



VIEWPOINT



THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

TUESDAY
FEBRUARY 20, 1979

New Iranian regime shows no new rights

By STEVEN MOSSBARGER

For several years now, Iranian students have been demonstrating in our streets, hoping to arouse public opinion against the Shah. They have formed anti-Shah coalitions and created these demonstrations, many times at great risk to their own lives, and always, always, pleading for the downfall of the Shah and the establishment of some kind of constitutional government.

They have requested respect for their rights, many of which most Americans still assume are shared by all men throughout the world, and also the establishment of many new reforms, including the new land reforms which the Shah was in the process of granting. But as to the Shah, this was too small a gesture, too late.

These years of protesting and striving to overthrow the Shah's regime have finally culminated in the "successful" revolution during the past couple of weeks. Yet in reality, what is being accomplished by this new regime?

So far, a new government is to be created under Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini — a man who was first looked upon by the masses as the liberator from Shah — is now having trouble controlling these masses, especially the "leftist" groups. And he is a person who, if he has his way, will set the people of Iran under a government constituting pure Islamic rule.

Not once has there been a promise of, or even mention of, establishing constitutional rule by this new governmental figure, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. In fact, by calling for a "religious war," he is placing Iran in an era that has not been seen since the desert "Holy Wars" in Algeria and Egypt around the turn of the century, an era mired by blood bath after blood bath.

This sort of action, coupled with economically separating Iran from the rest of the world, can only result in placing the social stature of Iran a couple of hundred years behind that of the modern world. In essence, this regime is placing Iran politically "180 degrees out" from what I have understood the Iranian populace, led by its intellectual class, to be fighting for.

I wonder if the people of Iran, most of all Khomeini, really understand what they have unleashed. For even with concrete ideas and policies decided upon before the official beginning of revolution or civil war (whichever term one prefers), it is a historical fact that once begun, a revolution cannot be stopped as we would stop a rotating bicycle wheel.

It is more like rock slide, or an avalanche, picking up speed as it travels down the mountainside, destroying all but the most firm objects in its path, only halting when it has finally exhausted source and Khomeini at this moment, has only abstract ideas as to how governmental policy is to be run.

will establish itself in relationship to the means. I hope that severed relationships

Reader's Forum

with the United States, plus an extremely strained economy, will bring the constitutional reforms which have so long been striven for.

I am placing these thoughts and comments in The Battalion hoping it will arouse some political thought on campus. I sincerely hope that some Iranian students will honor this article with a reply — for many things which we are able to read in our newspapers are quite often obscured, like such notions as classifying any government not allied with our own as "communist."

With communism still a dirty word in our society, this is an easy way to turn public opinion against that particular movement. I am sure that many of the Iranian students are still able to communicate with their homeland to some extent and I would like to invite them to share their thoughts with us, and perhaps help us to have a clearer picture of what is taking place in Iran.

Steven Mossbarger is a senior history major from Houston.

TOP OF THE NEWS

CAMPUS

A&M part of 7-library system

Texas A&M University has joined six other libraries that are building their research collections in forming the Houston Area Research Libraries Consortium (HARLIC). Other members are the Houston Academy of Medicine-Texas Medical Center, Rice University, Texas Southern University, the University of Houston, the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston and the Houston Public Library. The consortium has approved a policy of reciprocal borrowing privileges for faculty at member institutions.

LOCAL

Train derailment investigated

Missouri-Pacific officials are investigating the cause of the Sunday train derailment three miles west of Bryan. Fifty-two empty cars derailed about 2 p.m., forcing police to close Smetana Road. No injuries or property damage were reported. A Department of Public Safety report estimated that the track would be cleared and the road reopened by today.

STATE

Davis divorce trial begins today

Priscilla and T. Cullen Davis' well-publicized marital problems officially go on the public record today with the opening of their much-delayed divorce trial. The two Texas socialites split in 1974, but a series of spectacular legal entanglements by Davis — including charges of murder, the wounding of Mrs. Davis and charges of attempting to hire the murder of the divorce court judge — resulted in numerous postponements. Mrs. Davis said Davis once beat her with a crutch while she was recovering from a broken ankle and broke her nose during an argument. During the Amarillo murder trial, Davis' attorney, Richard "Racehorse" Haynes, said Mrs. Davis' \$6 million mansion was often a scene of drug and sex parties and that Mrs. Davis had had a number of sexual partners since the couple's break-up.

