



Gridlock on the White House jogging track

## EDITORIAL

### Bush Librarygate

#### Wilson should be put on probation

The recent appointment of Dr. Don W. Wilson to the position of executive director of the George Bush Presidential Library Center has come under intense scrutiny. In defense of the appointment, the Office of University Relations has claimed that Wilson is unquestionably "the most qualified person to be executive director." However, there are a number of troubling issues that Bush Library and Texas A&M officials would be wise to keep in mind.

At 11:30 p.m. on Jan. 19 - President Bush's last full day in office - Wilson signed an agreement giving Bush "exclusive legal control of all presidential information, and all derivative information in whatever form." One month later, Wilson was named executive director of the Bush Library.

The agreement gave the Bush administration control of millions of items of electronic mail concerning domestic and foreign policy initiatives during the Reagan and Bush years. Significantly, this period of time covers the Iran-contra affair.

This eleventh-hour agreement permits "Bush or his designee" to review all of the records before allowing anyone access. On this point, Wilson has stated that "no rights were given to the former president that are not already in existence under current law." If this is so, one must question why the last minute agreement was even necessary.

According to federal conflict-of-interest laws, all officials are prohibited from participating in any matters in which they have a financial interest. At the time Wilson signed the agreement, he was being seriously considered for the directorship of the Bush Library which provides an annual salary of \$114,000. In light of these facts, the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, under the leadership of Sen. John Glenn, has asked the Justice Department and the Office of Government Ethics to investigate

the allegations.

Wilson insists that he took no part in any decisions or actions that could be construed as conflicts-of-interest. Though this remains to be determined, there are other factors independent of this issue which bring Wilson's credibility into question.

Last November, the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee criticized Wilson as an "absentee archivist" in fulfilling his duties as the Archivist of the United States. According to the panel, his deputy, Claudine Weiher, was in effect running the agency. Three weeks later, Wilson replaced Weiher. In addition, Wilson was criticized by the panel for his selection of Lawrence Oberg as the inspector general of the archives. When he was selected, Oberg was under federal investigation for suspicion of contract fraud.

Although these accusations may be blown out of proportion, there is one charge of misconduct that cannot be dismissed. Last January, federal Judge Charles R. Richey found that Wilson had violated the law governing federal record keeping when he "failed to fulfill his statutory duties under the Federal Records Act."

Judge Richey said that this breach of duty occurred when Wilson failed to take preventative steps after being informed by the White House of its intention to delete computer records. In light of this information, one is led to question whether Wilson truly is "the most qualified person" for the job.

It would be prudent for Texas A&M and Bush Library officials to consider placing Wilson on a probationary-type employment status pending the outcome of the investigation. Texas A&M has certainly weathered more than its fair share of negative publicity among the national media, and this situation, if not handled properly, could tarnish the image of both the Bush Library and Texas A&M.

### Bombs, boxes and Bosnians away!

#### Airdrop adds excitement to lifestyles, pork to diets

The sky is falling! The sky is falling! And in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Chicken Little is about to become a McNugget. SPLAT! Just like the Bugs Bunny cartoons of our youth, very large things are falling from the sky. Unlike the anvils and pianos of Bugs and Wile E. Coyote, these airborne bundles bear food and medical supplies for a war-torn land.

Unfortunately, it's the wrong food. Leave it to the chefs at Chez Meal-Ready-to-Eat in the Pentagon to cook up a variety of goodies for our starving Muslim friends. Unfortunately the starving Muslims in Bosnia don't eat pork, which is one of the gastronomical delights that we have dropped on their houses.

Of course this is nothing new for the United States; we have a long-standing tradition of dropping the wrong things from airplanes. In Vietnam, we dropped urine sniffers. I kid you not. I learned about it in my history seminar on the 1960s. One of the neat things about being a liberal arts major is that one has the opportunity to take cool classes. Anyway, we were discussing the vast array of American techno-toys that we dumped on Vietnam during the war, and one of those cool techno-toys was the handy-dandy urine sniffer.

The urine sniffer operated under the assumption that a Vietcong soldier would probably need to go to the bathroom while he was busy being a "bad guy." American strategists concluded that the VC soldier, being male and thus being convenient, would proceed to relieve himself on a trail or tree. Knowing where the enemy was through this urine trail, American artillery could bomb him back to the stone age. Did it work? Put it this way, water buffalo and peasants also pee on trails. My professor explained that the Vietnamese had a lot of barbecued buffalo.

