

Opinion/Commentary/Letters

Committee smacks of censorship

Editor:
Some time ago I employed this forum as a vehicle to express my dissatisfaction with the 1976 Aggeland and its editor, Gary Baldasari. Apparently I was not alone in my sentiments as a rather large number of students, both Corps and civilian echoed my sentiments. At the time I was speaking as a disgruntled CT but at this time I would like to speak in my capacity as Senior Senator from the College of Business.

First, no provision was made which would insure any kind of expertise or ability among these committee members for the task which they would undertake. Second, it is unwieldy and would not work as a practical matter because there are too many decisions of a technical nature which require quick resolution and it would not be practical to call a committee meeting to decide whether a picture should be run. Third, it smacks of censorship, which I don't approve of, even when it apparently is in my better interests. Censorship breeds mediocrity, and if there is one thing I am proudest of it is the fact that Texas A&M can never be considered mediocre. The result of such a committee would be an Aggeland which

did not offend Student Government, The MSC Directorate, the RHA, or the Corps but would probably fail to depict student life even as well as the 1976 Aggeland.
I have the greatest respect for those Senators who have presented this bill. Their intentions are above reproach. But the problem lies not with the system but rather with the individuals who comprise it. I think Mr. Baldasari realizes he is not terribly popular with many factions of the campus right now and I doubt if he will attempt to antagonize them again. What the Aggeland needs is some common sense and consideration of the various groups on campus rather than publication by a committee and censorship.
I would not be averse to a student

advisory board to comment on the Aggeland before its publication. This might prevent the widespread dissatisfaction with this year's volume. But they should be nothing more than an advisory board acting in an advisory capacity.
For this reason I call upon my fellow Senators and their constituents not to support this bill. I feel that in an attempt to correct previous errors we are going above and beyond the call of reason and logic to prevent their happening again. Who knows, maybe Student Government will get a better write-up in the Aggeland than we "resume padders" did last year.
— Philip Sutton,
Senior Senator, College of Business

Stay off grass

Editor:
Our University is spending thousands of dollars to beautify our campus while the students are destroying the appearance by making paths through the grass.
Students are taking these paths as a short cut to classes or shuttle bus stops. The majority of the paths seem to be to the shuttle bus stops.
I have observed that as I walked on the sidewalk to my stop, the people taking the worn paths have not arrived there any faster than I.
There are plenty of sidewalks leading to the buildings to avoid walking on the grass.
Even though this may appear to be a minor issue, students should be more concerned about the appearance of our campus.
— Sherrie Allen, '78



Congressional-presidential relationship fragile

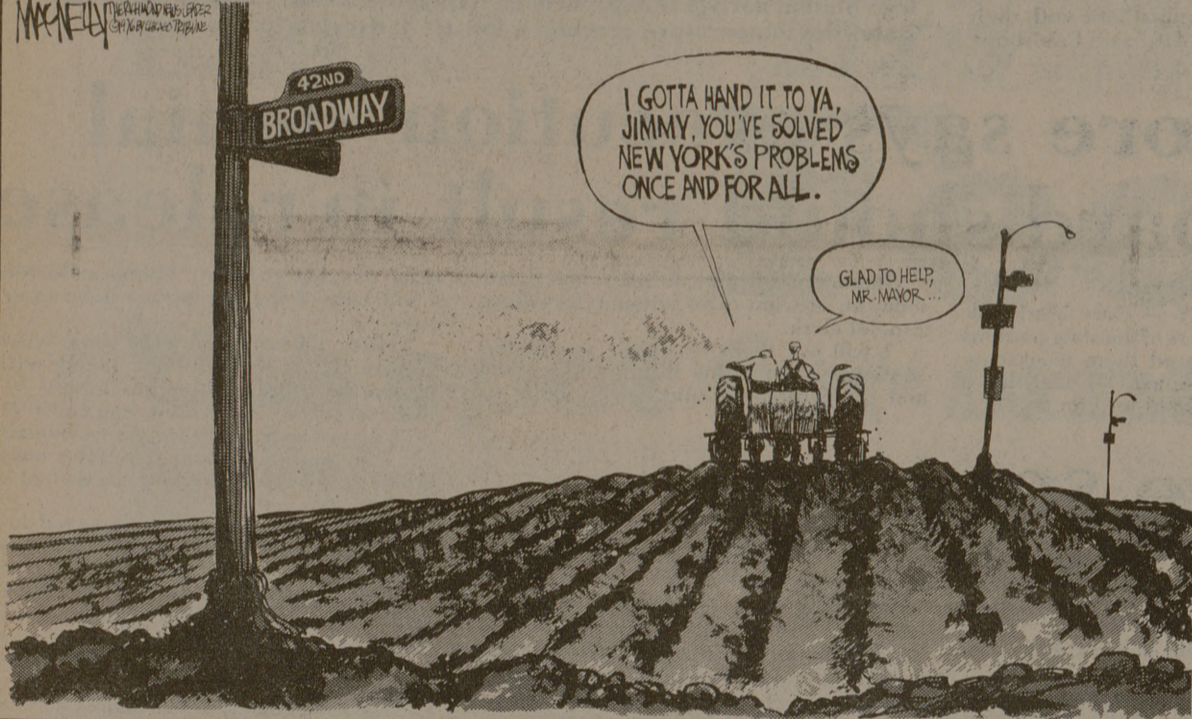
NEW YORK — Of all those watching Jimmy Carter's people preparing to take over power, few can empathize more with their eagerness and their anxieties than Lawrence F. O'Brien.
It has been 16 years since Larry O'Brien and the other Kennedy men were involved in the last Republican-to-Democratic transition. "I remember we were sitting around the pool in Palm Beach," O'Brien told a visitor the other day, "and President Kennedy said to me, 'Why can't we combine personnel and congressional liaison and give them to you, Larry?'"
"I said, 'Okay, but you'll have to point me toward Capitol Hill,'" O'Brien laughed.
The red-haired politician from Springfield, Mass., now commissioner of the National Basketball Association, was reminiscing in his office high above Madison Square Garden. On the wall facing his desk was a display case containing 50 presidential pens — a memento from Democratic members of Congress of



