



# OPINION

## Iowa proves substance over style

The very magic that made Sen. Edward Kennedy's entrance into the Democratic presidential contest so easy may well prompt the senator to disappear.

The humiliation resulting from the Iowa Democratic caucuses is evidence that magic is a fragile illusion on which to pin presidential hopes.

Kennedy's campaign pandered to the disappointment of Iowa farmers stung by Mr. Carter's grain boycott against the Soviet Union. Although Kennedy accused the president of lurching from crisis to crisis, it was in fact Kennedy who lurching from issue to issue, grasping for something that would spark the campaign fires.

Carter is sustained by international crises. Just as a boxing champion only loses the crown if he is soundly beaten, so a president is supported in times of world danger unless the alternative is particularly compelling.

Ronald Reagan's loss to George Bush in the Republican caucuses also hints of voter resistance to style over substance. To be sure, the nation might well prefer a more entertaining articulate president than Carter, but other components in the presidential makeup can compensate for such weaknesses.

Reagan will no longer remain distant, gracious and above the fray. If he is hungry enough to want the White House, if he has stamina enough to serve as president, if he is intellectually competent to lead the nation, he must now prove it on the road and in the television studios and on the newspaper pages.

If the GOP is seeking an "anyone but Reagan" alternative, Bush — at least at this early stage of the campaign — may be an attractive choice. He has considerable experience in national government, an asset that may well prove to be an issue in a campaign against President Carter. And Bush has avoided the rightist fringe of Republicanism from which GOP candidates never seem to be able to return in time to win a national election.

Hartford, Conn., Courant

## Strong, responsible CIA needed

The country needs a strong intelligence gathering agency so that rapidly changing events around the world won't catch us by surprise. The CIA has to be free to do its job and that includes spying.

Seven U.S. senators plan to introduce legislation that would strengthen the CIA's ability to keep its agents' names from public disclosure.

This comes after President Carter said a CIA charter is needed to make sure the agency doesn't abuse its power while at the same time removing unwarranted restraints. Currently the president is required to inform eight congressional committees if the CIA is ordered to engage in any covert activities abroad. That's about 180 legislators and their staffs. Hard to keep a secret like that.

The bill would make a person criminally liable if he disclosed the name of a spy if he learned it through authorized access. That might put a damper on former agents who want to make big money writing books regardless of people's lives being at stake. Intelligence is a tough business.

The Atlanta Constitution

# THE BATTALION

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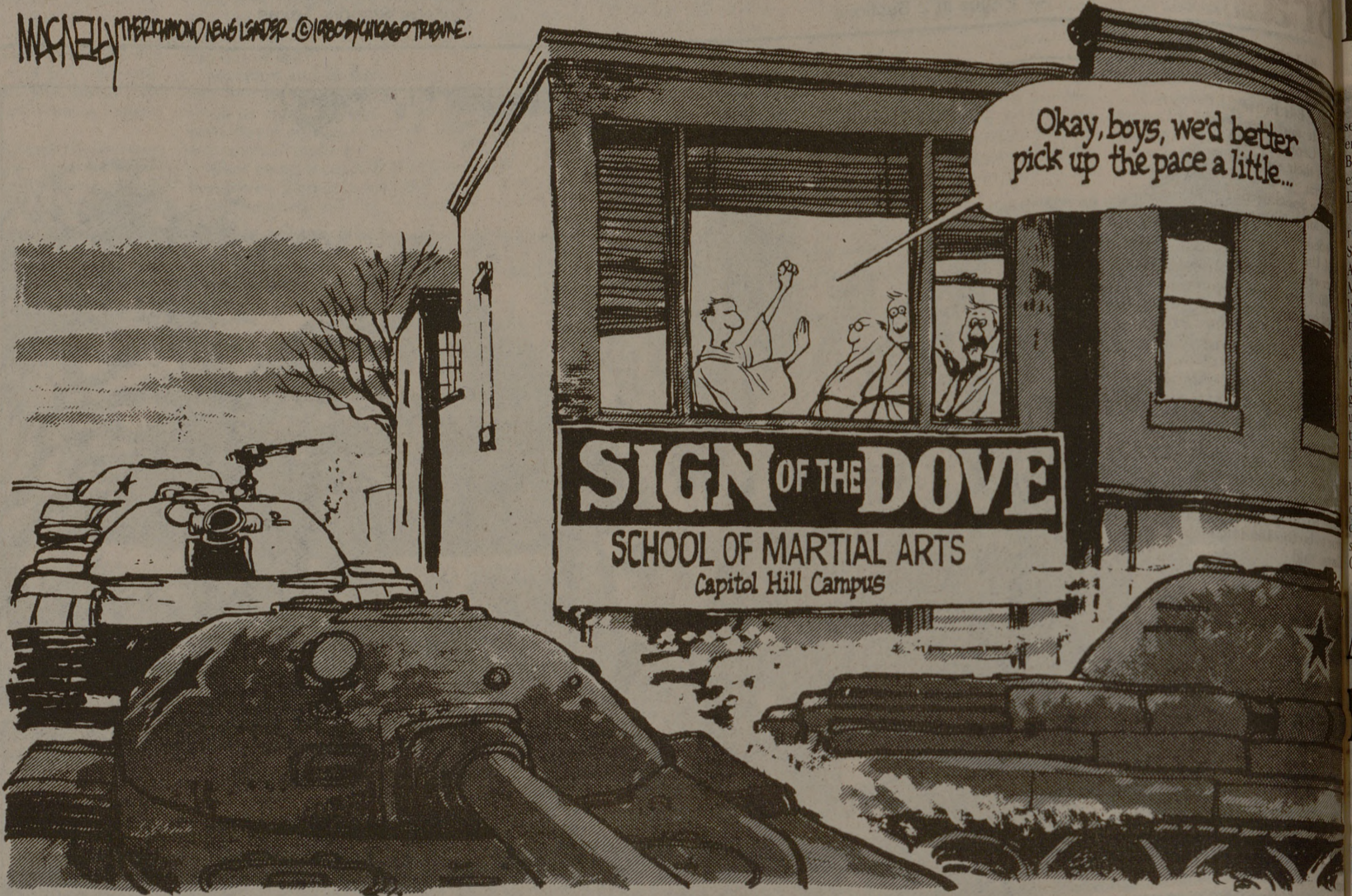
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# VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION  
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

