

VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

MONDAY
OCTOBER 23, 1978

Polish Pope symbol for reconciliation

Given the profound changes within the Roman Catholic Church since the second Vatican Council, it was inevitable that a cardinal from outside Italy would one day ascend to the throne of St. Peter. But it was not at all inevitable that it should be a prelate from the Communist world.

While the election of Polish Cardinal Karol Wojtyla as Pope John Paul II was not inevitable, it was fitting. It gave added meaning to the brief reign of John Paul I, whose papacy will be remembered as the bridge for a departure from four and one half centuries of custom.

The election was also a dramatic gesture of openness to all mankind. Who might be better equipped than a Polish Pope to be the symbol of reconciliation between East and West, between believer and non-believer, between the past and the present? He is, after all, the spiritual leader of a Communist country where the rights of the Church must be both asserted and defended and where he would be forced by circumstances to be both flexible and determined.

Now the world must wait to see whether John Paul has the richness of humanity necessary to realize the possibilities opened by his election. Meanwhile, the possibilities themselves are reason for joy.

Boston Globe

All that glitters is not litter

By DICK WEST
United Press International

WASHINGTON — Sen. Jim Sasser of Tennessee recently complained that the government was preparing regulations that would require 250 cat litter plant employees in his home state to take mine safety training.

Although the company owns three clay mines operated by a subcontractor, he said, the cat litter workers "never come close" to them.

He called "this ridiculous proposal" by the Mine Safety and Health Administration "the worse case of bureaucratic over-regulation I have seen."

As I was reading Sasser's screed, my mind went back to the summer some years ago when I was vacationing in Mexico.

One afternoon I was wasting away a couple of hours in a burrito in the quaint little town of Villa Margarita in the foothills of the Sierra Padres.

Suddenly the swinging doors, which the proprietor had installed to keep out passing doritos, swung open and a grizzled, dusty old miner lurched in.

Humor

Once his rheumy eyes adjusted to the dimness of the burrito, he espied me at the bar and sauntered over, requesting that I lend him a couple of muchachos with which to buy a bottle of cheap caramba. Asked how he expected to repay, he

limped to the window, raised a hand to his eyes, a seemingly redundant motion in view of the broadbrimmed hat he was wearing, and peered into the distant uplands.

"That's litter in them thar hills," he drawled after a dramatic pause.

A group of native marimbas playing fritos at a nearby table began to titter and snicker. They made twirling motions at the temple with their forefingers, a gesture I recognized as the classic Mexican symbol of a loose screw.

One of the calientes behind the bar leaned over and whispered that the old miner had spent months up in the Sierra Padres digging for litter.

"It's a delusion," he chuckled. "Nobody has ever found a trace of litter in these parts." The next morning as I was taking the

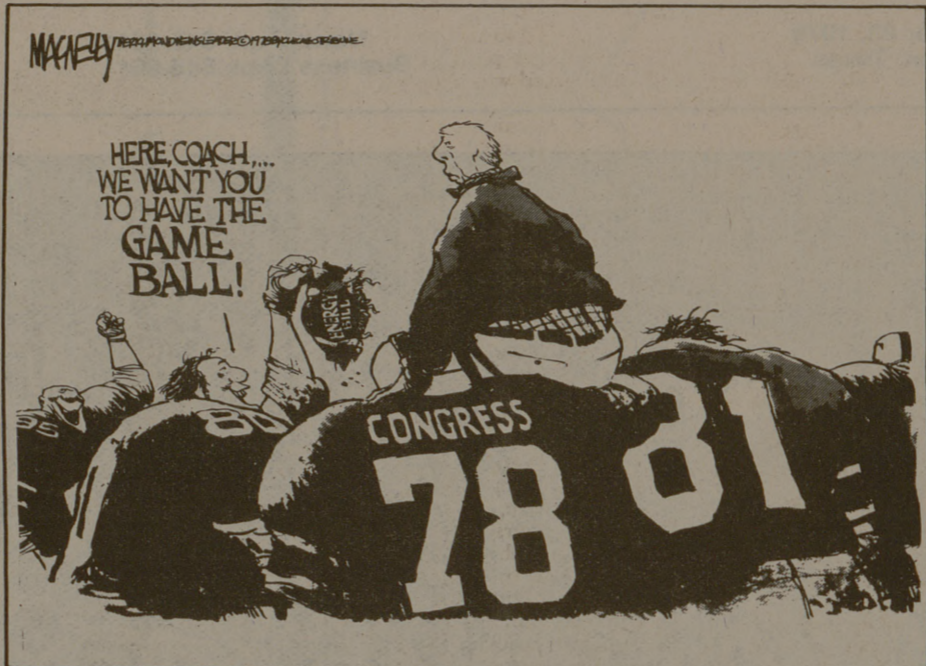
sun in the village frijole, the miner approached again. Swearing me to secrecy, he unfolded a bizzarre tale.

