

VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

MONDAY
NOVEMBER 26, 1979



OPINION

Creative listening: a dangerous game

A mother makes her weekly phone call to her child at college. "Are you coming home this weekend?"
"No, Mom, I'm going to study."
"Oh good, you'll be home 'til Sunday."

That's creative listening.

Another instance — dangerous on a national scale — was explained by a pollster at a national convention of college students last week. In his example, the country and the companies involved were losers.

Nicholas Tortorello, who worked for opinion researcher Lou Harris during the first oil crisis in 1974, said he was involved in polling for General Motors and Ford Motor Co.

Gasoline lines in parts of the country were long, and people were concerned about their gas-guzzling cars. Tortorello found Americans wanted small cars, but were scared of them. The cars couldn't survive a crash, they thought.

So the polling firm advised GM and Ford to push their economical cars and stress safety features.

But GM refused to believe the poll, Tortorello said, and continued the same ad campaigns — for big cars. GM also dropped Harris as its polling firm.

Ford, on the other hand, heeded the advice. The company changed its advertising for the Pinto — but didn't change the fuel system.

Thousands of Pintos were sold on the advertised safety features, but then one exploded on the "60 Minutes" TV show in living, dying color.

And Ford, like GM, lost out to imports in the small car market.

Creative listening didn't work.

the small society

by Brickman



THE BATTALION

USPS 045 360

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 Liz Newlin
Managing Editor Andy Williams
Asst. Managing Editor Dillard Stone
News Editors Karen Cornelison
and Michelle Burrows
Sports Editor Sean Petty
City Editor Roy Bragg
Campus Editor Keith Taylor
Focus Editor Beth Calhoun

Staff Writers Meril Edwards, Nancy Andersen, Louie Arthur, Richard Oliver, Mark Patterson, Carolyn Blosser, Kurt Allen, Debbie Nelson, Rhonda Watters

Photo Editor Lee Roy Leschper Jr.
Photographers Lynn Blanco, Sam Stroder, Ken Herrera
Cartoonist Doug Graham

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.

BRODER

By DAVID S. BRODER

ORLANDO — Ronald Reagan won the Florida Republican convention straw-vote, and John Connally finished second. But it was George Bush who surprised and impressed the political professionals by finishing a strong third, only 74 votes behind Connally among the 1,326 delegates.

It was the latest demonstration of what may be the most under-reported significant fact of the GOP presidential race. As almost every strategist for the ten Republican candidates would affirm, George Bush has made better use of 1979 than any of his rivals.

Indeed, the only two GOP contenders who have done what they set out to do this year are Bush and Reagan. It would not surprise many astute Republican insiders if they proved to be the finalists in next year's competition.

Reagan accomplished his goal simply by staying out of trouble, holding his lead during a long period of noncandidacy, and broadening his already impressive base of support.

Bush did what he said he would do on the day he announced, namely, "do better than you (in the press) expect me to do in every test that comes along."

He has done that by building the best non-Reagan organization in New Hampshire, Iowa, Maine and other early dele-

gate-selection states, winning the convention straw polls in Iowa and Maine, and showing strength rivaling Connally's in Florida — where Connally had concentrated his campaigning and Bush had not.

Connally has raised more money and drawn more publicity than his fellow Housatonic, Bush. But Connally has failed so far in his big test — overcoming the suspicions of Republicans about his party-switching and personal character. An NBC-Associated Press poll of Florida Republicans shows Connally's trust-to-distrust ratio is 2-1, while Reagan's is 9-1 and Bush's almost 7-1. Private polls show the same high "negative" elsewhere for Connally.

As for Sen. Howard H. Baker, Jr., who still leads Bush by a wide margin in the public-opinion polls, his neglected campaign organization switched managers again last week. He is so far behind organizationally that there is growing doubt whether he will challenge seriously, or fall back into the overcrowded category of short-term Republican also-rans.

Bush did what he did by copy-cutting the tactics Jimmy Carter employed four years ago. He has worked full-time, out of the glare of national publicity, at organizing the states that choose their delegates early. Like Carter, he has used living-room meetings, where he, his wife or one of his sons have been present, to build a network of

volunteers whose commitment is not lessened by the fact that most of them knew nothing of George Bush when 1979 began.

Bush has pursued that strategy, because he understands, as Carter did, that making such living-room conversions is the key to success in this kind of nominating system.

But if his tactics ape Carter's, there is one basic difference in their status. George Bush is as much of a respected insider in the Republican establishment as Jimmy Carter was a skeptically viewed stranger to the Democratic power-structure.

As a former congressman, national party chairman and official in the Nixon and Ford administrations, Bush has a network of personal friendships that spans the ideological range of the GOP from Rep. Pete McCloskey of California, who challenged Richard Nixon as a "liar" in the 1972 primaries, to Dean Burch, who defended Nixon from the White House until the last days of 1974.