THURSDAY  
JANUARY 31, 1980



# LETTERS

## Readers differ over registration

Editor:

This letter is in response to a letter printed in the January 28, 1980 issue of The Battalion by Davis Northcutt IV.

Maybe not all Aggies agree that draft registration is needed, wanted, and/or morally right. But certainly the majority of Aggies do agree with the registration (NOT reinstatement — nobody has been or will be drafted until military necessities dictate reinstatement) for the draft as a precautionary measure in a troubled world.

For today we are faced with more than a "vague Soviet threat." A sovereign, independent nation has been violated in a way that the world has not seen since 1938 — and ignoring that incident proved disastrous. No, war should not be declared instantly, but it must be shown to the Soviet Union that further aggression cannot and will not be tolerated.

It may be asked, why should we care about what happens in Afghanistan? Why should we care about a landlocked, barren country thousands of miles away from the U.S.?

All right, for convenience's sake, we will ignore such trivial things as the rights of men and nations to choose their own governments, such emotional and irrational ideas like preventing tyranny, or such inconsequential things as defending the prerogative of all people to choose what religious beliefs, if any, they may wish to hold. Let's stick to the facts.

Over the last 20 years, the Soviet Union has been enlarging their armed forces to a point where they now outnumber the U.S. forces by a 5 to 1 edge in tanks, 2 to 1 in artillery, 2 to 1 in warships, and 3 to 2 in total manpower. Now isn't that a little bit much to defend Russia against all 4 divisions we have stationed next to them in Germany?

What is even more alarming is the Soviet Union's recent tendency to utilize all this hardware on other countries. Russian aid and/or proxy troops have been used in Angola, Ethiopia, Somalia, Cambodia, South Yemen, and Afghanistan. Now, Russian troops and tanks are poised only 300 miles away from the Strait of Hormuz, the passageway through which 1/2 of the U.S. imported oil supply flows — about 15% of our supply was lost in the 1973-74 oil embargo, with disastrous effects on the world's economy. That constitutes a serious threat to the U.S. and its allies.

In response to this, draft registration is a necessary measure to show the Soviet Union and the world that the U.S. will not tolerate further aggression, is willing to commit itself in defense of freedom, and remains a major factor that the Soviets should think about before the next "Afghanistan".

Patrick M. Condray

(This letter was accompanied by 24 other signatures)

Editor:

I am writing in response to Ron Bucchi's letter in The Battalion, January 29. In the letter, Mr. Bucchi implied that those opposed to mandatory registration were "cowards." He has the right to his opinion, but he should not consider those who do not agree with him cowardly or unpatriotic.