And now in Bosnia, the Muslims have a lot of barbecued pork. A lot of good that will do them. Of course, the humanitarian aid packages of doom won't do any Bosnians much good if they miss their targets. After all, the United



STACY FEDUCIA  
Opinion Editor

States is dropping these 1,550 pound boxes from 10,000 feet and has yet to confirm that the people who need these goodies - but can't eat these goodies - are even getting these goodies, i.e. the Serbians really dig U.S. pork.

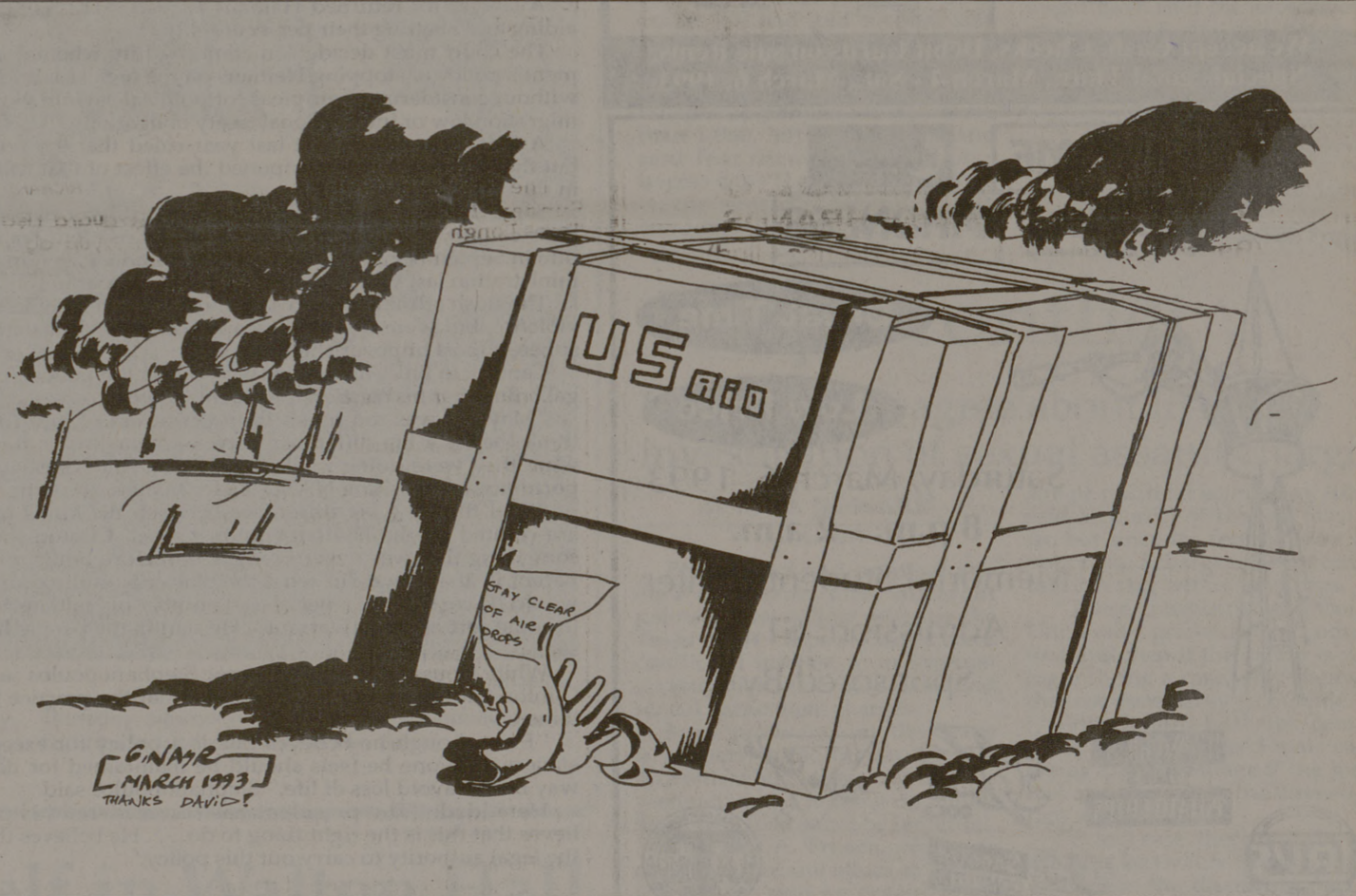
Serious concern arises over the serious size of these care packages. Imagine dropping a Geo from 10,000 feet. Odds are that these packages could do some serious damage to the Bosnians themselves. American insurance mortality rates estimate that three deaths per year are caused by falling Coke machines. Now imagine a veritable hail storm of Coke machines falling from the sky. Think of the carnage! And that's another thing: Would Bosnian homeowners insurance cover 1,550 pound boxes falling through the living room?

