

Viewpoint

The Battalion
Texas A&M University

Wednesday
November 9, 1977

Rusty Cawley

An election without personality

Apathy is alive, well and living in Brazos County. It's thriving in the rest of the state as well.

Out of 35,684 voters registered in the county, 2,769 bothered to vote in Tuesday's constitutional amendment election.

That's less than 7 percent. County election officials predicted a light turnout after the absentee balloting totaled 29 votes. They were right.

The issues were vague. To bring electronic banking to Texas. To sell additional bonds for the Veteran's Land Fund. To change the name of the State Judicial Qualifications Commission to the State Commission on Judicial Conduct.

Who understood these issues? Who cared? Not the voters of Brazos County.



College Station turned out 5 percent of its registered voters. That includes 2 percent of voters registered at Texas A&M University's Memorial Student Center. Talk about two percenters. They're the

ones who voted. Bryan did better, but not much. Seven percent cast ballots.

As for the rest of the county, smaller towns such as Millican, Wellborn, and Edge, 5 percent cast ballots.

Statewide, it was pitiful. The question is who to blame. The news media can take their share of it. There was an election summary here, an editorial there. But the media were as bored as the public. They tried to act as if this election mattered. It didn't work.

State leaders must also take their share, even though they did attempt to lend some importance to the issues. Gov. Dolph Briscoe publically endorsed all seven amendments. He and other leaders

saw the implications of each amendment. Somehow, they were unable to convey just what those implications were.

Finally, blame must rest on the public itself. Voters find it difficult to get enthusiastic over issues they don't understand. The information was there, but the voters either wouldn't or couldn't comprehend.

The American voter has succumbed to political laziness. He'd prefer to decide on issues the way he chooses between political candidates, weighing personality against personality.

But issues have no smiles to flash, no hands to shake. And they don't kiss babies.

They are cold, hard and indigestible. And for voters, it seems too much to bear.

Two-party system: Fiction and factions

By ARNOLD SAWISLAK

WASHINGTON — One of the reasons American politics often confuses its own citizens may be the insistence of politicians that it is a "two-party system."

That is a confusing claim because anyone who looks at American politics can see at least four parties and very little system.

The labels may differ, but in real terms there are two Democratic parties and two Republican parties. These parties-within-parties attempt to unite during election years, but the plaster usually cracks as soon as the votes are counted.

In the Senate. In 1976, the "conservative" Republican presidential aspirant was a former big state governor.

In the 1972-76 period, political observers tried to keep the Democrats straight by referring to "regular" or "old line" party members as opposed to "New Politics" or "reform" Democrats. Because there were liberals and conservatives in both groups, those labels were useless in trying to describe the bitter divisions that

followed the party's 1968 and 1972 defeats. Jimmy Carter came on the scene as a politician identified with neither wing of the party, a situation that allowed both Democratic factions to join him in a shaky, but successful coalition in 1976.

Carter's problems with a Congress dominated almost two-to-one by Democrats may be the sign that his party is reverting to the congressional-presidential division of the 1940s and 1950s.

Meanwhile, the moderate-conservative Republican coalition that Richard Nixon used to rout the liberals in 1968 and 1972 blew up with Watergate, and the GOP reverted to a conservative-liberal civil war. There are some who felt the Republicans, who now qualify as an endangered species, would unite to avoid extinction, but there is new evidence that the suicidal instinct still is strong.

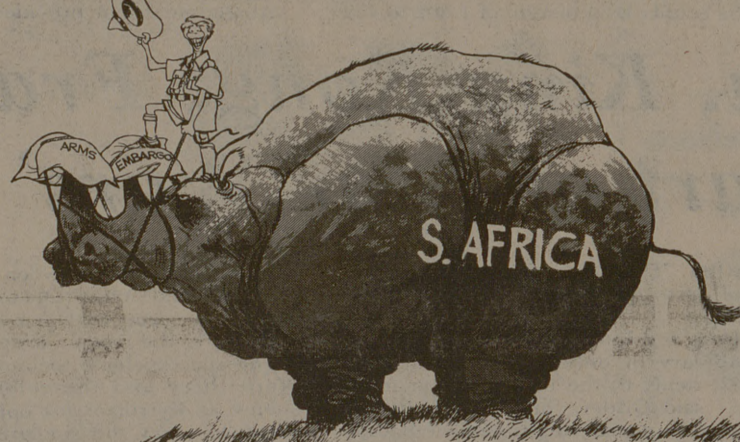
Last week, Carter nominated Samuel D. Zagoria to fill one of the Republican seats on the Federal Election Commission, whose six places are equally divided by law between the "two parties."

Zagoria was not one of the people recommended for the job by House Republican leader John J. Rhodes or Senate GOP leader Howard Baker. Rhodes expressed outrage, telling the Washington Post that some Republicans felt the appointment might cost the GOP 25 House seats as a result of unfavorable FEC rulings on election laws.

Is Zagoria some bloodthirsty partisan Democrat? Not exactly. He is a former administrative assistant to Sen. Clifford Case, R-N.J. and a registered Republican of 20 years standing.

