arrival at Manila Aug. 21 after three years of exile in the United States.



## Letters: Albritton bell debated

Editor:

I noticed the plans for the Albritton Bell Tower call for an arch at the base through which the Lawrence Sullivan Ross statue can be viewed. However, nothing will be visible through the arch if that trash dumpster at the back of Lot 44, between the Coke and YMCA buildings, is not removed. I hope someone presents the University with a gift to relocate the dumpster that has been there for at least the past two years.

Brent Boyd '85

### Library books wanted

Editor:

I would like to offer the following opinion to Mr. Ford D. Albritton Jr.'s gift of a "Bell Tower" for Texas A&M University.

Mr. Albritton:

Books! Books, not bells is what Texas A&M needs Mr. Albritton.

The "class" in "world class university" does not come from bells and bell towers — even 130-foot, 35-belled bell towers don't give a university "class" — It comes from its graduates. Graduates that have had the benefit of a good library.

Even with one million plus volumes in its collection, Sterling C. Evans Library is still sorely lacking. I can only speak for the areas I use, Architecture; Art; Literature; Sociology; Psychology; are all deficient.

Those of us attending A&M, working our hardest to get a good education need books — not bells! Books to expand our minds — knowledge to carry with us when we leave A&M! Not bells! Not something else to add quality to "University Life". Not more bricks and memories. Please give us something more critical to our lives beyond A&M.

B-O-O-K-S Mr. Albritton not B-E-L-L-S!

Wayne D. Norman

### Hotard for move

Editor:

This letter is being written in response to John Wagner's article in the Sept. 27 issue of The Battalion that recommends curing the football team's ailments by "taking 'em out of Cain Hall" — "and making 'em live in Hotard."

We residents of the Hotard Hilton are willing to make any sacrifice for the football team, even if it means giving up our plush, luxurious penthouse accommodations and moving to drab, old and run-down Cain Hall.

To further our commitment we would not be adverse to trading our SBISA meal tickets and our posh lounge facilities for those distracting elements that exist in Cain Hall.

Let it be known that the good Ags in the Hilton have not in the past and will never in the future shirk our duty to stand behind the Fighting Texas Aggie Football Team 100 percent no matter the personal hardship.

Christopher H. Meakin  
(Editor's note: This letter was accompanied by 26 signatures.)

### Radio music debated

Editor:

The large headline for yesterday's letter to the editor section was entitled, "B-CS in need of a listener-responsive rock radio station."

Well, to everyone out there who doesn't already know, Texas A&M has such a radio station and has had one for the past 10 years. I am referring to KANM 99.9 FM. To tune in to the wide variety of music offered by this student run organization, all you need is a cable running to your stereo; KANM is carried by both cable networks.

KANM 99.9 FM is geared towards the people who get bored with the same top 40 music that is played on the commercial radio stations every day. A regular listener can expect to hear a wide variety of music ranging from new wave to old rock — from new rock to jazz. Along with this variety of music, commercials are so few as to be negligible and DJ time on the air is also minimal. What KANM 99.9 offers, in effect, is music.

KANM is run voluntarily by students and if the DJ's don't sound like professionals, it's because they're the same people you go to school with. Their job is to take requests and play what the listeners want to hear, and because there is no set format, requests generally get played quickly. DJ's work 4 hour shifts and music styles change with each DJ. Thus "listener-responsive rock radio station" is exactly what KANM is. Tune in for a week and listen to the wide variety of commercial-free music that each DJ makes available and chances are you'll become a regular listener.

KANM 99.9 now offers a concert line with information on concerts in Houston, Dallas, Austin, San Antonio, and B-CS. Just call 845-7596.

Larry Chasen  
KANM Radio

### Listener wants variety

Editor:

I support many of the comments made by Mr. D.K. Petty regarding the 92-KTAW radio station. Mr. Petty complained of the prattling disc jockeys and the excessive amount of commercials. The station's format seems to dictate the playing of three to four commercials following every two songs. As for the disc jockeys, I am not entertained by their inane remarks. If they would provide a simple introduction to every song, they would appear much more intelligent.

Mr. Petty indicated that he was generally satisfied with the selection of music played by KTAW. I am not particularly thrilled with the station's programming, and I often find it difficult to state exactly what is wrong with their choice of music. I enjoy KLLO, KSRR, and KRBE — all are stations in Houston. When I am in West Texas, I like KLBK in Austin and FM 103 in San Marcos. I am not that hard to please.

I am suggesting that the style of KTAW's disc jockey's and the station's programming do not conform with the tastes and preferences of Aggies, who are the prime targets of the station's advertising. The station should reduce the number of commercials, if it can do so and still pay its overhead. Also, KTAW should determine if it is in tune with its listeners' tastes. The station should conduct surveys of students and citizens in College Station and Bryan. Finally, 92-K should do some constructive eavesdropping on the airwaves of Houston, Dallas, Austin, and even Waco.

Mr. Petty is lucky: he has cable radio. I am still a hostage of these hackneyed hi-fi half wits.

Jay Martin '85

Editor:

"Wake up" D. Kuldell Patty. It was obvious from your letter you had your rock and roll, but you seem to have a problem entertaining opinions other than your own. I know you are not alone in your opinion because I hear from your kind every Sunday evening. Most, not all of the are simply rude as was your letter. I receive a lot more calls from listeners who love jazz as much as you love rock.

In response to your suggestion to have the Sunday night jazz altogether, I would be a fool to think I could please everyone and I don't pretend to. I understand your position but I seriously doubt you would even consider anyone else's. Granted, my may not be perfect, but I am light ahead of you in tact. Besides, the "commercial free block of music" you're looking on Sunday evening from 7-10 o'clock.

I leave it to others to answer your accusations. I can only answer for which I am qualified. I know jazz and know my audience.

Finally, there's a simple solution for animosity you seem to feel towards "Sunday Night Jazz";

Buy a tape player!  
Armando Canales '84

### Science funds wanted

Editor:

Lore has it that in the olden days scientists worked in their ivory towers reaching whatever interested them, i.e. doing pure research. No longer. Now it seems investigation is so carefully structured and budgeted that the "science" performed is only a confirmation or extension of previous work, done by technicians. We have money available to just buy some glassware and chemicals and poke around.

The newly (and constantly) restructured biology department is stressing that grant money alone should fund faculty and graduate students. Hopefully the department, the College of Science, and the University will be far-sighted enough to fund research with no immediate application and of extremely esoteric nature by members of the faculty. This is the discipline of science, from which we learn to think.

Susan C.

### Berry's World



"Gimmie a call in a couple of hours, THEN decide if we're gonna play or not."

### The Battalion

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#### Editorial Policy

The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting newspaper operated as a community service to Texas A&M University and Bryan-College Station. Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the editor or the author, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Texas A&M University administrators or faculty members, or of the Board of Regents.

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 and show the address and telephone number of the writer.

Columns and guest editorials also are 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, or phone (409) 845-2611.

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