Not two weeks before, he confided, he had noticed that Villa Margarita's alley cats were going up into the hills to answer the call of nature.

Curious, he had followed them and they had led him to a mountainside so rich in litter that cats came from miles around for the pleasure of scratching in it.

"I tell you, it's the mother lode," the old miner cackled, dancing a little jig. "Front me with a grubstake and I'll have us a litter mine that will make us both a fortune."

I declined the opportunity and went my way. Later I heard that the miner had finally abandoned his quest, returned to the United States and gone to work for the government. Doing what, I can't imagine.



TOP OF THE NEWS STATE

IPAA to fight energy bill

The president of the Independent Petroleum Association of America said Saturday in Houston that his group may fight the latest federal energy legislation. Jack M. Allen said on the eve of his 5,100-member organization's convention that the bill was a "monumental step backwards" that threatens to keep capital from the hands of independent oilmen. The law "contains the potential for infinite federal control of domestic natural gas production and marketing," Allen said.

Fort Worth readies for '79 gymnastics

A group of Tarrant County officials left Saturday on a 10-day, \$17,000 trip to France to view the World Gymnastic Games. The event will be held in Fort Worth in 1979 and 500 athletes from 35 nations are expected to attend. When asked why taxpayers were paying for the trip, County Judge Mike Moncrief said, "Security is one aspect. We don't want another Munich in Fort Worth." His reference was to the 1972 massacre at the Olympics in Munich.

NATION

Hickel loses election court appeal

Former Alaska Gov. Walter J. Hickel's hopes of returning to office apparently have been ended by an Alaska Supreme Court decision. Hickel lost the Republican primary by 98 votes to incumbent Gov. Jay Hammond, and challenged the results, charging "irregularities." But the state Supreme Court, in a unanimous decision late Friday night, ruled the irregularities, including discovery of 247 uncounted ballots in a closet a month after the primary, had caused "no bias in the vote." It was Hickel's second attempt to regain the job he left in 1969 to become department of interior secretary under former President Richard Nixon. He was fired by Nixon 22 months later in a clash over policy.

Relief well to check gas flow

Work will begin this week on a relief well to stop the spraying gas and condensate from a blown-out offshore natural gas well. Mobil Oil Corp. officials in Cameron, La., said Friday the blowout probably will remain out of control for several weeks. The well blew out late Tuesday, forcing the evacuation of workers from a production platform 35 miles southeast of Cameron in the Gulf of Mexico. The blowout posed only a minor pollution problem, since gas blowing from the well dissipated and a slick of condensate on the surface evaporated quickly. Experts from the Houston-based Red Adair oil-field disaster fighting company were on the scene shortly after the blowout.

Court martial set for Army doctor

Capt. Leon T. Davis, an Army doctor at Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, has refused to practice on grounds his contract has been breached. He will be tried by court martial Nov. 1, an Army spokesman said this weekend. Stephen D. Keeffe, Davis' civilian lawyer, said Davis accepted a \$11,000 medical scholarship from the Army in return for two years active duty. Keeffe said Army recruiters told Davis he would be eligible for the rank of major after three years, would qualify for a bonus program of \$9,000 a year, would receive 30 vacation days annually and have his expenses paid to attend two medical conferences each year. Davis says a change in Army regulations has nullified all those promises.

WORLD

Rolling Stone on trial in Canada

Rolling Stones guitarist Keith Richards goes on trial today in a staid Toronto courtroom on drug charges that could send him to prison for life — and perhaps end the reign of the world's most durable and successful rock 'n' roll band. Almost 20 months after Richards' arrest, a jury will consider if he was the owner of an ounce of heroin the Royal Canadian Mounted Police found in his hotel suite along with a small quantity of cocaine. The maximum sentence for simple possession of heroin is seven years' imprisonment while possession with intent to sell is punishable by life in prison.

