

Warning for the unwary

You are now entering ... the Combat Zone.

Not quite, but if you spend any time near the Blocker Building (and the remains of Parking Annex 7), the Chemistry Building or the Academic Building, you know that the fences and torn up earth look like a war zone.

If you've been at Texas A&M for awhile, you probably know that the campus is undergoing continuous construction and renovation. The construction is one of those "necessary evils." The constant sound of jackhammers can be annoying, but those noises and inconveniences are the price students still must pay for Texas A&M's rapid growth in the 1970s. The campus hasn't caught up with the growth of the student body.

Construction sites can be dangerous. During the spring semester, a student was hit by a loose sheet of metal, blown off the addition to the Halbouty Geosciences building by a strong gust of wind. Accidents such as these do happen.

Sitting in a classroom can even be hazardous — at least to your ears. At least one professor who is teaching a class in the Academic Building has found that competing with a blowtorch is tough. Workers use the blowtorches to loosen paint on the windows so the paint can be scraped off.

The noise is a problem. But another problem — or inconvenience — to be worked around surfaced Tuesday when the fences went up at Spence and Ross streets. To allow construction of the new chemistry building, this major thoroughfare has been closed. So if you ever have to walk from the library to Zachry, allow extra time to reach your destination. Circling around does take longer.

And a gaping hole that has been cut into Ireland Street in front of the Printing Center presents an obstacle course for motorists as workers attempt to repair a leaking sewer pipe.

Stay alert. Don't wander too close to the construction sites. And don't stand in front of windows when blowtorches are in use.

— The Battalion Editorial Board



Investing in parking spaces

By ART BUCHWALD
Columnist for
The Los Angeles Times Syndicate

There is now a big real estate boom in parking places in Washington. As more "No Parking at Anytime" signs go up in the streets, people are desperate to have a parking spot they can call their own.

To find out about the boom I went to see a real estate agent who specializes in selling parking spaces. He had color photographs of various garages on his wall.

"I'm interested in buying a parking space," I told him.

"You've come at a good time. We have several outstanding ones that have just come on the market. May I inquire what kind of automobile you own?"

"A 1984 Volvo."

"Then you will want a quality parking spot in the upper range brackets. Here is one that was only used by the original owner. The garage is just five

minutes from the Washington Monument, and your place would be on the first tier, right near the entrance."

"How big is it?" I asked.

"It's quite large, 11 by 22 feet. It is marked by lovely gold stripes and decorated with a handpainted RESERVED sign on the wall. Your Volvo will be very happy there."

"How much does it cost?"

"Since the owner wants to sell because he is moving to San Francisco we can let you have it for \$23,000, not including maintenance charges."

"What are the maintenance charges for?"

"Heating, a 24-hour garage attendant, and keeping your space swept clean. Of course, you'll have to be passed by a board of the other parking space owners, but I'm sure you won't have a problem considering the make of your car and the year."

"Can I get a mortgage on it?"

"You'll have no problem at all. The banks consider parking places in Washington much better collateral than apartments and condominiums."

"Suppose I only want to spend \$10,000 for a spot. Do you have anything downtown for that?"

"We have a 9 by 16-foot spot in a dark alley that has just come on the market. The front of your car would look out on a meatpacking plant and the rear would face an empty warehouse. I don't know if your Volvo would feel very safe there or not. Frankly, I would buy something with a roof over it."

"But it seems like so much money."

"You must not look at it as a financial burden. After all, owning your own parking place is now the ultimate American dream."

The Rusk view of partisan policies

By D'VERA COHN
Columnist for
United Press International

WASHINGTON — Dean Rusk, secretary of state through the turbulent Kennedy-Johnson years, came to Capitol Hill to dispense some unconventional wisdom about the conduct of foreign policy.

There is a lot less disagreement between the two major parties about foreign policy than election-year rhetoric would seem to indicate, Rusk told a Senate Governmental Affairs Committee hearing last week.

The University of Georgia international law professor, now 75, also said government leaks are a lot less harmful than most officials say they are, and only one really got to him during his eight years in office.

Rusk, the 54th secretary of state, served under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson during the Cuban missile crisis and Vietnam War years of 1961 to 1969.

As the campaign season gets going,

and the rhetoric over Central America and nuclear arms heats up to the level of a four-alarm fire, Rusk said the two parties basically are not that different.

"If a president goes over on the soft shoulders of the road," he said, "The American people and Congress have a way of nudging them back onto the main highway."

As for splits between the Republican and Democratic parties, Rusk said: "There may be differences in tone, style and emphasis from time to time, but the central interests of the United States do not vary significantly when one party or the other occupies the White House or has a majority in Congress."

He said in his hundreds of meetings with congressional committees and subcommittees, "not once have I ever seen differences of view turn on party lines."

Tensions between Congress and the White House are inevitable, but can be muted by regular meetings, Rusk said.

He recommended the president sit down once a month with the bipartisan leadership in Congress to "build up a consensus of understanding," not necessarily to reach decisions.

