

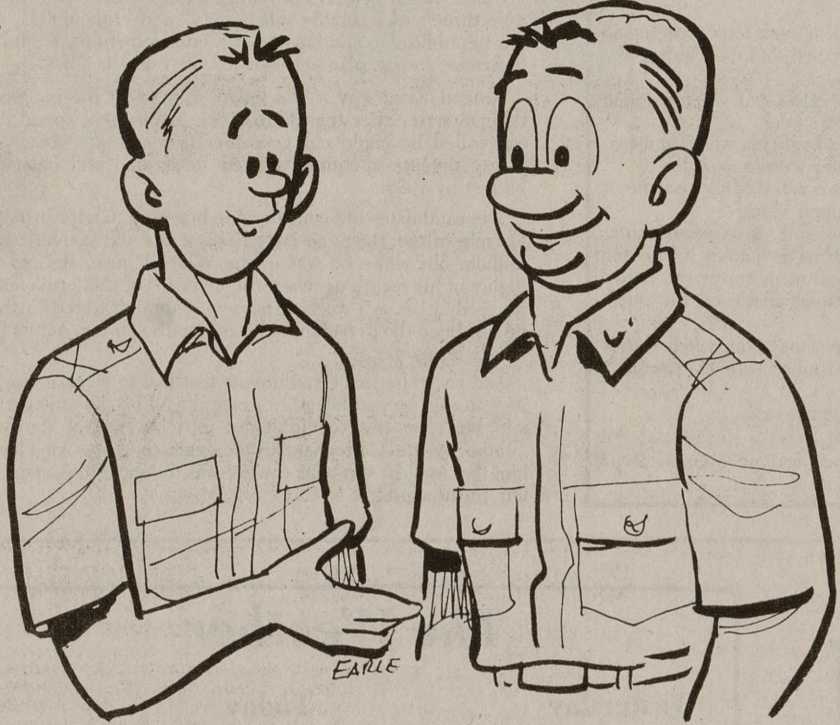
VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

WEDNESDAY
OCTOBER 29, 1980

Slouch

By Jim Earle



"It's too bad the Carter-Reagan debate couldn't have been held on Oct. 26, the 99th anniversary of the Shoot-out at the O.K. Corral."

Carter's party, record will hurt him most

It took the Great Presidential Debate of 1980 to put the spotlight on what's really underlying this election.

The next president won't necessarily be the best looking, the best orator, the best administrator nor even the best leader.

He'll be the man whose basic party philosophy more closely reflects the views of a majority of America.

Judging from Tuesday night, that man will be Ronald Reagan.

We've all heard complaints recently about how the two-party system is a farce, about how both Republican and Democratic candidates are so much alike in their views that it doesn't matter who we vote for.

Based on last night's debate, there are many fundamental differences between both Reagan and Jimmy Carter — and their respective parties.

Reagan forcefully hammered home time and again his philosophy that the federal government is intruding too much into the affairs of private citizens and the free enterprise system.

It's the same line we heard when Reagan visited Texas A&M almost two years ago. And it's going to be very effective in luring the vote of the guy who has a large percentage of his paycheck eaten up by federal taxes; the guy who believes there's too much federal regulation and not enough state autonomy; and the guy who believes the United States is weakening as a world power.

In short, Reagan is a dogmatic conservative, dedicated to less governmental interference in American life.

Reagan's also quick with the tongue. Noticing, like many in the audience, that Carter had not replied directly to a question on the hostage crisis in Iran, Reagan said, "Barbara, you've asked that question twice and I think it's time you got one answer."

(But Reagan proceeded to evade the same question, almost as skillfully as Carter had done.)

Reagan also compared Carter to "a witch doctor who gets upset when a real doctor shows up with the cure."

Cheap shots? Maybe, but they pinpointed exactly Carter's one major weakness: his record. On the hostages, on the economy, on foreign affairs, Carter hasn't a real leg to stand on. His record is open to substantial attacks.

