

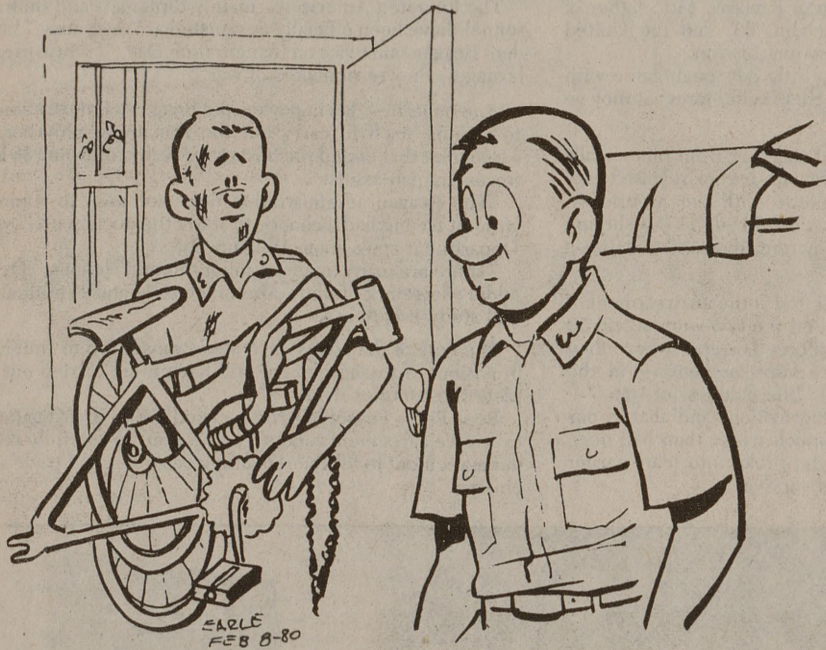
# VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION  
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

THURSDAY  
JANUARY 22, 1980

## Slouch

By Jim Earle



"This is the last time I'm breaking it down and bringing it upstairs. From now on, if anyone wants to steal it, he can have it."

## Time of hard choices marks decade

By HELEN THOMAS  
United Press International

WASHINGTON — The Ronald Reagan presidency is not starting from scratch. Many of his aides, top and middle echelon, know their way around the White House. They have been there before, most of them in the Nixon and Ford administrations.

"I told you we would be back," a former Ford administration official said as he moved into the White House on inauguration day.

The feeling that the more it changes the more it is the same does come upon one as the familiar faces reappear on the scene. Many of them had gone on to higher paying jobs, but the lure of power brought them back.

The orderly transfer of power about which presidents speak so glowingly, especially on inauguration day, is really not all that orderly at the lower echelons.

Carter aides were told to be out of the White House by 11 a.m. In effect, they would be intruders after that. Their passports were picked up. And their White House passes voided. Even as they worked on the details of the hostage swap for frozen Iranian assets their papers were being carted away.

Reagan has his White House staff and Cabinet in place, but that is about all. On inau-

guration day, he signed a document making a vast number of government officials "acting" heads of agencies. Although his head hunters have been recruiting and interviewing for weeks, hundreds of top federal appointive jobs remain unfilled.

The government itself has gone into low gear with the departments and agencies "on hold" until the newcomers set policy and take charge.

Euphoric would be the way to describe the incoming Reaganites. Their sense of exhilaration comes from long held Republican convictions — and now they have a chance to prove it — that the government should take a back seat in the lives of Americans, and that freedom from red tape and regulation will return the country to prosperity.

That was Reagan's theme song throughout the campaign and his high note in his inaugural address, which he kept harking back to. "In this present crisis, government is not the solution; it is the problem," he said.

To show that he is bent on keeping his campaign promises, Reagan's first official act was to order an across-the-board freeze on hiring in the federal government. He also is determined to abolish the departments of Energy and Education while transferring some of their functions to other agencies.

He hopes to make a grand splash in the next 100 days, taking actions that he believes will begin to pull this nation out of its economic slump and reduce rampant inflation. By February, he will send to Congress a package of proposals to turn the tide, including a 15 percent tax cut and deep cuts in the budget, Carter proposed.

In working style, Reagan also will be different from Carter. Unlike some of his predecessors who learned early rising from their roots, Reagan awakens at 8 a.m., has a leisurely breakfast and apparently does not start his official day until around 9 a.m.