Rusk said it can be confusing for other nations to hear a "cacophony" of voices from Washington. But he said even when differences are magnified during an election campaign — which he described alternately as "a grand inquest of the nation" and "our quadrennial silly season" — the damage is not usually too great.

"Candidates of both parties will probably say some very foolish things and create a certain amount of confusion at home and abroad," Rusk said. "One could hope that candidates on the campaign trail would be a bit careful about foreign policy matters, but complete prudence would be asking too much."

"Fortunately, when the elections are over, we are inclined to put these partisan debates behind us and follow the

policies which are set for our nation as a whole," he added.

On the matter of leaks and secrets, Rusk said he would not like laws restricting disclosure.

"Secrets are not as important as people think," he said.

He said only one leak bothered him during his eight years in office. It is perhaps the remark for which he is best known.

After the Russians backed down during the 1962 Cuban missile crisis and agreed to remove their weapons, Rusk was quoted as saying, "We were standing eyeball to eyeball with the other fellow and I think he just blinked."

He has said on other occasions that the remark leaked during a dangerous crisis where considerations of "face" or prestige could be important, and whoever leaked the remark had no business doing so.

One man's flower, another's crabgrass

By DICK WEST
Columnist for
United Press International

WASHINGTON — The U.S. government, I am pleased to note, has expanded by 17 species the list of 76 foreign "noxious" weeds that are subject to import restrictions.

The action by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service means that nobody can lawfully bring the weeds into this country without getting a permit from the Agriculture Department.

While it is difficult to imagine the department being so heartless as to deny an import license to noxious weed-fanciers, I say the move is long overdue.

That some travelers to foreign lands will go to any length to enhance their noxious weed collection is apparent to

anyone who has spent any time at a port of entry.

I've known returning globetrotters to try to fool customs inspectors by pressing noxious weeds in the family Bible between the bride's bouquet that Aunt Mossy Belle caught at Cousin Lobelia's wedding and the carnation Uncle Rimbeau wore to the senior prom.

Once they have safely through customs, having disguised the contraband as keepsakes, these shifty, albeit artful, tourists then evidently sow the weeds in my yard. At any rate, I've got all 76 varieties flourishing amid the crabgrass.

According to my dictionary, the word "noxious" can mean something is injurious to health or morally harmful. The name of the agency seems to

imply that the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service regards the former as the prime menace. But I believe the threat to our morals is a greater danger.

Oh, I suppose some Americans may be genuinely fond of *Rubus moluccanus*, a type of wild raspberry that is one of the 17 newly proscribed plants.

I'm told that until you've tasted *Rubus moluccanus* jam or sipped a bit of *Rubus moluccanus* wine, you don't really know what epicurean living is all about.

I rather doubt, however, that the problem would be as acute as it is if the motivation for the importation of noxious weeds was mainly a matter of providing new taste thrills, or aesthetic appreciation, or ignorance.

Petroplex A gusher of Aggies

MIDLAND — To understand the culture of Great Britain a tourist visits Buckingham Palace and Big Ben and the Tower of London and a host of other landmarks, but a visitor who wants to understand what caused the white man to inhabit the lands of the Permian Basin needs make just one stop — the Permian Petroleum Museum.

Here you can see oil.

Crude Oil.

Where it comes from and where going. The men who wildcatted. The men who pumped it out of ground. The men who continue wage the battle of the crude.

The museum's brochure says an average visitor spends 1 1/2 hours in the museum, but a careful inspection will take, they boast, 4 hours.

Four hours in a sacred temple voted to oil?

Yep, that's how long it took for reporter to travel through the museum.

The three wings — the west, east centering on geology and technology; and the north on the future of including reclamation of old wells are equally interesting to the buff or the environmentalist.

The video-touch-as-you-go exhibit range from a nitro explosion to a sized airplane that takes you on a line checking flight. In the Oil Hall Fame you can see the mugs of the that have pumped the region into a few good old Ags.

Midland itself is an Aggie kind town.

There's an office building downtown that one resident told me "the skyline with that Aggie flag."

That building, along with one Midland's newest: Clay Desta, is controlled by overall good Ag, Clay Williams.

On the floor of Clay Desta, among the rooms, the glass elevators green plants — that make it look like a Hyatt Regency than an office building — is a small plastic case.

Does the case cover a pre-historic footprint, the Midland women's hair or perhaps a piece of avant garde work, you ask.

No way, not in the petroplex.

Upon closer inspection I can clearly see the object d'art delicately preserved. Gently fingered into concrete it said, "Gig 'em Aggies."

It's a foregone conclusion in Midland that Aggies are a bit different.

As I stood in line at the Petroleum Museum, I handed my guide \$2.00 the admission. He pulled another buck from his wallet and laid it on counter. Upon realizing that he had only one single, he handed the lady the cash register a \$5 bill.

She smiled, picking one of the Aggie off the counter and handing it back to him.

"NO, no," he said, "that's all mine."

Flustered, she punched the button on the cash register trying to get it open.

"You wouldn't," she asked, "happy to be Aggies, would you?"



Donn Friedman

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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.

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