

VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

TUESDAY
DECEMBER 5, 1978

It depends whose axe is being ground

By ARNOLD SAWISLAK

WASHINGTON — A couple of weeks after Republican Roger Jepsen blindsided Dick Clark and ended the Iowa Democrat's Senate career, Clark sat down with UPI reporter Cheryl Arvidson to explain what happened.

First, he says, the one-issue special interests ganged up on him. In a coalition of convenience, groups espousing the right to life, the right to work and the right to have guns all jumped on the Iowa senator. There may have been some overlap in terms of the voters contacted, but the effect was similar to that of the ancient Chinese torture called "the death of a thousand cuts."

Second, six out of 10 Iowans eligible by age to vote did not. As is becoming clear to students of elections, the one issue people thrive on is low turnouts.

These people, whether left or right leaning, have cohesion and organization. The rest of the electorate, with at the most only a general interest in good government, is expected to pump itself up and find its own way to the polls.

This is especially true in congressional elections, which seldom get the kind of media hype characteristic of presidential campaigns.

Clark summed up the common denominator of his opposition as general feeling that government cannot solve the problems it has tried to deal with. He suggested the result would be the ascendancy of politicians who campaign against government intervention in social problems.

That will be the case, the senator added,

until other groups such as workers, the elderly and the poor come to realize that the people making decisions in Washington and the state capitals aren't doing anything for them. Then, he thinks, the pendulum may swing back.

Now that is a fascinating prospect. Clark says he was ambushed by a coalition of one-issue zealots and predicts that the outlook for politicians like himself will be grim until a different group of special interests coalesces to support them.

Clark would suggest that the groups he hopes will come together to support liberals are on the side of the angels, but he certainly seems to be talking about the same kind of political force that was responsible for his defeat.

And in this, Clark may have put his finger on the political pulse of the United States in the 1970s: People with specialized interests they want to protect or advance appear to be the only ones who care enough to give their time and money to politics; if you don't have an axe to grind, you probably aren't even going to vote.

It may be true that American elections never have been decided in this country by large groups of people who are focused on the broad national interest, but it does seem that special interests, relatively small compared to the whole electorate, have had a disproportionate impact on elections in recent years.

Clark sees an uprising by his kind of special interests as the solution. If that really is the only answer, the United States may be headed for a turbulent and rocky third century.

The blurred home movie authority

By DICK WEST

WASHINGTON — Mr. Chairman, I am honored to appear before this Select House Committee on Assassinations to offer my testimony as an expert witness.

To establish my credentials, I have had more than 20 years of experience in the branch of amateur photography commonly known as "home movies." My particular speciality is in the field of "blurred shapes."

Drawing on this background, I perhaps can be of some help to this committee in evaluating the movie film that you have been examining in connection with your investigation of President Kennedy's assassination.

As I understand it, Mr. Chairman, the film was taken by a amateur photographer during the Kennedy motorcade in Dallas.

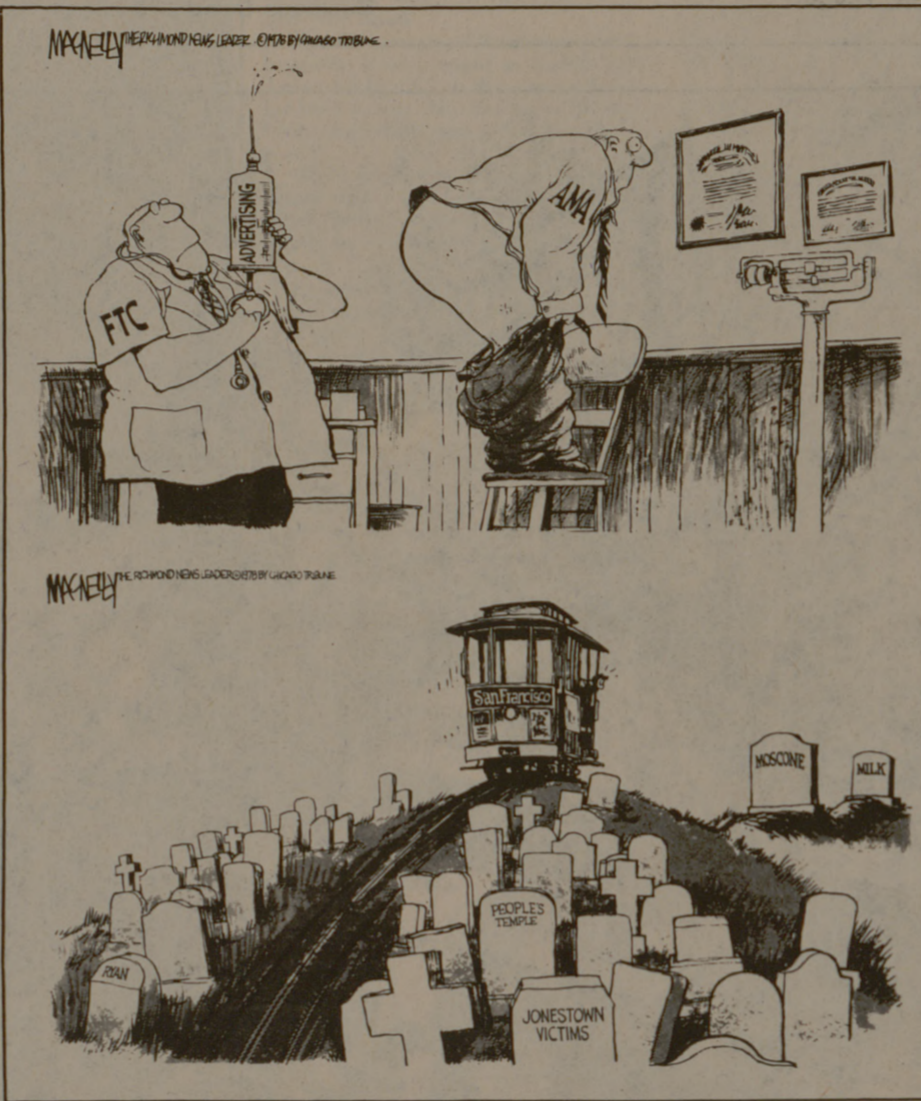
More or less by accident, he filmed the upper floors of the building from which the fatal shots were fired.

