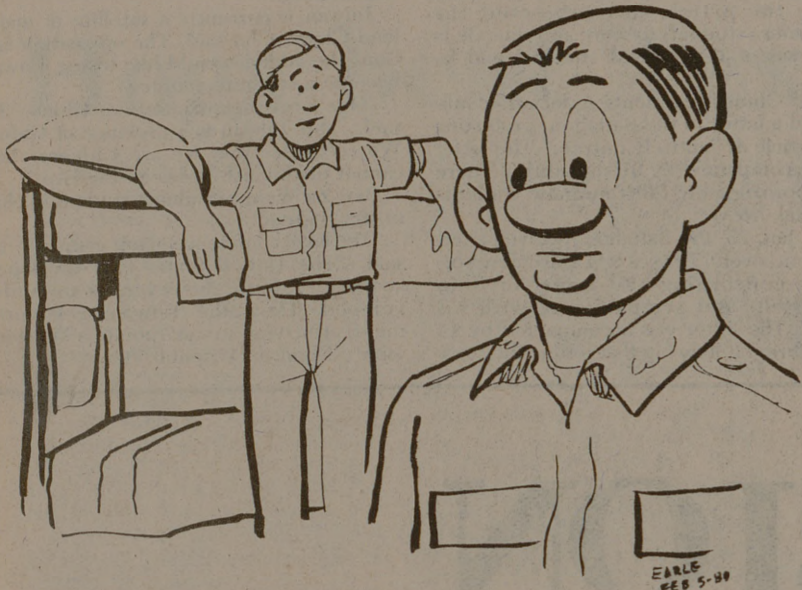


SLOUCH by Jim Earle



"I have difficulty getting started this semester. If I work hard and get my grades in good shape, we have a national emergency, and I get drafted, all my energy will have been wasted!"

OPINION

Draft overreaction is common

There's a lot of discussion going on about the reinstatement of the draft.

In larger cities and on larger college campuses, there have already been protests against involuntary military induction. A receptionist at a local travel agency said she has already gotten several phone calls from people in the draft age bracket concerning extended vacations in Canada. America is in the grips of a panic it hasn't seen since last summer's gas crisis.

The draft is a big issue for Aggies, too. A lot of people are perturbed about recent letters to The Battalion against the draft. Everyone is talking as though the draft is a certainty.

All of this hysteria is a bit premature. Let's set the record straight about this draft issue: Congress hasn't even begun to discuss a law that, if passed, would reinstate selective service registration. That's not the draft. The draft comes later. And from all indications, we're talking about six months at the earliest. Add a few more months for government screw-ups, and the first date available is about a year away. There's one reason to avoid an immediate panic.

Here's another reason: Americans like to worry. In a recent speech, Sen. Edward Kennedy accused the President of creating a war scare. Well, Kennedy is almost right; there is a war scare, but it's not Carter's fault. The call for reinstatement of selective service registration is more of show of force aimed towards the Soviets than anything else. The war scare is the fault of the American people themselves — the same people who created long lines at gas stations trying to keep their gas tanks constantly full.

Remember, discussion is healthy, but worrying won't solve anything.

the small society by Brickman



THE BATTALION

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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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VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

TUESDAY
FEBRUARY 5, 1980

Carter's disappearance won't shield him from media

By DAVID S. BRODER

I am getting a queasy feeling. It is the same feeling I had in 1972, when the incumbent President of the United States treated his re-election campaign as a matter too unimportant for his notice.

Richard M. Nixon had time to go to Peking and to Moscow that year, but he barely had time to campaign and no time at all to face his challenger in debate. In all of 1972, President Nixon held exactly seven press conferences.

When the 1972 campaign was over, those of us in the business of reporting politics were given unshirtd hell — and deservedly so — by the press critics and by a good many concerned citizens, not all of whom were supporters of George McGovern by any means, about why we had let Nixon "get away" without defending his record or explaining his policies.

Our defense, such as it was, was that the press has no real power to compel a President to talk; that our work is to cover a campaign, not to stage it; and that if there is no real campaign because one of the participants is missing, we cannot synthesize one.

All of which is true, but not a very satisfying response to those who said we did not do all that we could have done to make it uncomfortable for a President to defect on his duty to democracy.

Which brings us to the case of President

Carter. Since the American hostages were seized on Nov. 4, Carter has disappeared from the campaign stage and soared in the polls. Once again, this week, he explained to a group of out-of-town editors that "it would be better for me" not to make partisan appearances while the Iranian and Afghanistan situations remain in flux.

Better for him, but not necessarily better for the country. For there are real choices of policy to be debated in the Persian Gulf region — as at home — and the President's insulation increasingly impedes that debate. He says national unity must be preserved. But increasingly it is clear that it is Carter's interests — not the hostages' and the country's — that are being protected by his sequestered status.

Even if there were a plausible case for hiding from his challengers, what is Carter's case for hiding from the press? As this is written, he has not held a press conference for the reporters assigned to the White House since last Nov. 25. He did go on Meet the Press on Jan. 20 — the day before the Iowa caucuses.

That appearance provides an example of what the country is being denied by Carter's fadeout. I asked the President, on that Sunday, whether the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, posing an increased Russian threat to Iran, would cause him to "accept a delay or postponement of the imposition of

the economic sanctions against Iran" which he had requested the United Nations to vote a month earlier.

Carter did not hesitate or equivocate: "No," he said. "Those sanctions will be pursued by ourselves unilaterally and joined in by as many of our allies as will agree." Saying the support in the United Nations was "overwhelming," he reiterated, "I will not postpone the imposition of sanctions."