Pope congenial, aides flustered

Pope John Paul II startled aides in Rome Saturday by plunging into a crowd of 2,000 journalists, shaking hands, laughing, exchanging quips and telling them he would like to visit RSA "when they'll let me." The new pope, the first non-Italian pope in 455 years and first Polish pontiff in history, spent the eve of his investiture in an unprecedented session with journalists — much to the dismay of Vatican officials. The former Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, 58, archbishop of Krakow before his election last Monday as the 264th successor to the throne of Peter, was officially invested with the title in a simple outdoor mass Sunday in St. Peter's Square.

WEATHER

Mostly cloudy, windy and cooler with a 30% chance of rain increasing to 40% tonight. High will be in the upper 70's and low in the upper 50's. Winds are northerly at 15-20 mph.

THE BATTALION

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 Tuesday through Thursday.

Mail subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester; \$33.25 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. United Press International is entitled exclusively to the use for reproduction of all news dispatches credited to it. Rights of reproduction of all other matter herein reserved. Second-Class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.

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

MEMBER

Texas Press Association
Southwest Journalism Congress
Editor Kim Tysle
Managing Editor Liz Newlin
Assistant Managing Editor Andy Williams
Sports Editor David Boggan
City Editor Jamie Anker
Campus Editor Steve Lee
News Editors Debbie Parsons
Beth Calhoun
Staff Writers Karen Rogers, Mark Patterson, Scott Pendleton, Sean Petty, Michelle Scudder, Marilyn Faulkenberry, Diane Blake, Lee Roy Leschper, Jr.
Cartoonist Doug Graham
Photographer Ed Cummins
Focus section editor Gary Welch

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 to the Editor

Constitution incomplete, needs changes

Editor:

As an off-campus undergraduate senator, I would like to encourage my constituency and the rest of the student body to defeat the Constitutional referendum on this coming Thursday.

The Student Government passed this constitution as it has every year for as long as I have been here. Again the people are going to the polls to vote for or against basically the same document they saw last spring, Fall '77, Spring '76, etc. This document has once again been given a facelift which includes very minor changes and corrections but essentially the exact same as previous years.

Our student government here at Texas A&M could use some structural and procedural changes to make it a much more effective and responsive system for the student body. In the present system as well as the one on the referendum, you find vice presidents in the legislative branch instead of the executive branch where they could more efficiently perform their duties. You also find five vice presidents in charge of areas that could be more effectively run by two or three.

At Texas A&M change is usually looked at suspiciously and feared if it is too abrupt or extensive. I don't believe that change is always right, but when you see faults with a system, don't try to just patch it up until next year. Let's defeat this constitution and work on a major change for the Student Government so that we can better serve the student body.

Please do go and vote. The easy way out is to avoid the issue or simply mark yes on a ballot if you are uninformed. Call your senator if you want more information on the content of this proposal. Take your time, only five minutes, to vote no and help us get on the road to making a better

student government possible. Don't always be happy with the status quo.

I urge you to go to the polls on Thursday, Oct. 26, and vote to defeat this Constitution. We need a major overhaul, not just a few more Band-aids.

—Laura Brockman, '79
Off-campus Undergraduate Senator

Thanks — no thanks

Editor:

I would like to thank the person who found my wallet which had been thrown in the trash by accident.

This person (who ever it may be) was kind enough to steal four credit cards, and \$14. This fellow Aggie, and I use the term loosely, did not bother to put my wallet back together correctly. (What we have here is mental midget, not only did this jerk flunk simple reassembly, he also left it where I could find it.)

From now on when I dump my trash down one of the chutes in Dunn Hall, I will make sure it is just trash.

I would not like to lose something else of value only to have it found then lost once more. I do realize that this is one rotten person in a large group of great people. And if anyone is wondering if hanging is good for this t.u. exile; no, I think it is just right.

—Steve Echols, '79

Elections lacking

Editor:

On Thursday, Oct. 26, the 1978 Fall Elections will be held. From my understanding, the Fall Elections are primarily, if not solely, concerned with electing

freshmen into the Class Officer and Student Senate positions. Speaking as a freshman, I feel that the 1978 Fall Elections have several shortcomings that could be avoided.

Many freshmen are not well informed about the qualifications and the duties associated with the available positions. A series of articles in The Battalion giving brief descriptions of the positions, their requirements, and their responsibilities might help some freshmen understand more about the elections in general. If this would not work, then maybe a newsletter to all freshmen might.