But the conservatives dominating the GOP congressional leadership consider him a "liberal" and therefore unsuited for a Republican seat on the election commission.

MACKEY



Yell leaders' job includes speaking on issues

By DALE W. FOSTER

To Vic Cooper '81: (and other Aggies)

I don't write too often, but was prompted to do so in order to clear up some things. This answer is in regard to your letter of Nov. 1 to The Battalion. Please don't take it as any chastisement of you and any opinions on football or grass that you may have, since you are entitled to your personal beliefs, whatever they are.

But, concerning the yell leaders and traditions, you seem to have an incomplete perception of the scope and nature of their duties. I trust that this is due to your status as a freshman, i.e., a relatively new recruit (you have to admit) to the great legions of Aggies, past and present.

We are all in a continual state of developing and growing, and you are no exception, having much to learn. This is a process, particularly in regards to the "Spirit of Aggieland," through which

every Aggie has to go, earning membership in the elite group.

And yes, Aggies are an elite group. Their fraternalism (throughout life), pride, and ability to "gut-it-out" in overcoming tremendous odds, make them such.

Back to the issue in question, the Aggie Yell Leaders and their jobs go far beyond the limiting characteristics in which you

Readers' forum

seem to place them. I used the word jobs, as it takes a high degree of personal dedication and sacrifice to put in the amount of both time and money that they do.

The yell leaders are here to provide leadership, guidance, and direction to one of the most important facets of Texas A&M University life...that of its traditions, and the camaraderie and "esprit de corps" that go hand-in-hand with those traditions. This is a plus benefit of Aggieland, an extra education that provides a well-rounded

background for most A&M graduates, the ones that are proud to be recognized as Aggies and extol it.

These Aggies regard their experiences at Texas A&M as a vital key to success in life. That is why there is no such creature as an "ex-Aggie," only Aggie-exes (extinct). The A&M former student is a continuously involved Aggie (with moral and financial support), and that in itself is a rich heritage and a proud testimony.

Since many students, particularly in professional and graduate areas, come to this hallowed institution solely for the purpose of a quality academic education (for which I laud them), this "total education" concept does not apply to everybody, though readily available to any and all. It is a matter of individual choice, and I praise the decision of those who choose A&M for its academics only. But, I know that they are missing something, too.

You see, you're not an Aggie at birth or by heredity, location, or background, by

being a c.t. or non-reg. or even by having attended classes here. What makes a person an Aggie are their attitudes and personal motivation in support of fellow Aggies, Texas A&M University, and school traditions...where A&M has been and where it is going—physical, emotional, spiritual, social, and financial support. In other words, total commitment and doing your part within environmental, time, and money constraints.

And, believe it or not, that definition-of-sorts leaves a lot of room for variances (even outright diabolical differences) in opinion on specific issues. There is always room for diversity of ideas.

As to the leadership and direction that the Yell Leaders are entrusted to provide the University community, let me say that they are supposed to be (and usually have been) at the forefront of maintaining Aggie traditions, always ready to openly speak out for those traditions. They are the elected guardians of the eternal Aggie Spirit.

This Spirit of which I write includes the two actions, that have become traditions, to which the Yell Leaders were making reference. (Traditions, by nature and definition, are developed after a period of continued practice.)

It has been traditional, official policy and otherwise, (for at least the last 15 years), not to walk on the MSC grass, out of respect for the Aggies memorialized in the building on those grounds. I was the graduate student representative on one of the MSC Councils (1973-74) that did set an official policy discouraging use of the grounds.

Also, it has been tradition to support the football team (and all A&M athletic teams) at all times, through good times and bad. As an undergraduate (1968-72) at A&M, I and other Aggies rejoiced at even occasionally outscoring the other team. Naturally, we always won.

What A&M does not need are "fair-weather Aggie" fans (fair-weather and Aggie are mutually exclusive terms) nor any more arm-chair quarterbacks. There is a big difference between constructive criticism and a "two percent" attitude.

So you see, maturing Aggie Cooper, the Yell Leaders were not out-of-place. They were just doing their jobs by speaking out on matters that concerned their positions and related duties. No apology is necessary. May all Aggies do their appointed jobs as well!

Gig'em Ags, P.S. I will continue my practice of assuming any given student at Texas A&M is an Aggie until he (she) proves differently by their personal denial, poor attitudes, and/or actions (or lack of such).

Foster is a 1972 graduate, now residing in College Station. This commentary represents his own opinions and not necessarily those of this newspaper.

Top of the NewsBe Campus

Moody College to add to campus

Construction and planning dominate the agenda for the Moody College Board of Visitor's fall meeting at Texas A&M Friday and Saturday. Moody College President William H. Clayton said the advisory group is expected to center its discussions on the construction of the new classroom and laboratory building and small-boat dock approved at the last session of the legislature. The facilities will be built at the college's Mitchell Campus on Pelican Island in Galveston.