Power plants proposed for coast

A Florida company is negotiating with Gulf States Utilities to construct four floating nuclear power plants to be anchored off the Texas Gulf coast at a cost of \$8.8 billion, the Port Arthur News reported Monday. Permission to anchor the plants in 45-70 feet of water, three miles into the Gulf of Mexico would have to be obtained from the Texas Legislature, after approval of a nuclear manufacturing permit from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The plants would be towed to the Gulf sites by tugboats. Each would use about 90 acres of the Gulf bottom and would be protected by a 175-foot high granite horseshoe-shaped breakwater.

NATION

Rhode Island kills death penalty

The Rhode Island Supreme Court struck down the state's mandatory death penalty law calling it a violation of the Eighth Amendment's ban on cruel and unusual punishment. Until Monday, Rhode Island law mandated "death by lethal gas" for inmates or prison escapees convicted of murder while serving sentences for other offenses. Four inmates now sit in death row at the Adult Correctional Institutions in Cranston.

Utility merger causes speculation

Public Service Commission Chairman Louis Lambert Monday told officials of Gulf States Utilities Co. and the Central Louisiana Energy Co. that he would not be railroaded into approving their merger without a detailed study. Officials of both companies said they had no objection to a proposal by Lambert for a detailed independent study of the merger plan. Last week Central Louisiana Energy, the parent company of Central Louisiana Electric Co., and Gulf States announced an agreement in principle for a \$270 million transaction by which GSU would take over CLECO. The merged company would have about one-third of all electric customers in Louisiana.

WORLD

Middle East peace talks resume

Israel and Egypt sent high-level delegations to Washington Monday for a second round of Camp David meetings in an effort to pump new life into the dormant Middle East Peace talks. Egyptian Prime Minister Mustafa Khalil, Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Dyan and Secretary of State Cyrus Vance were scheduled to meet Wednesday in negotiations scheduled to last four to seven days. A major stumbling block is "linkage" between the proposed peace treaty and the establishment of Palestinian autonomy in the Jordan West Bank and Gaza Strip. Two other unsettled issues are Egyptian demands for a review of security arrangements in the Sinai desert after five or six years and putting their defense obligations to Arab states above the treaty.

WEATHER

Overcast skies and drizzle with a high today of 50 and a low tonight of 40. Winds are variable. 60% chance of rain.

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.

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Nicaragua's Somoza may face bankruptcy

By CLIFFORD KRAUSS

United Press International
MEXICO CITY — With his leftist guerrilla foes beaten for the moment, Nicaraguan President Anastasio Somoza must now battle a new enemy — international isolation. If he loses, Nicaragua could go bankrupt in 1979.

The U.S. government, once Somoza's staunch ally, has announced the withdrawal of 47 U.S. officials from Nicaragua, the closing of its small military mission, a halt to military aid and a freeze on economic assistance.

President Carter blamed Somoza for the impasse in the three-nation mediation effort that attempted to forestall another round of civil warfare that last year took at least 1,500 lives and caused \$66 million in damages.

Though the Sandinista Liberation Front took to the hills and escaped abroad in the face of far superior national guard firepower, its two-week September offensive took its toll.

International insurers have balked at \$60 million in claims arising from the offensive, and foreign credit agencies like the International Monetary Fund have squeezed the loan pipeline dry.

The government has been forced to postpone major hydroelectric works for lack of scheduled World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank credit.

Born-again horseless carriages?

By DICK WEST

WASHINGTON — The Senate Commerce Committee is holding hearings this week to see how the auto industry is responding to Transportation Secretary Brock Adams' challenge to "reinvent the auto."

Detroit's attitude is important, of course. If we are to have the kind of car Adams envisions — one that goes a long way on a small amount of gas — the companies that make the kind of car we have now must take the leading role in its development.

Leading but not exclusive. It is likely that a good bit of the basic headwork leading up to the reinvention of the automobile will be done by small "think tanks" and research centers, such as The Future Is Yesterday Foundation.

On the eve of the committee's study, I paid a visit to the Foundation's laboratories to see whether its director, Sam Harkenback, might have any ideas along that line.

"We don't have the complete concept firmly in mind just yet, but we have been testing a few of the components we believe the born again auto should have," Harkenback said.

He led me into a chamber, much like a wind tunnel. It contained a mock-up of an auto body. Attached lengthwise to either side was a long wooden plank covered with rubber matting.

"We call those running boards," Harkenback said. "I can see where stepping on a running board might make it easier to get in the car, but how could they possibly improve fuel efficiency?"