The footage shows some blurred shapes that appear to change or move from one

Humor

film frame to the next. The question is whether the film proves that more than one person was present, or whether there is some other explanation for the blurred shapes.

From my own extensive accidents with home movies, I can attest without equivocation that human figures may indeed ap-



pear on film as blurred shapes.

I have at home one 50-foot reel composed entirely of blurred shapes. From notes made at the time, however, it can be established that the film was taken at my daughter's sixth birthday party, and that the blurred shapes are the honoree and her guests.

How is this possible, you ask? There are many different causes of blurred shapes, Mr. Chairman. Among them are failing to thread the film into the camera properly, accidentally exposing the film to sunlight, using outdoor film for interior shots and leaving the camera out in the rain.

I should caution the committee, however, that blurred shapes are not necessarily human figures.

In the summer of 1977, I went on a raft trip in the Grand Canyon, taking along my

movie camera. Two years later, I repeated the trip.

Upon returning from the second trip, I discovered that the film I had used was the same roll I had used during the first trip.

If the committee would like to see a first class exhibit of non-human blurred shapes, I would be glad to offer this film in evidence.

As my accompanying commentary would explain, some of the blurred shapes are river rapids, some are interesting rock formations, some are waterfalls, some are caves in the canyon walls and some are sunsets.

To sum up, Mr. Chairman, interpretation of blurred shapes is a tricky business. My expert opinion is that those seen in the Dallas film were either the assassin's accomplice or an unidentified flying object.

TOP OF THE NEWS CAMPUS

President Miller to meet with Carter

Texas A&M University President Jarvis E. Miller has been invited to the White House to discuss a new scholarship program. Miller will meet with President Carter and a select group of other university presidents to discuss the Hubert H. Humphrey North-South Scholarship Program. The new scholarship program is designed to bring students from developing nations to the United States. Texas A&M has major commitments for agricultural and technical assistance in five foreign countries through contracts with the U.S. Agency for International Development. Students accepted for the program must be from countries which have diplomatic relations with the United States.

Retrieval system extends hours

The automated retrieval system in the Sterling C. Evans library has extended its operating hours. Charles Gilreath, coordinator of Automated Information Retrieval Services (AIRS), announced the extension. Effective immediately, automated services will be available on Tuesdays between 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. According to Gilreath, the later evening hours may decrease costs due to faster computer response time.

STATE

State's blue law upheld

The U.S. Supreme Court Monday let stand a lower-court ruling that a Texas law banning sale of certain merchandise on Sunday is constitutional. The justices dismissed an appeal by a group of suburban discount stores from a Texas Supreme Court ruling that the state's blue law, which bans Sunday sales of items ranging from lawnmowers to jewelry, does not violate the Constitution or federal antitrust laws. The case arose when the Downtown Development Association of El Paso sued the Gibson Distributing Co. Inc., which owns several retail stores in the western part of Texas, including El Paso, alleging Gibson sold some of the 42 items listed in the Texas closing law as banned from sale on consecutive Saturdays and Sundays.

Racial investigation requested

Black students have asked Trinity University officials to investigate several apparently racial incidents at a dormitory, including the setting of a fire and the depositing of a Ku Klux Klan T-shirt. A spokesman for the school administration said it had been unable to "get to the bottom" of the incidents, apparently directed at one black coed. The Black Efforts of Trinity, an organization of black students, said it asked the administration a month ago to investigate the incidents and now is urging university officials to request help from District Attorney Bill White.

Hill seeks help to stop rate hike

Attorney General John Hill Monday urged President Carter's new inflation adviser, Alfred Kahn, to join a fight against increases in coalhauling rates railroads charge Texas power plants. Hill and the city of San Antonio are appealing a decision by the Interstate Commerce Commission on Oct. 25 allowing railroads to increase coal hauling rates by 30 percent. "Your new role may allow you to help the citizens of San Antonio defeat the single most severe inflationary problem they face: rail rates on the transportation of Western coal used to generate much of their electricity," Hill said in a letter to Kahn.