A&M debaters win tourney

Texas A&M debate teams won top honors at the annual San Antonio Jr. Varsity Debate Tournament Nov. 5. The Texas A&M debaters ranked higher than the other 12 colleges and universities participating by winning 14 out of the 16 rounds held. One of the teams, freshman Mike Shelby and sophomore Becky Parks, was undefeated. The San Antonio tournament is the third one this term in which Texas A&M students have placed in winning positions.

Cotton Maid race seeks entrants

The 1978 Maid of Cotton will serve as the international goodwill ambassador for the American cotton industry for the year. Applications for Maid of Cotton competition are available in the Student Activities office, Room 221 of the MSC. All applications must be mailed to the National Cotton Council no later than Nov. 12. Late in November, finalists will be chosen from the applications and photographs. These finalists will be invited to participate in final judging, to be held in Memphis after Christmas, based on beauty, personality, background and training. For more information call 845-1134.

Local

C.S. city council to meet

The College Station City Council will meet Nov. 10 and plans to have a public hearing on rezoning a 1.61 acre tract adjacent to the East Bypass and directly across from the Ponderosa Motel. The area, now in the agricultural open district, may be changed to the general commercial district. The application is in the name of Margorie Eimann, 1015 Winding Road, College Station. The council will also discuss airport improvements and consider bids for police cars, electric system materials and the construction of the Municipal Building Annex and Central Fire Station.

State

Damage high due to rain loss

Lack of rainfall has caused \$135 million in damage to crops and livestock, said Reagan Brown, Texas Agriculture Commissioner. "Although we have had good rainfall in parts of the state, about a third of the state is below normal rainfall levels," Brown said Monday. The agriculture commissioner said Lee County had received only 3.5 inches in the past five months compared to a norm of 16 inches. The county had suffered crop damage of \$2.6 million because of reduced yields, he said.

Nation

Kissinger praises CIA boss

Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger says former CIA director Richard Helms acted properly by giving a congressional committee evasive information about American involvement in Chile. Kissinger spoke to a foreign policy symposium at the University of Texas Tuesday. Kissinger called Helms a patriot and said he regretted the former CIA chief was found guilty of giving Congress false information about the overthrow of the Chilean government of Marxist President Salvador Allende.

Georgia asks for experts

Gov. George Busbee has asked President Carter to send federal experts to determine the cause of an earthen dam rupture that sent an 82-acre lake sweeping down a mountain gorge onto a small Bible College. Tom Perdue, Busbee's administrative assistant, said Monday that it would be up to Carter to decide whether the state or federal government would lead the investigation into the early Sunday disaster. The death toll for the disaster stood at 38, with one probable victim still missing and presumed dead. "We lost 11 bridges in north Georgia over the last two days. This dam held water for 30 or 40 years and there was no reason to think it was going to collapse," Perdue said.

World

British firemen threaten strike

The British government is vowing to call out troops if the nation's 32,000 firemen carry through on their threat to strike unless they get 30 percent pay increases. The threat goes against the government's policy of holding pay increases to 10 percent. Leaders of the firefighters' union voted Monday to strike next week unless they get a pay increase from \$92 a week to \$120. Newspapers denounced the firefighters' decision. "Would you refuse to rescue children?" the Daily Mail asked in a headline splashed across its front page. "The answer with a roar from the firemen was YES," it recorded.

Carter approves gas pipeline

President Carter Tuesday gave final U.S. approval for construction of a 4,700-mile pipeline to carry Alaskan natural gas through Canada to the lower 48 states. Carter, who personally selected the joint U.S.-Canadian Alcan pipeline route, signed a resolution of approval passed by the Senate and House last week. The privately financed project will cost at least \$10 billion. Possible completion may be by 1983.

Weather

Sunny and cool today and tomorrow with northwesterly winds 20-30 mph. High today mid 60s. Low tonight mid 30s. High tomorrow low 60s. No rain.

The Battalion

Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the editor or of the writer of the article and are not necessarily those of the University administration or the Board of Regents. The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting enterprise operated by students as a university and community newspaper. Editorial policy is determined by the editor.

LETTERS POLICY
Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words and are subject to being cut to that length or less if longer. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit such letters and does not guarantee to publish any letter. Each letter must be signed, show the address of the writer and list a telephone number for verification.

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.

The Battalion is published Monday through Friday from September through May except during exam and holiday periods and the summer, when it is published on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Subscription rates: \$36.75 per semester; \$73.25 per school year; \$35.00 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request. Address: The Battalion, Room 216, Reed McDonald Building, College Station, Texas 77843.

MEMBER
Texas Press Association
Southwest Journalism Congress

Editor	.....	Jamie
Managing Editor	.....	Mary Alice
Editorial Director	.....	Lee Bay
Sports Editor	.....	Paul
News Editors	.....	Marie Homeyer
City Editor	.....	Romy
Campus Editor	.....	Beth
Copy Editor	.....	Glen
Reporters	.....	Liz Newlin
Photographer	.....	David Boggan
Cartoonist	.....	Doug

Student Publications Board: Bob G. Rogers, Chairman; Joe Arredondo, Dr. Gary Halter, Dr. Julia W. Phillips, Robert Rice, Director of Student Publications; Donald C. Johnson.