

VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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Nomination pursuit erratic at best

Baker campaign self-destructing

By DAVID S. BRODER
There were about 320 diners at the Maine Republican Party's \$20-a-head dinner in the Augusta Civic Center, and about 6,000 empty seats in the stands surrounding them.

The setting — the half-filled floor, the yawning stands — was discomfiting enough. The invocation was a little strange, a presumably humorous prayer to "free us from our Georgian bondage." The program had been rearranged to accommodate the schedule of the visiting speaker, so Sen. Howard H. Baker Jr. was called on to deliver the address while the party faithful sat staring, a bit hungrily, at the salad bowls, the plastic containers of dressing, and the pie that would, in time, be their dessert.

All of those unsettling elements must have gotten to Howard Baker, for he suddenly heard himself saying: "I am 5 feet, 7 inches tall, have green hair and brown eyes, and . . . you'll just have to take me as I am."

When Howard Baker reaches the point that he declares himself The Boy with Green Hair, you can be sure that something weird has happened. But that is the way it is as the Senate Republican leader

carries on his erratic pursuit of the GOP presidential nomination.

Of all the campaigns in this year, none has so squandered the talents of its principal as that of the senior senator from Tennessee. The Howard Baker that Washington knows is a capable legislator, a skillful leader of his party, a man with a grasp of issues and a talent for articulating them — and a man of considerable charm, besides. The man on the stump in this presidential campaign is a double who invites ridicule.

Occasionally, Baker shows his true form. His characterization of President Carter's State of the Union speech as "a full-scale attack on the Carterism of the last three years" is a neat partisan shot and drew applause here and in New Hampshire. But, from the beginning, Baker's campaign has been characterized by organizational ineptitude and missed opportunities. Those problems continue.

Baker had been sent off to the dismal event in Maine on a night when he had a longstanding commitment to address a dinner of Maryland Republicans. Maryland is natural Baker country — a neighboring state with a long tradition of supporting Baker's brand of moderate Republicanism.

By canceling the date in Maryland, Baker earned a widely publicized attack from the state's GOP chairman and clouded his prospects of gaining his support. The visit to Maine did nothing but revive memories of Baker's unexpected humiliation at George Bush's hands in the convention last fall. Since then, Bush has consolidated his support here, and Baker did nothing to recoup by his performance the other night.

But the candidate professed ignorance about why he was here. "I just go where they tell me," he said.

Earlier on the day of the Maine dinner, Baker had addressed a convention of New England broadcasters in Boston. The speech, which was important enough to be filmed by his own crew of commercial-makers and touted as a major policy address, was built around this proposal:

"Twenty years ago, President Kennedy challenged America to put a man on the moon by the end of the Sixties. As President, I will challenge America to put a man in a car not powered by gasoline by the end of the decade."

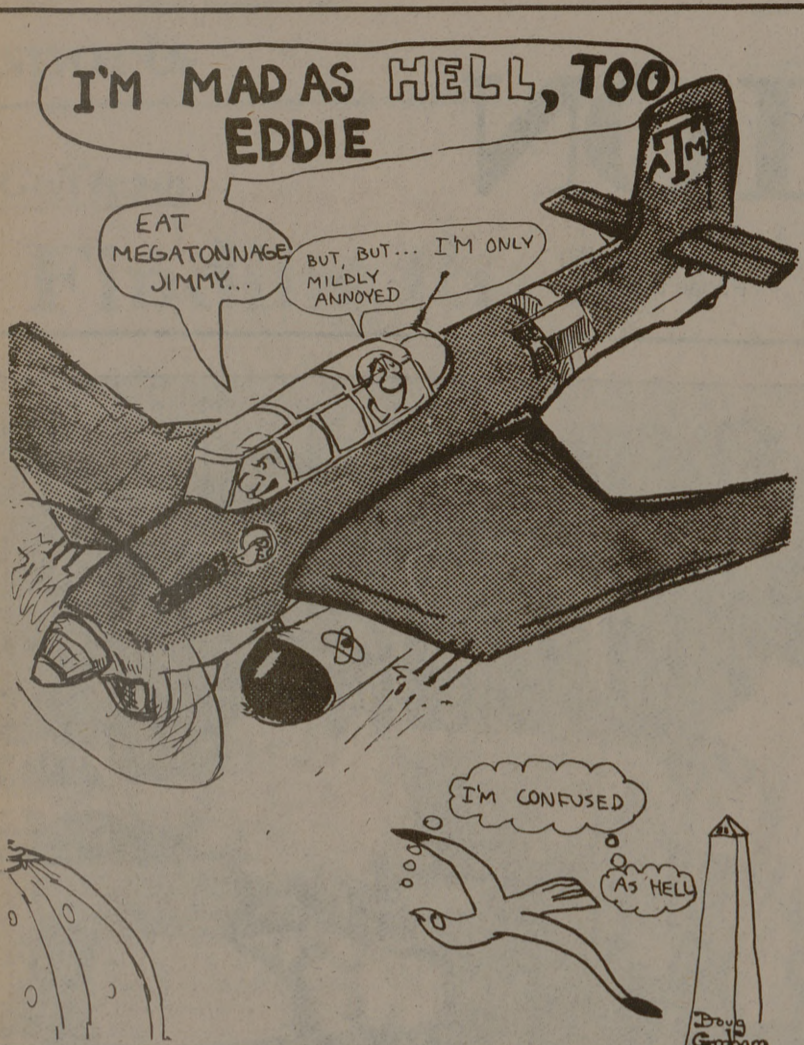
That supposed clarion call left the broadcasters so unmoved that in 20 minutes of questioning, not one of them cared to ask

what would power the Bakermobile. A lucky thing, too, for when the senator asked, he rattled off a list of alternative fuels long enough to suggest he had written which one it might be. And his casual assertion that the car could be built at a lower cost than today's gas-guzzlers fell out, on examination, to be based on discussions with anyone in the auto industry.

