

VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

TUESDAY
AUGUST 5, 1980

Slouch

by Jim Earle

'Mo Mentum' is coming back

by DICK WEST

WASHINGTON — Now that George Bush has returned to the campaign trail as the Republican vice presidential candidate, voters everywhere are wondering whether Mo Mentum also can make a political comeback.

For awhile it appeared "Big Mo" had made the fatal mistake of backing the wrong man.

Anyone who was paying attention during the early stages of the 1980 campaign is aware that Bush originally started out as a candidate for the top job. In that capacity he was wont to claim that Mo Mentum was on his side. He even used the intimate diminutive "Big Mo." But it was more like being in cahoots with "Slo Mo."

Despite Bush's claim to have picked up Mo Mentum, it was Ronald Reagan who kept winning the primaries. Television analysts began suggesting that Mo Mentum wasn't all that important. If Reagan could win so handily

without "Big Mo" behind him you had to question whether Mo Mentum would ever again be a political force worth cultivating.

That sort of talk, it now appears, may have been badly off base.

I am told by experts who were on the scene at the Republican convention that "Big Mo" was instrumental in landing second prize for Bush. What happened to put Mo Mentum back into the campaign picture after he was all but counted out?

Look, if I could answer questions like that I would be knocking down half a mil or so a year as a television analyst.

All I can tell you is that on that fateful night in Detroit when the television analysts were so astutely assigning the vice presidential nomination to Gerald Ford, "Big Mo" was there waiting in the wings biding his time. Then, when he saw the iron was hot, he struck.

If you want Mo Mentum behind you when you go up against Jimmy Carter, you will have

to ditch Ford and put my boy George on a ticket," he told Reagan's men. And the history.

Such loyalty, if that was what it is, is exceedingly rare. In previous campaigns Mo Mentum has been the supreme pragmatist, shifting sides and changing directions at a whim.

We all remember the 1976 campaign. Carter emerged from the Democratic primary election with "Big Mo" solidly behind him. In election time, it was Ford who had Mo Mentum going for him.

Did Bush make any unusual concessions to keep Mo Mentum with him during the presidential maneuvering? Did he offer to make "Big Mo" a co-veep?

Not being a television analyst, I cannot tell you the inside story. But if the Republicans win in November and you see Bush with ceremonial ribbons with Mo Mentum, I bet there was some kind of a deal.



EARLE
8-1-80

"Have you seen my armadillo?"

Billygate, Watergate cases not comparable

by HELEN THOMAS

WASHINGTON — Will "Billygate" be Jimmy Carter's undoing?

Some Republicans say Billy Carter's monied flirtation with the Libyans is akin to the Watergate scandal which brought down Richard Nixon.

Whatever it is — and a special Senate committee aims to find out — the investigation of Billy's Tripoli connection has put his brother the president in a political hotspot.

It has given Jimmy Carter's old enemies — and sometime friends — among the Democratic ranks an excuse to jump ship. It also has caused the president enormous personal problems at a time when he had expected to gear up for a tough campaign against Republican candidate Ronald Reagan.

No doubt the Billy Carter inquiry has given supporters of Sen. Edward Kennedy a new lease on life with their calls for an open convention.

But the president's political strategists do not believe the dump Carter movement will succeed and feel there will be little slippage among the delegates Carter won in the primaries.

The president's relationship with his brother is personal and complex. It has also become embarrassing and in some ways an albatross. But from past observations it is not expected that Carter will repudiate his baby brother although he may admit errors in judgment — perhaps faulty decisions — but no wrongdoing.

White House aides are leaving it up to the imagination of reporters what Carter is saying privately about the matter. Obviously angry, Rosalynn Carter put it succinctly saying, "I have no comment to make publicly" about Billy.

"It's one thing if we got a brother — out here a boob — making an embarrassment of himself causing embarrassment to the president. We can all sympathize with that I think," said Sen. Birch Bayh, D-Ind., chairman of the special Senate committee.

"It's another if he has in some way or other influenced the course of government. That is a serious problem if it happened. We have no evidence of that now."

Believing this too shall pass White House press secretary Jody Powell says the president "obviously is concerned about all of this."