That produced very useful caucusing headlines of a President committed to the sternest action to free the hostages. But 11 days later, as this is written, the sanctions are not in effect.

On Jan. 29, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance said the delay was irrelevant, because "in practical effect, the sanctions are in place already." The freeze on Iranian assets in U.S. banks and other measures taken after the hostages seizure had brought U.S. trade with Iran to a halt, he pointed out.

But those measures were all taken before Carter on Dec. 21 said "the foundation of civilized diplomacy... the integrity of international law, the credibility of the United Nations and the maintenance of peace in the region" all required that formal sanctions "must" be imposed. They were in place on Jan. 20 when Carter said, "I will

not postpone the imposition of sanctions... When Jody Powell was asked about promised sanctions on Jan. 28, "There has been no change in policy that can be true only if one supports what the President says he will do. I think, he means you to understand that already did it."

There may be good case for imposing sanctions or dropping them... view of the Russian army in Afghanistan and the new government in Tehran, so, let the President say it — and let him explain, too, how he can on Jan. 26 that the United States will do any effort by any outside force to control of the Persian Gulf region means necessary, including military and on Jan. 29 that "obviously we intend, and never have claimed to, ability unilaterally to defeat any that region with ease."

Let him, in short, cast aside his... ing for a \$40 billion tax to increase... in the face of an expected recession... Let him, in short, cast aside his... Texas tive clock and face his duties as... Durin seeking office in a democracy... men are And, oh yes, let us be spared... round of questions on "how did... member press let him get away with... Klapp s... (c) 1980, The Washington Post... ons an... and atte



LETTERS Foreign student says draft needed

Editor: I am writing to you concerning the letter written by Robert Zahary.

I am a foreign student, and the reason why I am in the United States studying is to get a better education, and to learn the principles of democracy and freedom. I admire these two principles as the basis that sustain America and the free world.

First of all I can not understand how some Americans can say things like this: "The draft is simply a form of involuntary

servitude not in keeping with the ideals of a free people. The concept of slaving some of our citizen in order to keep The United States free is self-contradictory at best."

These Americans do not realize that the United States is not an island isolated from the rest of the world. We have two powers in the world — the Communist power bloc and the Western power bloc. If we take a look in a dictionary, we find out that power is "a nation having influence over other nations." If we have two powers in the

world we can say that the world is divided into two parts: the free world influenced by the United States and the oppressed world dominated by Russia.

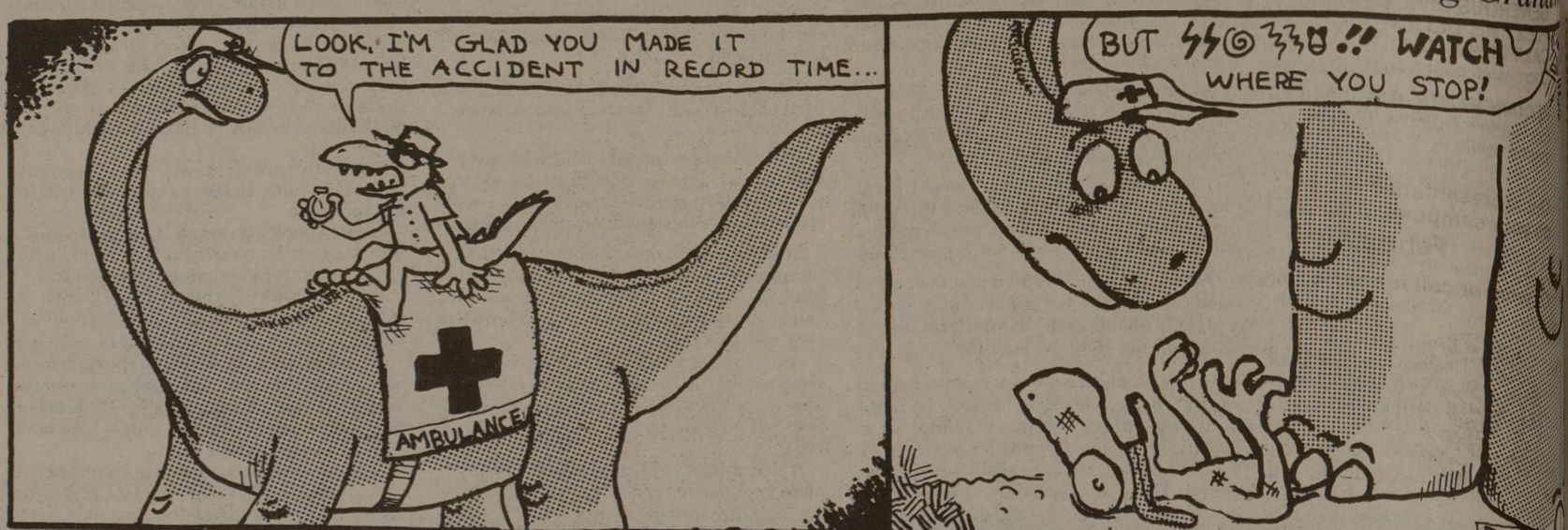
When the United States is fighting in a war it is not only for its own defense, but the defense of democracy and of the free world. If the United States does not fight, Russia is going to take over the free world and the whole concept of democracy and freedom will be destroyed.

If some people do not want to fight for

the rest of the world it is understandable but why not fight for the country where everything to its people. When Uncle asks for help, some non-patriotic Americans give only excuses like involuntary vitude or slavery of its citizens. The thing to do is to go and register, and be a good American; not only for the freedom of the world but for the freedom of America and its own people.

Oscar A. Alvarez

THOTZ



By Doug Graham