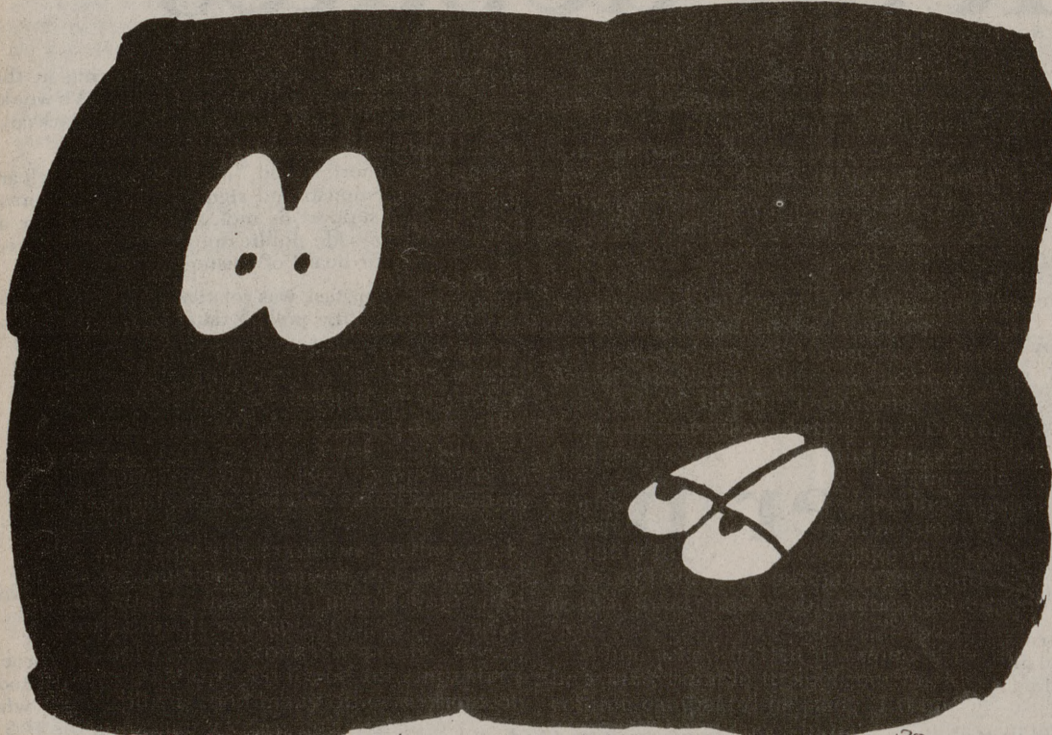


VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

WEDNESDAY
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Slouch By Jim Earle



EARLE 9-10-80

"I've got it! If I change my chemistry lab to Tuesday, drop history, change my math course, and get out of the Corps, I can have Friday afternoons free!"

Anderson platform needs more exposure

By DAVID S. BRODER

DETROIT — Independent presidential candidate John B. Anderson has some interesting ideas to offer in this election year. But unless the latest shakeup in his staff serves to focus his rather helter-skelter personal campaigning, it is unlikely that many voters are ever going to know what they are missing.

The 317-page platform that Anderson and his running mate, former Wisconsin governor Patrick J. Lucey, issued last week is studded with specific programs that are eminently worth discussion. But the document was dropped into the newspapers on the Labor Day holiday weekend, when few voters were paying attention. And after one day, it disappeared.

Anderson's mid-week visit to Detroit was a demonstration of how far the candidate has to go in converting the intellectual capital invested in the platform into political dividends for a campaign that is still struggling to achieve credibility.

As it happens, Michigan is potentially one of Anderson's best states. Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan have never demonstrated any great personal appeal here, and the economic plight of the auto industry has left thousands of voters searching for an alternative. A professional poll of some 800 voters, taken during the Democratic convention week in August, showed Anderson only seven points behind Carter and only nine points behind Reagan in the state.

Thus, Anderson's first visit here in the general election campaign was an event that carried great potential — and should have been treated with great care. It was not.

The Anderson platform has a specific, seven-point program addressed to the auto industry's problems, plus a good many other sections on rehabilitating aging cities and obsolescent industrial plants.

Instead of pulling those buried proposals into a relatively compact statement focused specifically on the problems of Detroit, Anderson went unarmed into his morning press conference, which drew a heavy turnout of reporters from local and national newspapers, radio and television stations.

After introducing Lucey, he turned immediately to questions — and was overwhelmed with the predictable "horse-race" queries about the status of his finances, his chances of getting into the presidential debates and his willingness to quit the race if he runs out of money or drops in the polls.

To all of this, Anderson responded in a lackadaisical defensive manner. If there was any

forethought on his part or his staff's that the press conference could have been used to get across a story he wanted to communicate — a story of his concern for, and solutions to, the problems of Detroit and the auto industry — it was not in evidence.