That's why he's resorted to attacking Reagan's stands — rather than promoting his own solutions — more and more as the campaign winds down. And the Carter attacks aren't restricted to rational arguments against Reagan's views — he's exploiting America's

Sidebars

By Dillard Stone

fear of Ronny-On-The-Button, just as Lyndon Johnson painted Barry Goldwater as a man of war, tied to nuclear weapons proliferation. If Carter wins, it will probably be due to the fear many Americans have of seeing Reagan in control of nuclear weapons.

That's why Carter said that nuclear bombs are the key issue in the election. Carter focused on that because he realizes the truth of Reagan's charge that he, by his own Misery Index standard, doesn't deserve to be re-elected.

But in addition to his record, Carter has another weakness: his party. The president is inextricably linked with governmental extensions into many areas of life. It comes down to liberalism vs. conservatism, and Reagan's belief that Americans are capable of handling their own affairs without the government stepping in may win him the election.

Feminists — and Democrats — are almost hyperactive in their support of the Equal Rights Amendment. Many other Americans aren't so sure that the ERA is necessary. They feel, as does Reagan, that the federal government need not interfere yet in areas where state and local governments haven't had a chance to try solutions.

Carter's favoring of national catastrophic health insurance isn't going to sit well with those Americans who see socialized anything as 1) a step in the direction of decreased freedoms, and 2) an automatic indicator of a decline in the quality of the product.

Even Carter's "good" claims, for example, a 73 percent increase in federal aid to education, are anathema to citizens who see federal aid as federal control.

The Democrats years ago may have found a receptive audience to put up with their social welfare philosophy of government. That philosophy is slowly losing favor.

Carter had hoped to show Reagan up as an ignorant fool Tuesday night. He didn't succeed — mainly because Carter's record is singularly unimpressive; because Carter is tied to party views which may be those of a coalition of minorities, but which probably no longer reflect the views of Middle America; and because they see no real reason to continue putting off answers to the problems facing America.

Beware of last-minute charges

By ARNOLD SAWISLAK
United Press International

WASHINGTON — With just a week to go before the election, this may be a good time to post the "Voter Beware" sign. Herewith is a "Guide to Last Minute Campaign Exposés, Promises and Other Fast Shuffles."

1) Be wary of charges that surface during the last week of the campaign about candidates' health, honesty or morals.

The very fact that such charges are heard in the final days of the campaign is suspect: if the candidate really is suffering from a terminal illness, has been dipping in the public till or indulging sexual peccadilloes, the information is likely to have come out much earlier.

Of course, it is possible that relevant new facts in these categories might come to light just before the election, but experience shows that most such disclosures are either false, based on incomplete or distorted information or old stuff dressed up as hot, fresh and spicy news. Approach with care.

In this same category are rumors and whis-

pers ("My sister heard..." "A guy at the office was told...") that begin circulating just before the polls open. They almost surely are the product of 11th hour desperation campaigning and almost surely are fabrications.

2) Watch out for the last-minute promise. At best, if a candidate suddenly makes a promise to do something for this or that special group (appoint a gay Eskimo to the Supreme Court, for example), he has made a very late discovery of a social need or injustice that was there all the time.

At worst, the candidate is trying to squeeze out the last bloc of votes needed to win, after which the promise will be forgotten or fudged up with all sort of explanations of why it can't be redeemed.

As for sensational election eve promises ("I shall go to Abu Dhabi"), the questions to ask are, "Will it solve the problem?" and "How come it took you so long to think of it?"