Of course the United States thought ahead in this case and dumped one million pamphlets from airplanes on Sunday. The pamphlets issued the following warnings: "DANGER! FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY, LET THE HUMANITARIAN AID LAND BEFORE YOU APPROACH," and, "AMERICAN PLANES WILL PROVIDE HUMANITARIAN AID TO ALL PEOPLE BY AIR. DO NOT SHOOT AT AMERICAN AIRPLANES. THE FOOD AND MEDICINE ARE INTENDED FOR ALL."

Though some may think that littering thousands of dead trees across a foreign country is environmentally unsound, dumping pamphlets has been a staple of American foreign policy. We used this method successfully in Vietnam when we warned peasants to steer clear of falling urine sniffers.

Certainly the Clinton administration is using recycled paper products in these pamphlet dumps. Otherwise, everyone from Earth First to Aggies Against Bonfire would be protesting the senseless dumping of dead trees over Bosnia. Come to think of it, dead trees would probably be better than what we are dumping right now. Bosnian Muslims could at least burn the trees - in order to roast their pork. Perhaps we should just drop urine sniffers on Bosnia. Then they could eat roast buffalo after we bomb them into the stone age... which just might start to happen if we don't watch out.

Feducia is a senior English and history major.



G. NAIR  
MARCH 1993  
THANKS DAVID!

COLLEGE STATION, TX  
MARCH 4  
1993  
MAIL CALL

#### Economy improved under Reagan regime

I was surprised to see a fellow Aggie so obviously ignorant about the history of Reagan's presidency. Paul Greco in his Feb. 24 letter to the Batt says that he has seen no improvement in our economy in the past twelve years.

Apparently Greco has chosen to ignore the facts. As the Bureau of Economic Analysis points out, the prime interest rate fell from 15.26 percent, where it was at the end of the Carter presidency, to 9.32 percent at the end of the Reagan presidency.

These numbers are replicated in almost every other area of the U.S. economy. Inflation fell from 12.5 percent to 4.4 percent and civilian unemployment from 7.1 percent to 5.5 percent. The Dow Jones index rose from 950.68 to 2235.36, and the average disposable per capita income for every ethnic group rose at least 16.5 percent.

To add to these numbers, Gallup polls taken at the end of the Reagan era showed that most Americans thought they were better off at the end of the

Reagan presidency than they were during the Carter years. America clearly benefited from conservative leadership.

Greco points out that the United States experienced a budget surplus until the end of Lyndon Johnson's presidency.

This fact simply makes my argument because history shows that it was under Johnson's administration that Medicare and Medicaid as well as many other entitlement programs began.

Today these programs comprise the biggest part of the budget. These policies are untouchable and no Republican was able to eliminate them substantially due to the Democratically controlled House of Representatives.

If we are looking for a place to cut the budget, I would start by freezing spending, not increasing it as Clinton wants to do.

Then cut welfare so many jobless Americans would have an incentive to get off the government dole and begin working again.

Elliot Williams  
Class of '96

#### Aggie Cinema prices too high for students

We have a question for Aggie Cinema: What are the objectives of their organization? If this is a student organization, we expect it to provide services for the students at reasonable rates. Why do they charge \$2.50 per student for movies? If all the cinemas around town charge \$3.00 for new releases during the matinee showing, why should Aggie Cinema charge so much? Ironically, when they showed the "Last of the Mohicans" and "Under Siege," Schulmann was screening the same films for \$1. Please explain why it is necessary to charge \$2.50.

How Mooi Lau  
Graduate Student  
Accompanied by four signatures

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Letters should be addressed to:  
The Battalion - Mail Call  
013 Reed McDonald / Mail stop 1111  
Texas A&M University  
College Station, TX 77843

#### When is too close too much?

### Back Talk Q & A

Regarding the standoff between the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and the Branch Davidian cult in Waco, the media has been criticized for its constant presence at the Mount Carmel compound.

Some argue that the media is simply in the way, and that their presence is hindering efforts to end the standoff. In addition, critics say that the large presence of the media may have added to some of the deaths and injuries suffered on both sides during the shootout.

However, media proponents believe that the public has a right to know about the events as they unfold.

#### Question: How close do you think the media should be allowed to cover a crisis such as this?

Address letters to The Battalion - Back Talk, MS 1111, College Station TX, 77843, or bring letters by the office in 013 Reed McDonald. Please include name, ID number, telephone number and classification on the letter. We ask that you limit the length to 150 words.