

VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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Slouch

By Jim Earle



"I got to admit it's a long shot, but I just took a bet that Carter would win the election because the odds were so good — 1,000 to 1."

Base foreign policy on neutrality, trade

By THOMAS L. GEORGE, JR.

American foreign policy is in a crisis. The post-Korean era has seen the fall of South Vietnam after massive support by the U.S., the rise of communism and communist aggression around the globe, the formation of an oil cartel among Arab nations, the taking of the American embassy in Iran, and, perhaps worst of all, a general and intense feeling throughout the Third World of hatred towards Americans.

The situation is compounded by the fact that American foreign policy is bipartisan. Both political parties, to some degree, favor an aggressive, interventionist foreign policy. Jimmy Carter has insinuated that he would be willing to use military force in the Middle East in response to Soviet aggression. Ronald Reagan has gone even further, suggesting a blockade of Cuba. Even John Anderson has joined the interventionist bandwagon by advocating a strong U.S. naval presence in the Middle East, increased military aid to a dictatorship in Pakistan, and the introduction of theater nuclear weapons into Europe.

There is a popular misconception about U.S. foreign policy, namely that the U.S. government helps liberate oppressed people throughout the world by its actions. The hard facts indicate otherwise. The U.S. government has supported dictatorships in every part of the world: Somoza in Nicaragua, the Shah in Iran, Trujillo in the Dominican Republic, Pinochet in Chile, etc. Untold thousands have suffered at the hands of these "pro-Western" dictators.

Iran is a classic example. In 1941, the U.S., British, and Russian governments conspired to overthrow a nationalist movement which threatened the Shah's strangle hold on Iran. Despite Ronald Reagan's statement that the Shah was a "good ally" and Jimmy Carter's reference to "my good friend, the Shah," Mohammed Reza Pahlavi was well documented as a violator of civil and economic rights. At last, the Shah was overthrown by a maniacally anti-American movement. American observers have been unable to fathom the anti-American sentiment in Iran, so let's put things in perspective. As much as I dislike Jimmy Carter being President, I would not want the Iranians to kick Carter out of office and replace him with their favorite man. Yet that is precisely what the U.S. government has done to Iran.

I would like to propose an alternative foreign policy: a foreign policy based on neutrality and free trade. I cannot claim any originality in advocating this, for it was the foreign policy

advocated by the Founding Fathers of this country.

George Washington said in his Farewell Address, "The great rule in conduct for us, in regard to foreign nations, is in extending our commercial relations to have with them as little political connection as possible."

Also Jefferson, in his first inaugural address, said, "Peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations-entangling alliances with none."

Some will object at this point: "That may have been fine in Jefferson's day, but not now. Who will stop Soviet aggression if we don't?" Certainly the might and intent of the Soviet Union should not be underestimated. But the Soviets are fast approaching the limits of empire, as their current experience in Afghanistan shows. Even internally, their hopelessly inefficient economic system bears the seeds of its own destruction. But to answer the question more directly, the nations of Western Europe and Japan are wealthy enough to defend themselves. There is no justification for taxing Americans in order to defend the rest of the world.

The diehard interventionist will continue: "But the Middle Eastern countries are not so wealthy. We must defend them, lest the Soviets cut off our oil supply and deal a severe blow to our economy." Defense Secretary Harold Brown recently estimated that it would cost \$25 billion to adequately defend the Middle East over the next five years. That would certainly be a blow to our economy. Our dependence on OPEC oil could be virtually eliminated by deregulation of U.S. energy production.

Americans can best promote freedom throughout the rest of the world by providing an example of freedom at home. We have a monumental task achieving and maintaining liberty in this country. It is more than enough of a challenge. A policy of free trade will allow foreigners to see firsthand the benefits of freedom. A policy of neutrality will show them that we believe freedom is for everyone, not just Americans. A strong defense will show them that freedom is not easily destroyed.

A foreign policy based on neutrality and free trade will not result in Utopia, but it does give us our best hope for peace and liberty. The alternative is to suffer the cycle of intervention, confrontation, war, and increased government power until there is no freedom left to preserve.

Thomas L. George, Jr. is a graduate student in economics.

Carter's loss of credibility caused his demise at the polls

By BRIAN GROSS

At 6:20 p.m. CST, after Marvin Zindler's report, Dave Ward flashed on the screen to announce that NBC News had projected Ronald Reagan would win the election. What? I quickly calculated it was 4:20 p.m. in California and mid-afternoon in Hawaii. Over half of the states were still voting, and NBC had already projected Ronald Reagan the winner!