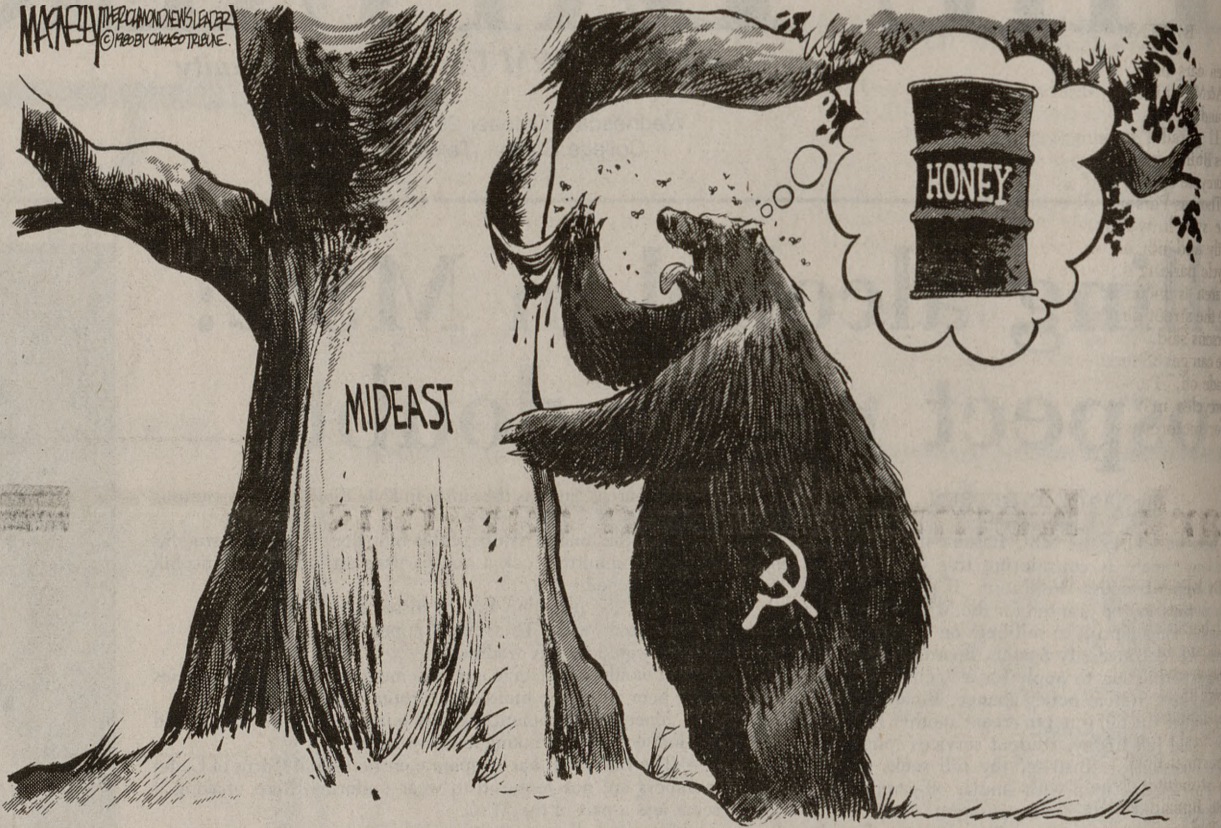
If a candidate can't come up with his proposed solution to an important problem until the last minute, maybe he is too slow on the uptake to do the job he is running for.

3) Don't be swayed by last minute and canvassing blitzes.

There is a school of politics that entails the military idea of saturation bombing: the newspapers, airwaves and mailboxes propoganda and ringing telephones of hooks and doorbells out of their housings the last days of the campaign to get you psyched up for the big day.

All of the above, within limits, are legitimate campaign tools and useful devices to increase voter turnout. But don't fall into the snare of voting for the last candidate you hear from, which is the hope of candidates who fly with last minute salvos of advertising and personal contact.

If you haven't already made up your mind who you are going to vote for, use this week to come to the decision. If you have made up your mind, use the week to think it over again. But decided or otherwise, don't let anyone pull your strings in these final days before the election.



It's your turn

Gov. Bill should shut mouth, run state

Editor:
I am writing in answer to "Governor Bill's" comment to reporters of the Texarkana Gazette. It is a shame that the man who is supposed to be the leader of our state has nothing better to do than ride around on airplanes and criticize our nation's president, which is all that he has done since he was elected. He is not against President Carter; he is against the Democratic Party. He is a political bigot.