It was Burch who introduced Bush to the conservative Florida convention delegates as "a man of universal acceptance and unullied reputation, a man in his physical prime, a man for the Eighties." Bush himself is conservative in his economics, hard-line in his foreign-policy views, but is linked by family background and education (Greenwich, Kennebunkport and Yale) to the party's affluent, progressive eastern wing as well.

It is far too early to compute the Bush's winning the nomination. Tests are still ahead. His views have been subjected to serious scrutiny in press or rival candidates. His speaking — though vastly improved over year's living-room practice — is which he is only now gaining personal confidence.

He remains unknown to the public, although that condition is certain to change dramatically in two months, when the Iowa and Hampshire contests will likely catapult into prominence. But his two losses in the Senate in Texas have left the reputation — deserved or not — being a candidate who has a hard time leading or responding to a stiff

Reagan will not be easily displaced, far, Bush has avoided challenging directly and Reagan has seen no need to undercut Bush. All that is still to be seen is whether Bush can hold his own against Carter. But Bush is on the verge of being "George Who?" question, as Carter "Jimmy Who?" four years ago. The he set out to do, and that is what — in the eyes of the party pros — who has gained the most from 1979. (c) 1979, The Washington Post Company

George Bush gaining politically by imitating part of Jimmy's style



Vienna treaty calls for embassy protection

Ayatollah ignoring legalities open to him

Iran and the United States are bound by three international conventions and one bilateral treaty that were designed to protect the immunity of diplomatic and consular personnel. The most explicit is the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, formulated in 1961 at a United Nations conference and signed by all nations.

It opens with the statement that "peoples of all nations from ancient times have recognized the status of diplomatic agents." The safety of diplomats is expressed

in Article 29: "The person of a diplomatic agent shall be inviolable. He shall not be liable to any form of arrest or detention. The receiving state shall treat him with respect and take all appropriate steps to prevent any attack on his person, freedom or dignity."

When a nation believes that a diplomat has abused this protection by conduct offensive to the hosts — when an embassy, in the Ayatollah's words, has become a "nest of spies" — two remedies exist. The

host country can declare diplomats persona non grata, and order them expelled. It can also turn to an optional protocol to the Vienna Convention, which obliges signatories to submit any disputes to the International Court of Justice at The Hague.

These legal formulas obviously meant little to the Ayatollah at the start of the current confrontation. But they were well understood even by the Iranian government he had appointed and which resigned when he refused to let it protect the Amer-

ican Embassy in Tehran. Respect for law continues to protect all Iranian diplomats in the United States. And if even nations sympathetic to Iran's seizure have condemned the seizure of hostages to press a grievance against the United States. The trick now is to encourage the Ayatollah to submit his case against the Shah and the United States to the World Court — as soon as the hostages are freed. The New York Times

DICK WEST

New energy source is being wasted Iran may have to ration U.S. flags

By DICK WEST

WASHINGTON — Just about every night on television this past fortnight there have been scenes of Iranians burning American flags in front of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran.

All of which has made me realize just how much my mind has been affected by the energy crisis.

So conditioned by fuel shortages have I become that televised shots of Iranians burning American flags aroused my conservation instincts as well as my animus.

No precise figures on the amount of energy derivable from flag combustion are available. I would estimate, however, the Iranians have wasted enough this month to heat a city the size of Cincinnati for 24 hours.

Iran is fuel-rich, of course. It exports, as we know, vast amounts of surplus petroleum. Even so, it cannot completely escape the deleterious consequences of letting so much energy go up in smoke.

On the tube, at least, flag smoke appears loaded with pollutants. What those embassy demonstrations might have done to the air quality index in Tehran can only be guessed.

As I was watching a demonstration the other night, I fell to wondering whether Iran is a flag-producing nation or whether it must import the banners the radical students burn.

If the latter, there must be concern among Iranian leaders as to whether the supply lines are dependable and whether a

flag shortage might be in the offing. Thus far, I have seen nothing to indicate the Ayatollah has ordered any programs to make Iran less dependent on foreign flags.

It seems unlikely, however, that so small a country could continue to consume flags at current rates indefinitely.

At some point soon, I look for the Iranian government, or what passes for a government in Iran, to resort to flag rationing.

Even then, the shortage is almost certain

to drive up the price beyond what the average Iranian student demonstrator can afford.

Apart from the pollution and inflationary aspects of flag burning, it should be borne in mind that the current rampage in Iran coincides with a return to veil wearing by many women in that country.

Cloth used to make flags obviously could be used to make veils, and vice versa. So unless there is a sudden outbreak of veil

burning, the supply problem is bound to become ever more pressing.

I'm not suggesting the United States do anything about this as long as the veils are being held. But if at some future date America should wish to cool the revolutionary fervor in Iran, a flag embargo on the answer. Without some other cloth to incinerate before the television cameras, those student radicals might come despirited enough to go back to

THOTZ

By Doug Graham