I had just sat down for a long evening of sparring between the candidates. I knew Reagan would win most of the West, except for Hawaii. I also knew he would do well in the Midwest. But, the South would be tough. After all, Jimmy Carter only lost Virginia in '76—the South was pretty solid then. But in my mind, the Northeast would be critical. Anderson would be important, since Reagan was relatively weak, and Jimmy Carter was only reluctantly favored. The Northeast was critical to Jerry Ford and so it would be for Ronald Reagan and Jimmy Carter.

My first clues of Reagan's imminent win were the projections of Ohio, Illinois, and Pennsylvania: All for Reagan. Then followed New Jersey, Connecticut, New Hampshire. Then followed Florida and Texas. It was all over. Jimmy Carter never stood a chance.

Reader's Forum

The NBC guys were kind of smug, but I guess they had a right to be. They had preempted the other two networks, not to mention all the states west of the Mississippi. David Brinkley, who looked more disgusted than surprised, kept asking how had it happened. Tom Brokaw gave an answer and Brinkley later offered an answer. But, neither was very reassuring. How, then, did this happen?

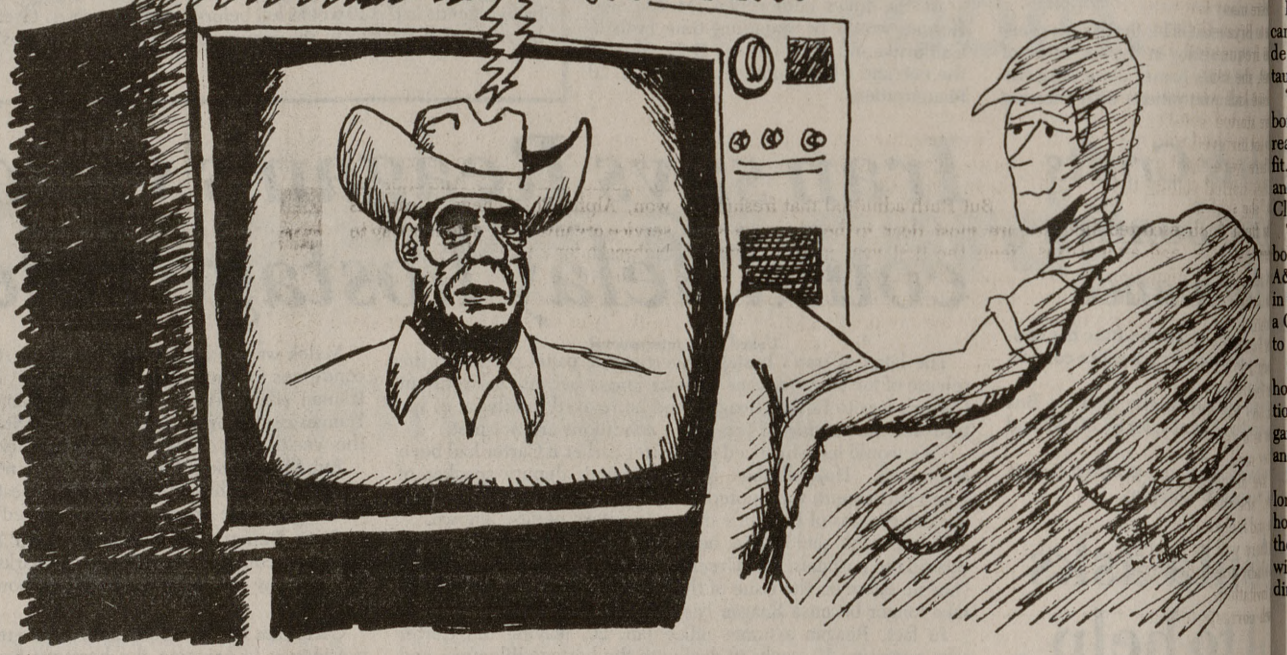
Brokaw kept bringing up Patrick Caddell's last poll for Jimmy Carter. Caddell and Carter knew that he was eight points behind Reagan on election eve — there was no way they could win. Caddell insisted that the hostage issue was the critical element. The timing of the Iranian Parliament's decision could not have been worse for Jimmy Carter. Brokaw and Brinkley thought the inflation issue was central, and it was. They thought the hostage issue was important, and it was. They thought the perceived

inferiority of the U.S. and her military was important, and it was too. But, beyond these issues, beyond the Iranian Parliament, beyond inflation and its ravages, there was more.