Two hours later, at a rally in Kennedy Square, Anderson did address those issues. But an out-of-doors stump speech, with the candidate shouting to drown out a few hecklers, was not the place to explain a refundable 10 percent tax credit for industrial research or an additional 25 percent tax credit for rehabilitation of old factories — although Anderson tried.

But in his hasty search for applause lines, he neglected to make it clear that he was committed, in his platform, to "consult with foreign automotive producers in an effort to avoid arbitrary trade restrictions by persuading them to observe voluntary restraint during times of sharply slumping domestic sales."

The point Anderson made in his platform, but not in his Detroit appearances, was stressed here the day before by Reagan. But Reagan's views were headlined in the local newspapers and featured on television broadcasts, while Anderson's statements on the auto industry were known to most Detroiters.

In an interview during the Detroit visit, Anderson complained of the "negative" coverage he was getting, of the emphasis in news stories on a supposedly "faltering" campaign which he said was really just beginning. But he did little to shape the coverage of his own campaign or to focus attention on his positive proposals instead of his problematical political situation.

When asked in that interview if he thought he would be able to spell out his ideas in the coming campaign, he said, "I think we'll have some good audiences in national forums, but I don't know what the format will be. David Garth is my media expert."

But Garth, the ad man and campaign consultant, is back in Washington, and Tom Matthews, Anderson's newly designated traveling political and public relations adviser, is off on a fishing vacation in Utah.

The Anderson platform may be the most valuable collection of innovative policy ideas so far assembled in the 1980s. It could help form the dialogue and debate in this presidential election campaign — no matter who wins. But it will be doomed to the dustbin unless Anderson and his campaign acquire the skill and the discipline to use the resource the platform represents.

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'Choking' can be reversed

The ability to handle pressure, whether it be social, sporting or learning, is an underdeveloped skill at any age. But college students struggling for grades and recognition seem especially susceptible to its ill effects.

Pressure is the blame-all for poor performance. Listening to television announcers in last year's NFL playoffs, I continually heard that pressure causes the choke that audiences associate with substandard performance in a win-or-lose situation.

And for years my friends and teammates have told me that "the pressure got to me." Or, "I choked." Or, "I wasn't mentally prepared." Or, "I am worried about this test." At times, I have used that excuse.

With midterm tests approaching, my roommates have chain smoked, paced, contemplated the ceiling at bedtime and verbally worried about failing. My palms always sweated, but I could sleep without trouble. Those actions never helped performance.

But I felt pressure most shooting rifle for Texas A&M University. With competition, especially against the University of Texas, came that familiar stomach-tightening, heart-pounding, muscle-twitching decrease in scores that I had pictured before the match. What I saw was what I got.

Leftovers

By Todd Woodard

That decrease was not only unnecessary, but contrary to how champions use pressure.

Lanny Bassham, 1976 Olympic gold medalist in rifle, told me this summer how he used pressure to enhance his performance rather than destroy it.

He explained that pressure has both a positive and negative side. On the positive side is arousal, the sharpening of physical abilities in response to stress. On the negative side is anxiety, the jitters, the shakes.

Unfortunately, he said, most persons experience anxiety in much larger amounts than arousal. They feared failure more than they could envision success. Mentally, they saw themselves struggling while shooting, or taking tests or talking to an attractive man or woman. Because of that mental picture, they decreased their chances of success, a self-fulfilling prophecy.