"Our experiments indicate that wind rushing under the running boards provide a lift effect that lightens the weight of the vehicle and thus makes it get better mileage," he explained.

I said, "I don't know about Henry Ford II, but Brockdams should love it. Anything else?"

In an adjoining chamber, Harkenback directed my attention to another mock-up.

"How many people would you say it seats?" he asked.

"It looks like there's only room for the driver and one passenger," I said.

With a triumphant cry of "Wrong!" Harkenback leaned over and twisted a handle that caused the back to open, revealing seating space for two.

"We call it a rumble seat.

"In winter, this part of the car wouldn't be heated," Harkenback pointed out. "And in summer, it has its own natural air conditioning."

Deeply impressed, I told Harkenback he already had gone a long way toward reinventing the auto.

"Wait, there's more," he said, pointing to a Z-shaped metal object. "We don't have a name for it yet, but we're thinking of

Somoza hopes to reschedule the foreign debt, or he may not be able to pay off the interest, scheduled at \$155 million in 1979.

The public sector is already in default on \$45 million due in interest and principal to a number of U.S. banks, including Citibank, Manufacturers Hanover Trust and Wells Fargo.

Among the pressure points the Carter administration plans to apply on Somoza is the freezing of any further economic aid, including two projects worth \$10.5 million agreed upon last summer. However, several other aid projects now in advance stages will be completed.

A freeze of U.S. support to the Somoza regime has its symbolic as well as economic points.

By withdrawing the four-man military mission, effectively ending all military aid, Carter is ending a traditionally strong relationship between the United States and the 20,000-man national guard.

The guard was organized and trained by the United States in the 1920s and 1930s to permit a withdrawal of U.S. Marines fighting nationalist guerrillas led by Augusto Cesar Sandino.

Letters to the Editor

Victims shouldn't take blame for crime

Editor:

In reference to your Feb. 13 article, concerning the rash of recent thefts on campus, I quote the words your reporter attributed to our University police chief:

"Most (of the thefts) have resulted from inattention and failure of owners to protect their property. . . . Most of the time it's a girl or secretary who goes off and leaves her purse unattended. . . . The best thing is for owners to be more careful about leaving their belongings."

Being one of the "victims" mentioned in the article, I am greatly disturbed about this philosophy which places the burden of responsibility on the offender rather than on the offender and also the blanket implication that most of this is a result of carelessness on the part of "girls." The article mentioned 282 thefts with two being detailed as female victims. What of the other 280? Were they also female victims?

The implications of this philosophy — blaming the victim (in this case "girls" or secretaries), could be of great importance as I see in it a striking similarity to the attitudes perpetuated nationwide concerning the crime of rape, which also places the burden on the victim. The danger then, is that this same philosophy could determine future security policy on our campus towards such crimes against persons.

It is apparent that a greater cooperative effort is indeed called for — but placing so much responsibility on the victim is hardly indicative of a cooperative effort between

security personnel and potential victims.

Far more was lost that afternoon than my wallet; there was the loss of a certain basic trust that was part of my nature, but of much greater concern to me is the attitude towards crime on this campus.

—L.M. Saltsman
Secretary, Sociology Department

Birds attacking

Editor:

We've got a problem besides grass, Waggies, and ticket lines. We've got birds. Yes, that's right, birds. And they are destroying a lot of our beautiful trees. They started early this semester at the east gate and have been slowly moving towards the Systems Building, leaving along their way a path of seemingly ruined trees.

I don't know if the problem exists throughout our campus, but I am interested in finding out if the trees will be permanently damaged or if there is already some action being taken to prevent further damage.

—Andy Jones
College Station

Correction

In the Monday Feb. 19 Battalion the winners of the Muscular Dystrophy dance marathon were incorrectly identified in a caption as Diane Fusselman and Forest Parker. The winners were Michelle Pringle and Bob Bauer.

The Battalion regrets the error.

Why's 'Batt' late?

Editor:

I have often wondered why the faculty and staff of the different departments do not receive The Battalion newspaper on the same day in which it is published. I feel there is a real need for faculty and staff to be as immediately informed of campus activities as are the students.

With more up-to-date knowledge of the news, communication between faculty and staff of each department, faculty, staff and students, as well as students will be much improved.