Jimmy Carter will leave office with a record of being a challenger. In this century, Hoover and Jimmy Carter are the only Presidents to lose their re-election. I think it will be quite easy to draw a line between the two. Herbert Hoover has been short-changed by history. While nothing spectacular, he wasn't as bad as I think. And Jimmy Carter wasn't really either. Many of Carter's problems were caused by him, and he did do some things (Egyptian-Israeli peace). But, anything else, Jimmy Carter lost credit. Jimmy Carter has little credibility with the people. While he may say the right things for very little, Jimmy Carter may have heart in the right place, but that was all lost the single most important element of leadership—the faith and trust of his fellow Americans.

Bryan Gross is a senior political major.

MY FELLOW AMERICANS, I AM AFRAID I AM UNABLE TO ACCEPT THE PRESIDENCY, DUE TO THE FACT THAT THE ACTOR'S STRIKE IS NOW OVER, AND I MUST GO BACK TO WORK...



It's your turn

Sadie Hawkins Day is approaching

Editor:

I would like to remind everyone that Sunday, Nov. 9 is Sadie Hawkins Day. So girls, now is your chance! Ask that special guy who never really noticed you, or is bashful, out for a beer, to a movie, or to the TCU game. By the way, I'm available.

Paul A. Hughes '80

Question for team

Editor:

I have a question that I would like to ask the Texas Aggie Football Team. But first I would like to say that no where that I know of do students and alumni take more pride in their school and show more motivation and spirit towards their teams and especially the football team, than at Texas A&M University. My question is, where is that special motivation and spirit in the football team, and why can't the team stay and participate in a 12th Man yell practice? The student body and some alumni stand during each football game, and as if that's

not enough to show that they are supportive of the team, they also stay in the stands in the event the Aggies are outscored. I think if the team would stay and take part in a 12th Man yell, they would know without a doubt that we are behind them.

Maybe I am wrong, but I do not see the motivation and spirit in this year's team like I have in the past teams. I can remember when an Ag scored a touchdown, half the team would run to the end zone to congratulate and share the victory. Not this year. I can remember seeing the Aggie sideline overflowing with excitement and players yelling and supporting their fellow members. Not this year. By no means do I know near as much about football as the football players and the coaching staff, but I

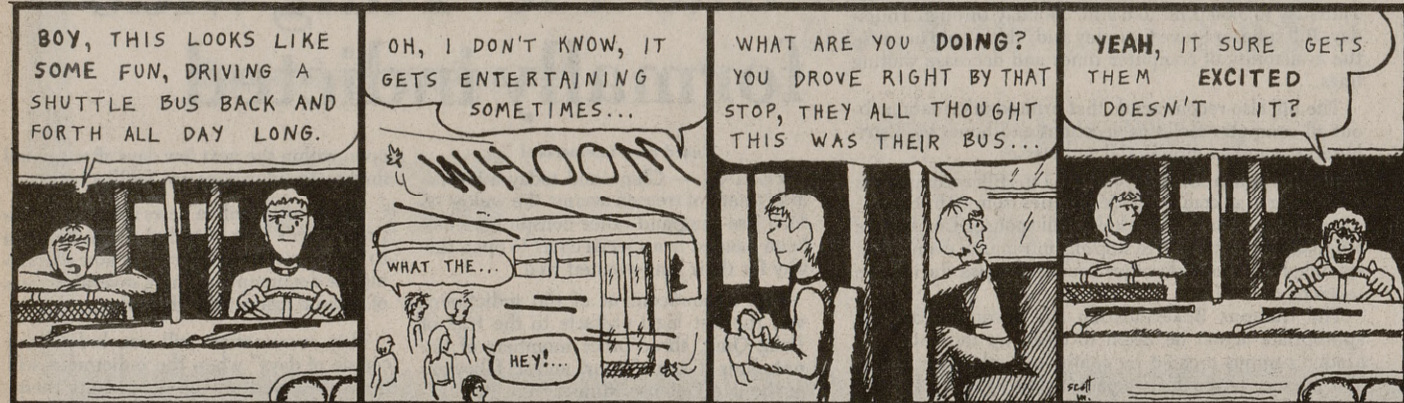
do know that a team must have that spirit that the student body and alumni have and have always had. I am behind the team 100 percent, and I think Coach Wilson is a great and capable coach, whom I respect very much for certain disciplinary actions he took over the year. I would like a reply or comment to questions from the team or any players.

Beat the hell outta' Arkansas.
Beat the hell outta' Regents and alumni who cannot support the coach they hired.
Build the hell outta' bonfire!

Editor's note: This letter was accompanied by 100 other signatures.

Warped

By Scott McCullar



THE BATTALION

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