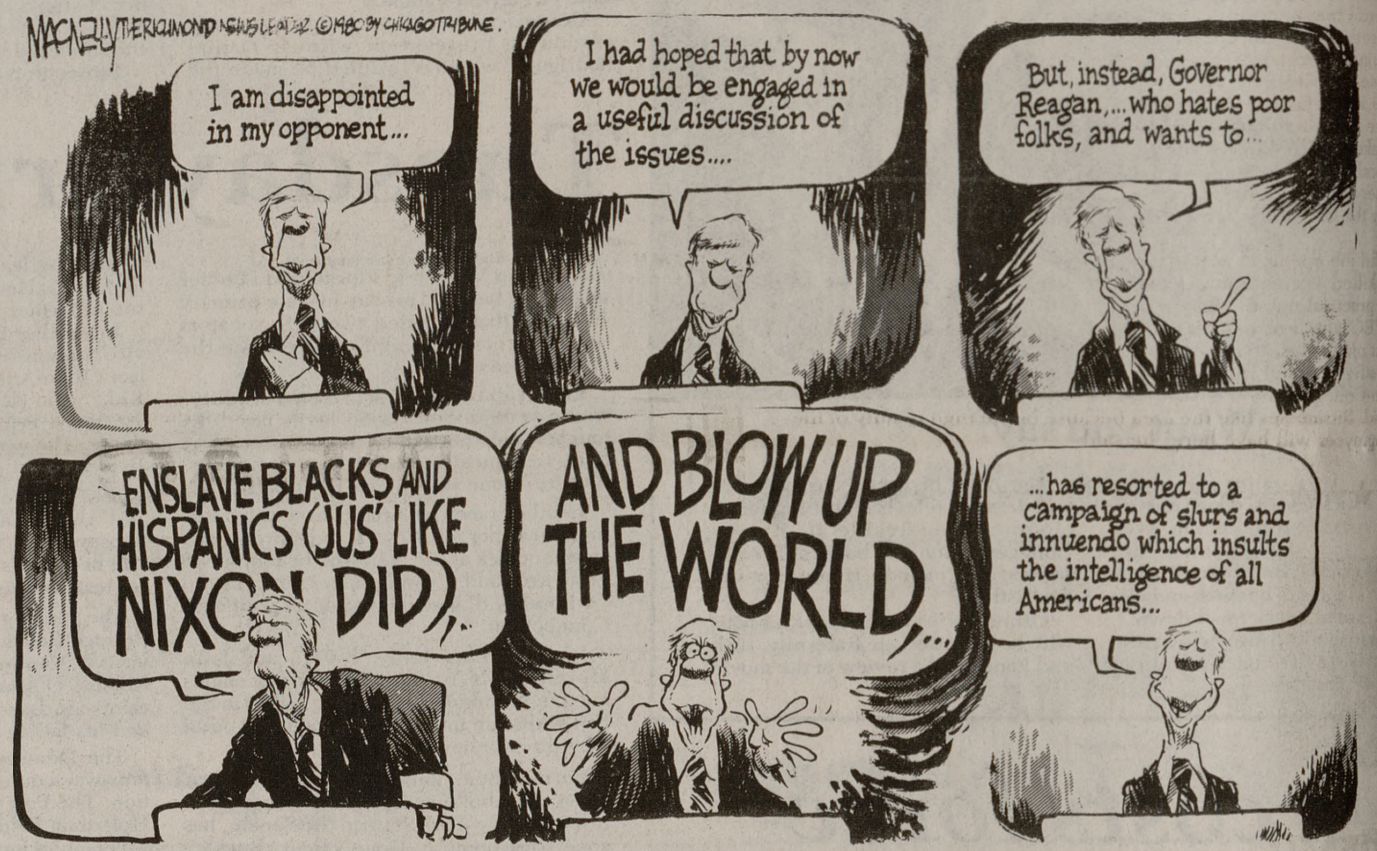
Off the cuff, he added that Texas A&M foot-

ball teams had the reputation, unwarranted, of folding in tight or important games. He suggested that Aggies might be worried about failure instead of feeling success before the game. He laughed wondering if Todd was thinking "Don't mess up," could affect his performance. I missed the joke.

Prior preparation should take the worry, he said. If you have shot a lot of scores, or read and absorbed material or lifted and sweated and run before the game, why worry? Be aggressive and positive, he said. "You know you're ready, you will have the performance you planned." "Even if you haven't prepared, why worry? Will worrying improve your score? Will your brain function better? No," he said.

His advice was good. Just thinking well prior to a competition lets me relax, of scoring high on a test, of being through questions, takes the pressure out of it to confidence.

After scoring her first 10 in the 1976 games, gymnast Nadia Comaneci said when a television commentator asked her to deal with pressure. With a puzzled look said through interpreter, "What is pressure? Oh, Lord, it's hard to be humble."



It's your turn

P.E. registration lacking in efficiency

Editor:

I am thoroughly disgusted with the system the Physical Education department used for registering students for P.E. classes this year. I, only being a two-year industrial engineering major, can easily see that this system is sadly lacking in efficiency and cohesion of purpose. Unless, of course, the purpose is to thoroughly frustrate and confuse the student.

I pity the freshmen who have to wander through G. Rollie without directions, onto the floor to try and read illegible signs, to wait on lines to get a card, to wait on more lines to try and get another card, without hearing "the class is closed, I guess the flimsy sheet of paper with closed scrawled across it fell off"; to file to the bleacher to wait on another line to get another card, to wait, wait, wait until their sections from a list of all the sections held at that time only is called, and then wait on another line to hand in their card and finally leave.

Actually I share empathy with my new Ag counterparts for although I am classified as a sophomore, I did not have the required 45

hours (the equivalent of two 2 1/2-hour semesters) to register early. Instead, I earned the privilege of choosing my class at the same time they did. So much for the "rank hath its privilege" philosophy that the University followed last year and still adheres to for football games.

I can't believe that a department within a university that has one of the top engineering schools in the nation, would ignore all the resources available to create an efficient system and attempt to make do with a sorely inadequate "system." I'm not the nasty type, but now I'm convinced that physical education majors should stick to the gym and let the engineers do their job.

Terri Rome '83

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The Battalion solicits letters to the editor and guest opinions and comments for the Viewpoint page.

Letters to the editor should be limited to 200 words, and are subject to being cut if they exceed that length. Every effort will be made to honor the intent of the author. Letters will not be returned unless accompanied by return address.

Guest columns and opinions may address a wide variety of topics, outside the limits of the Viewpoint page. All letters, guest opinions and columns must be signed by the author, with accompanying phone number.

All letters and other material will be published at the discretion of the editor.

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

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