Natural gas explosion kills 9

Natural gas flowing through a patchwork line into a ghetto home in Houston was ignited into a raging fire Monday, killing nine members of a poverty-stricken family of 14. Officials said six of the victims were children. Gas and electrical service to the home had been terminated for non-payment of bills, but apparently someone in the family had rigged a car radiator hose directly to a natural gas pipe — allowing fuel to flood unchecked into the residence. The fire was apparently ignited by candles used for lighting.

NATION

Sub heist defendants prepare for trial

Defense attorneys are expected to argue this week that a plot to heist a nuclear submarine actually was a scheme to swindle front money from a businessman. The trial of Edward J. Mendenhall, 24, of Rochester, N.Y., and James W. Cosgrove, 26, of Geneva, N.Y., was scheduled to begin today with selection of a jury in the court of U.S. District Judge James H. Meredith. Mendenhall and Cosgrove are charged with conspiracy against the United States by plotting to steal the USS Trepang from its base in New London, Conn. Conviction on the charge carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison and a \$10,000 fine. Mendenhall, Cosgrove and Kurtis J. Schmidt, 22, of Kansas City, Kan., were arrested Oct. 4.

WEATHER

Fair skies with a 20% chance of showers Wednesday and a warming trend. High today 60 and a low of 40. Winds will be southerly at 10-15 mph. The outlook for Thursday through Saturday will be partly cloudy and cool temperatures.

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.

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Letters to the Editor

Ags outscored, but not beaten

Editor:

In my four-plus years here I've never before written a letter to the editor (though the desire to do so has definitely come up more than once). But while watching the A&M-t.u. game Friday something happened that compelled me to do so.

Overall, the Ags played a good game. Oh sure, there were a lot of mental errors that a team can't afford to have in a championship caliber game. The punting never produced, and our offensive line has yet to make the transition from the wishbone to the I.

But I saw something out there on that field I definitely didn't see at the beginning of the year. Something that made me proud to be an Aggie.

Our team never gave up. No matter what the circumstances they never quit trying, even on fourth and 29 they kept going for it.

When all is said and done, football is still just a game. No matter how good you

are, you win some and you lose some. But it's a certain kind of pride and determination to do your best no matter what that sets good teams apart from great ones.

I'm confident that I speak not only for myself, but for Ags everywhere when I say that when the final score was tabulated we may have been defeated point-wise, but we sure as hell weren't beaten.

Keep fighting Ags, we're proud of you, and BEAT THE HELL OUTTA IOWA STATE!

— Bryan Kuhlmann, '78

Clean up bonfire

Editor:

I am writing this letter in response to bonfire this past week. I believe that all Aggies who worked on it could be proud of this year's bonfire. My complaint arises from the actions of some Aggies during bonfire. This applies only to the few who

do not seem to respect tradition or Aggie spirit.

My first complaint is the number of people who showed up with alcoholic beverages. I am not against drinking by any means but when the crowd began to disperse there were hundreds of bottles and cans all over Duncan Field.

Not only did this make Duncan Field look like a mess but it also made it difficult to maneuver your way back to the streets. If you carried it to bonfire, why couldn't you carry it off Duncan Field?

My second complaint involves the people who don't seem to understand how to sing "The Spirit of Aggieland." I saw people talking, laughing, and raising hell while the rest of us sang "The Spirit of Aggieland." If you don't want to sing, if you don't know how to sing, or if you can't sing, the least you can do is to stand there and listen. Some of us respect these A&M songs and their traditional meanings.

My third complaint has to do with a certain male dorm who did their "hump it." This was the first bonfire my parents have attended and after this dorm "humped it" I was totally embarrassed. Their "hump it" is disgusting. Obscenities have their place but I don't think it is in public. I am sure that the thousands of other Aggies and parent were just as "pleased" with the hump it as I was. I wonder if they do their "hump it" in front of their parents.

Even with these gripes, I think we had a good bonfire this year. Let's try to correct some of these problems for next year's bonfire.

—Andy Reese, '80

Flu study useful

Editor:

I am writing this letter in response to Joe Hickman's Russian Flu sermon delivered in the Thursday, Nov. 30 Battalion. Being a participant in this influenza study, I must disagree with Mr. Hickman's assessment of the evils involved. Obviously, he was not well informed as to the risks.

I was told the risks were relatively small, consisting of runny noses, muscle aches, a slight headache, and perhaps a fever. I cannot comprehend how Mr. Hickman feels these risks are fatal.

Is taking the consequences of a few minor discomforts from the vaccine worse than getting Russian Flu if no vaccine is ever developed? What is wrong with trying to help find a vaccine effective against Russian Flu? If there were more people in the world with Mr. Hickman's sentiments,

Slouch

by Jim Earle



REMEMBER YOUR PLAN FOR MAKING GOOD GRADES THIS SEMESTER: START OUT SLOW, BUILD YOUR MOMENTUM, AND FINISH STRONG: IT'S ABOUT TIME TO CUT LOOSE WITH YOUR FINISH!