David S. Broder

Carter's situation, as O'Brien sees it, is not unlike Kennedy's. Both men won close elections, trailing their party's congressional candidates, and both were regarded with some skepticism by the power brokers of Capitol Hill. But Carter has a bigger Democratic majority in Congress than Kennedy did and the new President's aides seem to O'Brien much better briefed for their duties than were the Kennedy men.
There are certain enduring truths about a President and Congress which O'Brien tried to impart to Watson and Moore.
"A President can't whip members of Congress into line," O'Brien said. "All he can do is work out a relationship with the members that is comfortable for them and that keeps the lines of communication open. It's a very fragile thing and it can break apart so easily if you lose touch with each other."
"The little things are so important — returning their phone calls and setting aside time on the President's schedule for informal, off-the-record

meetings with members; getting their constituents on the White House VIP tours; helping them get publicity and speakers in their districts."
"We talked about the importance of answering their questions, of getting them information that lets them justify their support for something the President wants to do. But mostly we talked about the importance of the personal relationships. Kennedy developed a real friendship with Carl Albert and Phil Landrum and Albert Thomas — men from Southern states he'd hardly known before he became President. And Carter can have that kind of relationship with Tip O'Neill (the new Speaker of the House). I've known Tip all my adult life," O'Brien said. "And there's nobody who has a greater commitment to the programs of the Democratic party. He can be a tremendous asset to Carter."
O'Brien said he has little sympathy with those cautioning Carter to postpone his promised push for reorganization of the government until he is on stronger political grounds. "It will be a long and rocky road," he said, "but if I were him I'd go for it aggressively and early. Postponing the fight isn't going to help win it."
On the other hand, Carter's talk about taking the reorganization fight into the states and districts of recalcitrant members of Congress and appealing over their heads directly to their constituents strikes O'Brien as imprudent.
"I'd sure as the devil try to do everything humanly possible to avoid having to do that," he said. "That's got to be the court of last resort — even for someone with Carter's flair for organization. You don't go into somebody's congressional district unless you've organized very carefully — or you'll fall flat on your face. I think it's much more productive to direct that kind of effort at Congress directly, rather than go over the heads of the members. You can't deal with the Congress when the members feel they've got to embarrass you to keep you from embarrassing them."
That approach is consistent with



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the view O'Brien outlined in his book, "No Final Victories," an approach which helped put the Kennedy-Johnson legislation on the books and those pens on his wall.
"Politics is the art of the possible," he wrote, "and it is an intensely personal art. . . . I always felt that we could never discount any member of Congress, no matter how much we might disagree with him. The people of his state or district had elected him; he spoke for them and he was, therefore, deserving of our respect. . . . I never expected any member to commit political suicide in order to help the President, no matter how noble our cause. I expected politicians to be concerned with their own interests; I only hoped to convince them our interests were often the same."
It will be interesting to see how much of O'Brien's teachings have rubbed off on the Carter crew.
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Address correspondence to Letters to the Editor, The Battalion, Room 216, Reed McDonald Building, College Station, Texas 77843.

Represented nationally by National Educational Advertising Services, Inc., New York City, Chicago and Los Angeles.

Mail subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester; \$33.25 per school year; \$35.00 per full year. All subscriptions subject to 5% sales tax. Advertising rates furnished on request. Address: The Battalion, Room 216, Reed McDonald Building, College Station, Texas 77843.

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