Another weakness of the upcoming elections is the campaigning of the candidates. The only "campaigning" I have been exposed to is a few fliers tacked onto bulletin boards and some wooden stand-up posters placed at various intersections on campus. This type of campaigning will inevitably lead the voters into voting for the name they have seen most often. One way to eliminate name-voting would be for the candidates to campaign on a one-to-one basis for as much time as their schedules will allow.

A campaign session would be another possible solution. It could be held at the Rudder fountain or be publicized not only through The Battalion and the video screens in the M.S.C., but also through the Hassle Free representatives in the apartments of campus.

At the session, the candidates would be given the opportunity to give their reasons for running, and their qualifications for Office. Questions from the audience could provide more information for those seeking it.

Freshmen Elections are an important event that should not go unnoticed. Many freshmen will not vote simply because they do not understand what is going on, or because they know little about the candidates and his or her abilities. I feel certain that all the Aggies would come out to the polls if more information was made available. After all, we Aggies care about our university and its student government. Right Ags?

—Kelly Jack Brown, '82

Cat's no mascot

Editor:

I suffered through four and a half years of ridiculous "Letters to the Editor" in the Battalion. After: 1. one year of letters relating to lavish settings in the MSC (promptly ignored by incoming freshmen); 2. one year of letters criticizing orange primer on the water tower (which, when finished, was unnoticed by incoming students); 3. one year of letters complaining about the wall built around campus (again, unnoticed by new students); and 4. one and a half years of other assorted "controversies." I return to find that the best the letter writers can come up with is the death of a cat ("Requiem for a cat," Oct. 16).

Perhaps this is a good sign. As a former resident and officer of Leggett Hall, however, I resent the implication that former Leggett residents are criminals. Mr. Schroeder, '80 did go out of his way to mention that the fierce cat-murderer ("the crime") was a former resident of Leggett Hall.

I had promised myself that I would never lower myself to the level of most people that write to the Batt. However, promises, like records, are made to be

broken. If the "Letters to the Editor" section was not the major entertainment section of the Batt, I would request that said portion be abolished.

Back to Mr. Schroeder's letter. I am a pet-owner but also a firm believer in the phrase "Don't Litter - Neuter your Pets."

Incidentally, to refresh your memory, Reveille is the only mascot for all Aggies. We elected "Bertha the Beer-drinking Buffalo" as dorm mascot in one Longneck election but deferred because it wasn't proper to praise an imposter as mascot.

To paraphrase a popular letter-ending, if Mr. Schroeder '80 wants a cat for a mascot, there's always Cougar High. Warmest regards to Squadron 3 and "Long Live Longnecks!"

—Dave Danneley, '77
101 Crockett, Austin

Facts in error...

Editor:

This is written in reference to the letter by Steve Eubanks in the Oct. 19 Battalion.

Mr. Eubanks reported that when the first verse of the Aggie War Hymn "was first printed and passed out to the Singing Cadets, they threw it away, and it has not been sung since." As a member of the Singing Cadets, I would like to correct this erroneous statement.

On every occasion that I have performed with the group or even seen the group, the Singing Cadets have sung both verses of the Aggie War Hymn. I feel that the singing of both verses of the song is perfectly appropriate. At the football games the band plays the tune twice — so why not sing both verses?

Another point that can be raised is that "The Spirit of Aggieland" officially ends with the phrase: "We are the Aggies, the Aggies so true. We are from Texas-AMU." The words were officially changed by the songwriter, years ago, when our school gained university status.

Would it break tradition to sing the correct words of the song and let the world know that Texas A&M is not longer a little cow college?

Mr. Eubanks, I hope that you will not feel that I am trying to be antagonistic or anti-traditional. I am proud to be an Aggie, as I am sure you are. I am not even trying to "change" our school's beloved songs — their composers have done that. I merely desire that our songs reflect the true mood and spirit of the thriving university we are both privileged to attend.

— Bob Harper, '80

Editor's note: Please see the next letter.

... sorry cadets

Editor:

I am writing this as both an apology and as a retraction to my letter of Oct. 19. Having talked to members of the Singing Cadets, I discovered that most of the information I was given on the history of the Aggie War Hymn was erroneous.

I apologize to all the Singing Cadets for this, and for not double-checking the validity of my information. I hope no one takes offense to this, for my purpose was not to offend.

Now will someone please tell me, what is the true story?

— Steve Eubanks, '79