Let me remind you of an incident that happened last spring. Bill Clements steps off of a plane in Houston when he is approached by reporters about the recent attempt to free the U.S. hostages in Iran. He admitted that he knew nothing about it, but that did not stop him from making his usual criticism. I trust that when state elections come back around, the people of Texas will be, as I am, fed up with the bullshit we have been fed for the last two years and decide to elect a Governor who will keep his mouth shut and tend to business of running our state.

David McCarroll '84

A change in attitude

Editor:
When I decided to attend Texas A&M two years ago, it was for a number of reasons. One

reason was academics, another was the scenic qualities of the campus. The main reason I decided to come here was that intangible spirit and friendliness which permeated throughout the campus.

That same spirit still exists, but somehow I can't help but feel that this unique quality is being challenged. I'm talking about the ever-increasing presence, or should I say that omnipresence, of social fraternities. I'm not trying to say that all social fraternities are bad, but when people start taking more pride and interest in their "frat" than such a fine university as Texas A&M, then it's time to take a look at what's happening.

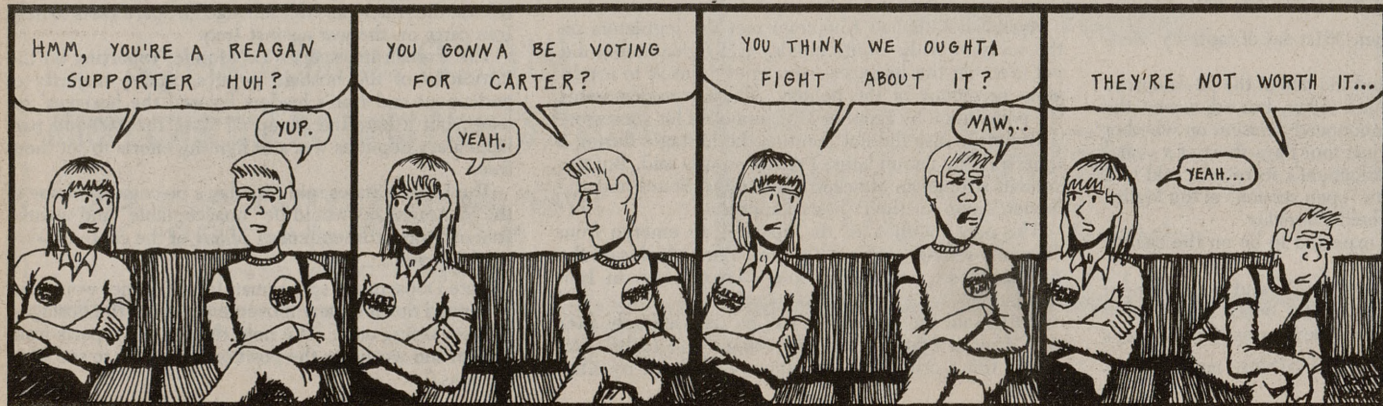
Even though this is only my second year here, I've noticed the change. The change I'm referring to lies in the general attitude of the students. Just walking around campus, you're lucky if half the people you pass will even

make eye contact, and half of those who rarely respond. It makes you feel if you aren't cut right or you're not wearing the clothes, you don't deserve the time of day. This kind of attitude does not belong here at Texas A&M, and it's frustrating to me to see it slowly eating away at the very heart of being an Aggie is all about.

Maybe some people attend an institution of higher learning to study four years and get a degree, but this university has so much more to offer. If only those who put forth so much time and effort toward their fraternity would direct it toward their university, we would have the finest school anywhere. Don't misunderstand me, I sincerely believe Texas A&M is the finest or I would not be here. I don't want to see such a special institution become just another university.

Kevin J. Bailey

Warped



By Scott McCullar

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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.

The Battalion is published daily during Texas A&M's fall and spring semesters, except for holiday and examination periods. Mail subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester, \$33.25 per year and \$35 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request.

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