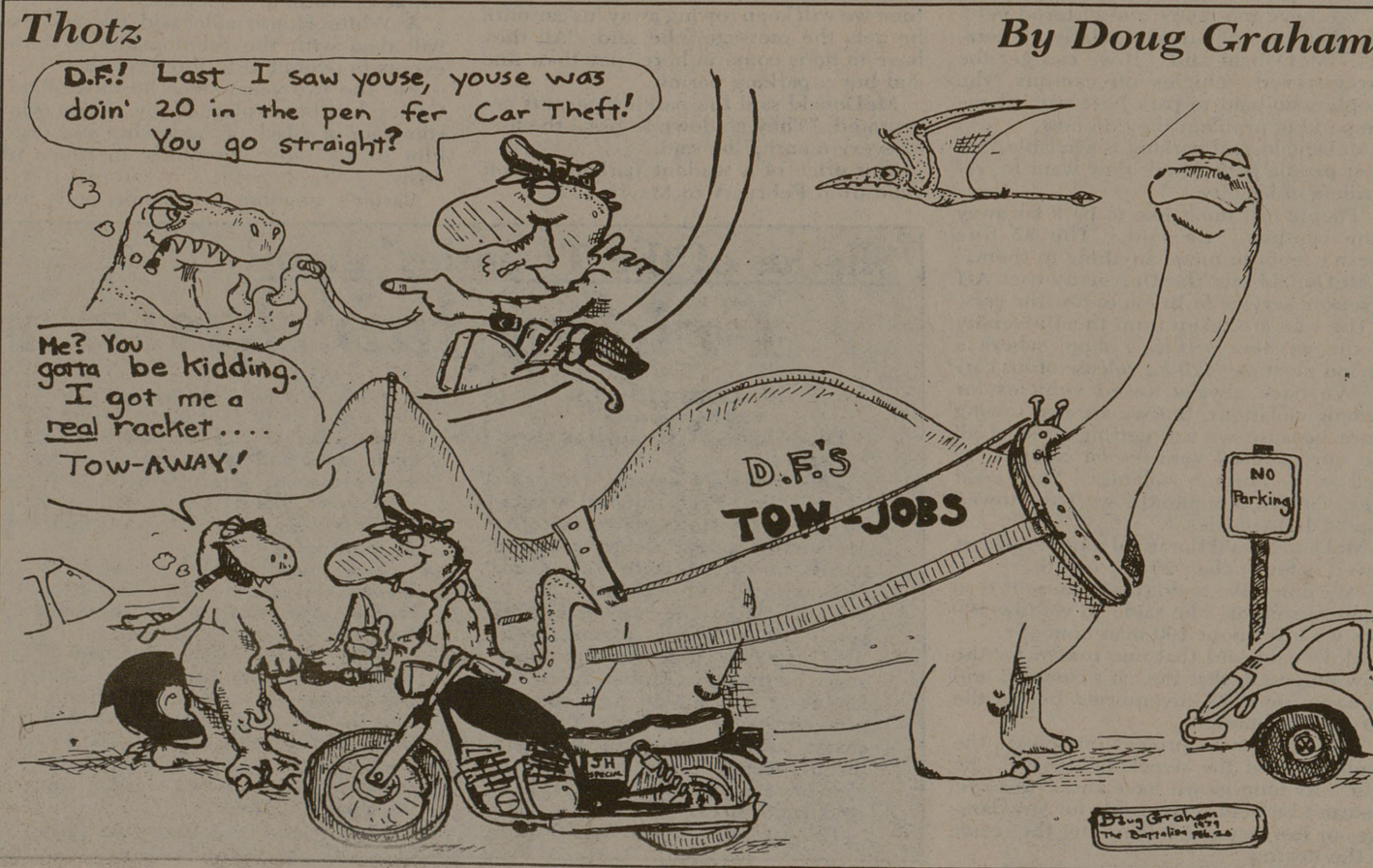
P.S. The "Aggie Moonshine" photograph on the front page of Monday's (Feb. 12) Battalion was a nice one. Really.

—Paul Parma
Secretary, Agricultural Engineering Department

Editor's note: The Battalion is delivered to the University Mail Service at press time each day — generally about 12 p.m.

The mail service has an afternoon delivery route. However, according to an employee with the service, The Battalion would have to be ready and sorted in the morning in order to make the afternoon delivery, so it can't be delivered to campus offices until the next day.

The Battalion is also dropped in bundles at various campus spots for general distribution each day.



By Doug Graham

D.F.: Last I saw youse, youse was doin' 20 in the pen fer Car Theft! You go straight?

Me? You gotta be kidding. I got me a real racket. . . . Tow-Away!

D.F.'s TOW-JOBS

Doug Graham for The Battalion