"But he has a very strong feeling that he and the White House have behaved properly in the matter... which doesn't mean it's not

possible to question this or that decision. He's confident that full public disclosure will show that," Powell said.

Powell also contends Washington still suffers from a "post-Watergate syndrome."

"People in Washington and on Capitol Hill are reliving in many ways things that happened before we got here" he said. "Both Congress and the press have been burned because they believed what a president said."

He believes that members of Congress are reluctant to go out on a limb and support the president for fear of "having the rug pulled out from them," particularly since many are running for reelection.

Ever since the days his brother first ran for president, the spotlight has been on Billy Carter, who up to then was going about his life in Plains minding his own business.

Colorful, wisecracking and good-hearted, Billy has been caught up in the aura and captured national attention. There were those who chose to exploit him as a legitimate redneck and there was perhaps his own desire to make a fast buck.

It is difficult for him to fathom the ramifications of his actions and the political damage it may have caused the president.

He does not believe he did anything wrong. He believes the \$220,000 loan from the Libyan government was an act of friendship. He resisted registering as a foreign agent for Libya but was convinced by his lawyers, and probably the president, that he should do so.

Justice Department knowledge of the payments was probably the most telling point in persuading him to register.

But both Billy and the White House insist that he never lobbied for the Libyans. Nor, they say, did he try to free for them the planes they purchased in the United States. The delivery of all but three of them has been blocked because the United States believes they may be used for terrorism by the radical Libyan government.

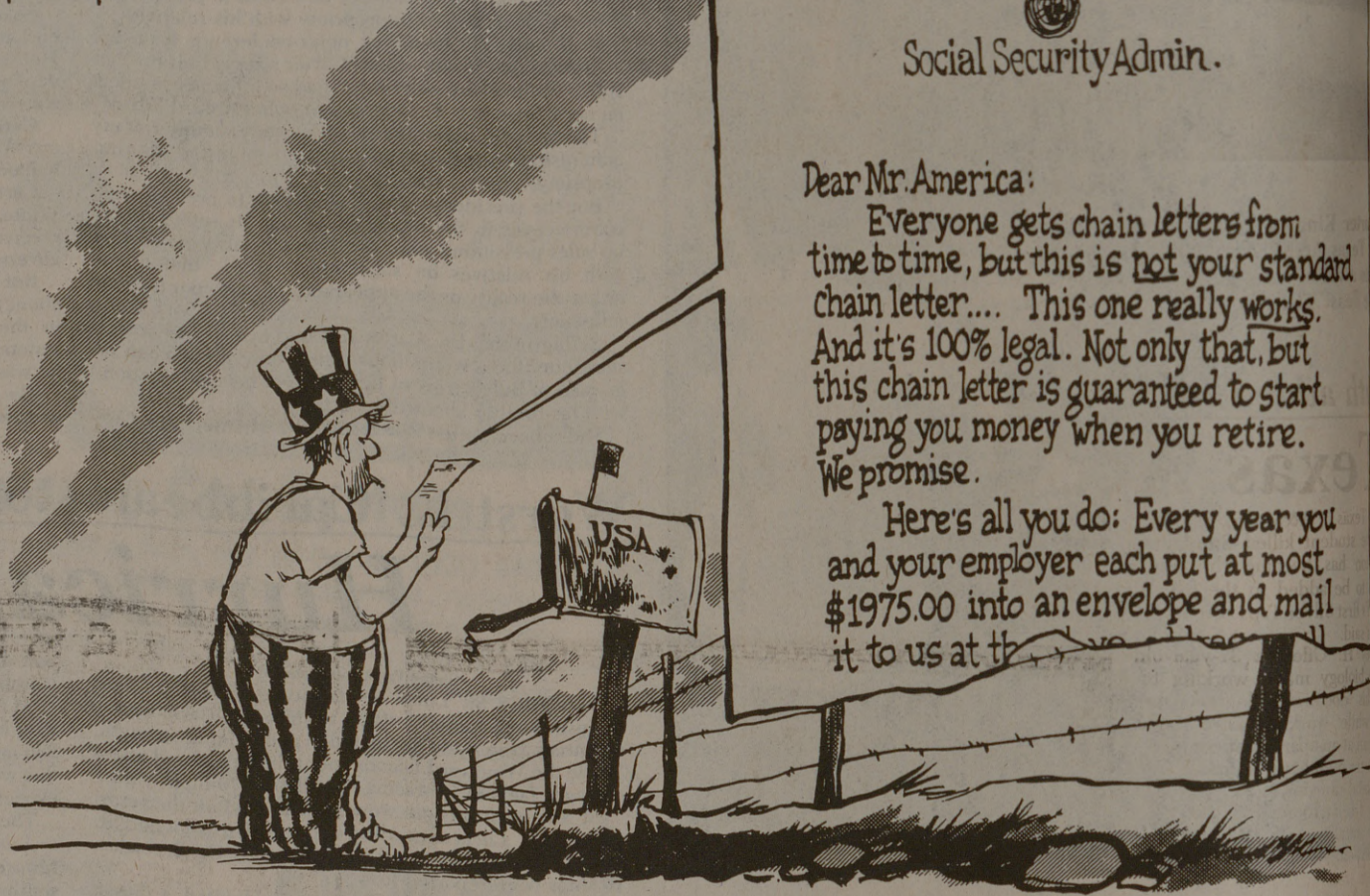
Billy Carter's appearance at the hearings may have tragic and comic overtones. He speaks his mind, much in the manner of his mother, Miss Lillian.