It is hard to know what to think of a man who has demonstrated his ability to vary a variety of challenging situations as a senator for 13 years runs such an inept campaign for President.

The manager of one of Baker's rival campaigns that Baker is the "worst-served by his nomination" of anyone in the GOP field. Howard Baker has had at least three vice-presidential bids since the 1976 convention, at which he passed over for vice-president in favor of Bob Dole, to think about how he would do for President and who he wanted to do for him.

At this point, the responsibility — and the consequences — are his.
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OPINION

We're just mad about Eddie

Another figure is making a bid to enter the Hall Of Fame of the Untalented.

The Hall of Fame of the Untalented is a place where they stick famous people who shouldn't have ever been famous. These are the people who have reached the pinnacle for success in show business simply because they had good managers.

Election to the Hall is usually reserved for television "personalities" like Allen Luden, Durwood Kirby, Farah Fawcett-Majors, Howard Cosell, Ed Sullivan.

The new addition to the Hall is a man who touched the hearts and stomachs of all of us — Eddie Chiles.

Eddie Chiles is an oilman. He was well-known, but he wasn't that famous. At least, not until his radio ads started. Eddie wanted others to hear his opinions on the state of the nation, the economy and the world.

Using his own money (which he has a lot of, I'm told) he paid for a series of radio messages.

The first line of an Eddie Chiles ad is always the biggie: "Hi, I'm Eddie Chiles and I'm mad as hell."

Catchy, isn't it? Well, someone thinks so. By now, most people — even those who don't go along with his conservative approach to most issues — know who he is. There's even an "I'm mad as hell, too Eddie" bumper sticker available.

So now, Chiles is the star of oil wells, car radios and bumper stickers everywhere.

All of this notoriety and hoopla just because he spoke his opinion. And sunk several hundred thousand dollars into an advertising campaign to carry this opinion everywhere.

It doesn't sound like something that should make a guy famous, but look what "Excu-u-use Me!" did for Steve Martin's popularity.

Move over Farrah — here comes Eddie.

the small society

by Brickman



MACRELLY THE ARCHMONT NEWS LEADER © M. B. ARCHMONT NEWS



LETTERS U.S. needs draft

Editor:
This letter is written in reply to Robert Zahray's letter which appeared on January 30. I want to go on record, for myself and many other Aggies, as one who firmly believes that both draft registration and possible reinstatement of the draft are very necessary actions.
The draft is basically a method of meeting manpower needs of our armed forces. The draft is practically useless if instituted after a war has begun. In that event we would be caught with our pants down and would be unable to react in time to preserve vital national interests. The time to prepare an adequate size army is now. We must build an Army that is trained, ready, and able to fight.
Mr. Zahray call the draft "a form of involuntary servitude, not in keeping with the ideas of a free people." May I point out what involuntary military service really is. It means being taken from your home and family, in the middle of the night, to spend

eight years guarding a missile silo in Siberia; it is being 40 years old and taken from your job to stand in a guard tower on the Iron Curtain; it means being told "yes," you can attend college provided you become a Soviet pilot or KGB officer. No Mr. Zahray, our draft is not a form of involuntary servitude, it is a necessary function to preserve that hallowed ground you now stand on. It means protection of your job, your home, your family and friends. It could preserve your very way of life.
Mr. Zahray further states that in case of an actual attack on the U.S., volunteers would meet our manpower needs. Just who is going to volunteer if everyone possesses Mr. Zahray's ideologies?
We take so many of our freedoms, such as speech, religion, and assembly for granted that we never give thought as to why we enjoy these privileges. No, a strong military does not guarantee our rights; but it does guarantee that we have a chance to defend these rights.

So sleep easy tonight Mr. Zahray, your freedoms are still yours . . . for now.
Kenny Ray '82
(This letter was accompanied by 15 other signatures.)

Story called 'unfair'

Editor:
As a Taiwanese student in Texas A&M, we are really amazed at seeing an entirely untrue report regarding our country in Friday's Battalion. We are all from Taiwan and we firmly believe we know our own country much better than Susan Arigo, Jim Leach or any one else who has never been in our country. Our country is not only a democratic one, it is a country totally of the people, for the people and by the people. But that does not imply one may endanger any other person at his will.
Is there any freedom of attacking police-

men in this country? I am afraid the answer is "no." However, under Shih Ming-sheng's scheme, a small group of mob with various kinds of weapons attacked the fresh-faced policemen in Taiwan, which caused 20 people wounded — 200 policemen, not rioters. It is not Shih but all those policemen that are real heroes. They protect the citizen's lives and safety at the risk of their own lives, they are not only brave, but also respectable. As a matter of fact, we, as most people in that beautiful island are really happy to know that Shih has been arrested. He should have been put in jail along time ago.
Please tell Susan Arigo that our government and all friendly people there always heartily welcome visitors to our country, but not rioters, and one more thing, she should really be ashamed of having such a brother-in-law.
Shirley Ding
(This letter was accompanied by 90 other signatures.)

THE BATTALION

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THOTZ