I am opposed to mandatory registration. I am probably in the minority, but it is doubtful that support for registration is as unanimous as Bucchi would like us to believe (How about a survey on the issue?).

Mandatory registration would make it easier to reinstate the draft. This would increase the temptation to intervene in places we have no business in — Vietnam would be an example.

Mandatory conscription is a socialist principle. It is the individual being forced to serve the state. Lenin was once quoted as saying: "We will force the capitalists into military conscription until the uniform becomes a symbol of servitude, instead of patriotism." The draft should be reserved for emergency situations to be effective.

We are not in an emergency situation now. President Carter is trying to create crisis situations to serve his political purposes. He used the Iranian hostages as an excuse to avoid debating his rivals for the Democratic nomination in Iowa. Is this new crisis designed to influence the voters in New Hampshire? What is planned for future primaries? Another energy crisis scare? Maybe Ron Bucchi wants to support this political play, but he should not imply that all "Aggies" agree with him.

William D. Hancock

Editor:

Contrary to the letter from Davis Northcutt IV in The Battalion (Jan. 28) concern-

ing your views about the registration for the draft, your answer (in my opinion) to quote you, is not legally or "morally right."

I must admit, you did get one fact right in the article — this is a free country, and everyone should defend and protect their homeland. After all, you do enjoy your freedom, don't you?

Furthermore, to compare this situation with the one in Vietnam is somewhat inaccurate. Our freedom in the Vietnam War was not in any way directly threatened, whereas in Iran the lives of our American citizens, our freedom — along with our integrity — is of a big threat at this time.

Let me also add that should you desert or evade the draft by skipping the country, please don't think about returning to this Land of Freedom. While many proud men and women will fight to protect the freedom of this country, why should you come back to enjoy the freedom that others risked and lost their lives for.

Margarita Jaime '81  
Karen Kauffman '82

Editor:

Contrary to a recent letter in The Battalion by David Northcutt IV about his cowardly views on the selective service reinstatement, I'm sure there are many Aggies out there who would deplore his views about this "selective slavery" he is so afraid of.

Where have you been lately? What is this "vague" Soviet threat you are talking about? What is vague about an invasion of a country by a 100,000-man army? What is vague about using nerve-gas on anti-communist resistance? What is vague about Afghanistan being some 300 miles from western oil supply routes? You are the only thing that is vague, and ignorant! Contrary to your thoughts about our president, he is trying his best to control the situation; and bringing America into a state of readiness is the best idea to back our policies. I don't support aggression by any country Mr. Northcutt, but our national interests are at stake here. How can you say that dissent is patriotic, when it goes against our national well-being? Who are you patriotic to? You are a draft evader left over from the hippies' rally of the 1960s and if you had any guts you wouldn't complain. You talk about this country being free, well I'm sorry freedom

means putting up with thoughts that have. How much else has to happen in the world before you realize what the Soviet Union is?

If a war does break out and I don't get drafted, I won't be with you and the draft evaders in South America, but my country needs me. And I assure Northcutt, that I will uphold the truth and justice our people believe in, as do thousands of others.

Jimmy Orr

(This letter was accompanied 26 other signatures)

Editor:

I am writing this letter in response to Davis Northcutt IV's letter, Monday, January 28, 1980, in which he expressed his "patriotic right" to dissent draft registration. Mr. Davis Northcutt IV obviously claims an expertise in military affairs that several of us, spending several years trying to obtain Mr. Davis Northcutt IV has called on.

Soviet attempt at gaining a warm water port in the Indian Ocean, relatively free of blockades (which can be imposed on them at Bosphorus or Dardanelles) as a "vague" threat. Mr. Davis Northcutt IV apparently sees no military implication to a Soviet presence in the Persian Gulf area. I will argue over his erroneous and irresponsible assumptions. Instead, I'll quote a man who has earned recognition as an authority in modern warfare (with whom Mr. Davis Northcutt IV should be well acquainted, Carl Von Clausewitz, from On War, 1832).

"If bloody battling is a dreadful spectacle that should merely be the reason to appreciate war more and not allow our swords to grow blunt by and by, through humanitarianism, until someone steps in with a sharp sword and cuts our arms off somebody." Mr. Davis Northcutt IV's argument stems from the definition of the substantiality of a Soviet threat in the regions of the world. Either Mr. Davis Northcutt IV failed to research his position adequately or else he is willing only to take of the fruits of America and not defend them.

Ron Bucchi

# THOTZ



By Doug Graham