Certainly he is never dull. There is some pathos about his position. Will it be a three-ring circus or a sedate inquiry?

Washington observers who watched the unraveling of the Watergate scandal believe the Billy Carter case is not comparable.

The main difference they say is that Billy's brother has not tried to subvert the Constitution, as was the case with Richard Nixon.

MACABLY REPHRASED NEWS LEADER © 1980 BY CHICAGO TRIBUNE.



It's Your Turn Traditions should be told to visitors

Carlin praised

Editor:

I picked up another Tuesday afternoon Battalion only to see a picture of George Carlin on the front page. Unfortunately, I missed the concert because I had to work and had an exam to study for that night.

George Carlin is a favorite and one that can always make you appreciate things in life that happen to everyone, yet aren't given time to

be appreciated. Upset about missing the concert, I turned to page 3 to read the review.

I must commend Scot K. Meyer for his review, as he put such a spark of Carlin's giggle all the way through and I felt I could see George talking about the way krispies float in milk.

Thanks Joe Monroe, for hiring George and thanks George Carlin, for awakening our eyes; and thanks Scot K. Meyer, for enabling me to enjoy George — even through a review. Mia Zwolinski

Correction

A cutline on page 1 of Thursday's Battalion contained some incorrect information. The dog pictured in the Chemistry Building fountain is a Norwegian Elkhound named Balaena, belonging to biology senior Hoffman Marett. The Battalion regrets the error.

THE BATTALION

USPS 045 360

MEMBER

Texas Press Association
Southwest Journalism Congress

LETTERS POLICY

Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length and are subject to being cut if they are longer. The editor reserves the right to edit letters for style and length. Each letter must be signed, show the address and phone number of the writer.

Columns and guest editorials are also welcome, and subject to the same length constraints as letters. All inquiries and correspondence to: Editor, The Battalion, Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843.

The Battalion is published Tuesday through Thursday, Texas A&M's summer school schedule. Mail subscription rates: \$16.75 per semester, \$33.25 per school year and \$57.50 per year. Advertising rates furnished on request.

Our address: The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843.

United Press International is entitled exclusively to the reproduction of all news dispatches credited to it. Reproduction of all other matter herein reserved. Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.

Editor Dillard Stone
City Editor Becky Swanson
Sports Editor Richard Oliver
News Editor Lynn Blanco
Staff Writers Uschi Michel-Howell,
Debbie Nelson, Cathy Saathoff,
Scot K. Meyer
Photo Editor Janet Golub

EDITORIAL POLICY

The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting newspaper operated as a community service to Texas A&M University and Bryan-College Station. Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the editor or the author, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Texas A&M University administrators or faculty members, or of the Board of Regents. Questions or comments concerning any editorial matter should be directed to the editor.

by Scott McCullar

Warped