He has surrounded himself by trusted advisers who are champing at the bit to run the government Reagan-style. His Cabinet also is made up with his philosophy. There is little room for dissenting opinion. Only the Democratic Congress can provide that, and they know they are prepared to give Reagan the traditional honeymoon.

If they do, it will be more than they deserve. Carter, who never recovered from his early on to cut out what he believed were less projects.

And so it's a time of testing for Reagan. The people who gave him the mandate will watch to see.

## People to play wait-and-see

By DAVID S. BRODER

WASHINGTON — This time, the purists who insist that a new decade begins with the year ending with a 1 — not a 0 — have a point. This new year 1981, with a new administration and Congress gathering in Washington, represents a fresh start for the nation in a way that 1980 did not.

The mood is hardly buoyant, but it is realistic — and there is a lot to be said for that. It is plainly going to be a time of hard choices, but that knowledge creates a climate where sensible debate may proceed without the disabilities of a dream-world where all good things may be done at once.

The framework for that debate is well-defined in "A National Agenda for the Eighties," the soon-to-be-issued report of a blue-ribbon commission named in 1979 by President Carter and headed by William J. McGill, the former president of Columbia University.

The introduction to the report notes that 20 years ago a similar commission named by President Eisenhower "reflected the optimism of an entire nation and a belief in the government's ability to address and solve its problems both at home and abroad. Throughout the decade of the Sixties, the nation's leaders expected that we could simultaneously eradicate poverty, go to the moon and win a war in Vietnam."

"Today as we enter the Eighties...we fully realize that the nation cannot proceed on all fronts at once. The nation faces a decade of difficult choices."

That is no news to the young David Stockman and the others struggling to frame Ronald Reagan's first budget, and it will soon be evident to Congress and the country. But the necessity for choice does not equate in any way to a policy of passivity for the national government.

On the contrary — as both the ongoing budget analysis and the commission report make plain — the one option that is not available to America is the continuation of the status quo. What is required is a searching reexamination of existing government to the forces shaping the private economy.

In some areas, that will likely and properly lead to a reduction of the federal role. But in others, there may be new duties forced on the government.

Advance stories on the commission report, for example, have provoked controversy by questioning the wisdom of federal urban policies designed to slow the shift of population and industry from the declining cities of the Northeast to the growing cities of the Sun Belt.

What has not been emphasized is that the commission calls for the creation of a national "minimum security income" program as a substitute for the welter of federal state and local welfare programs — a step that by itself might offer more fiscal relief to New York City than the mix of urban-aid programs.

The commission is right when it says that choices will have to be made in years ahead between "place-oriented" and "people-oriented" programs. And it is right, too, when it says that sorting out and choosing the right mixture of policies for the new decade is no task for the simple-minded.

"The answers to our dilemmas," the report notes, "do not lie in such slogans as 'less government,' any more than they lie in automatic dependence on federal solutions."

The decade now beginning can be a challenging and rewarding time for those involved in those choices. But the first step is the recognition that there is no escape from choosing.

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## Friday is National Handwriting Day

### Scrawlers: Practicing poor penmanship

By DICK WEST

United Press International

WASHINGTON — Jan. 23 — John Hancock's birthday — is National Handwriting Day. All over the capital, grandees of the new Reagan administration presumably are learning to sign their names with inscrutable squiggles.

An enigmatic signature is a status symbol for superstars celebrated enough to give autographs and for government officials eminent enough to sign important papers.

Hen-tracking signifies that the inscribers have arrived at the pinnacle and now find their time too valuable to waste forming the actual letters of their names. But these marks of greatness are reserved for true luminaries.

For the rest of us, an unfathomable signature is simply an indication of illiteracy. Hence the Writing Instruments Manufacturers Association is urging scribblers everywhere join a scrawl-ender program.

The grand climax of the push for readable handwriting is today's national "scrawl-out" — an entire day during which everyone is asked to write not "a single illegible word."

Sponsors of the campaign recognize it is difficult for habitual scribblers, many of whom started scrawling at an early age, to quit cold turkey. The program therefore is geared to a

phased withdrawal.

Participants supposedly taper off scrawling and taper onto legibility without the wrenching psychological shock so often associated with abrupt changes in handwriting.

Here is the broad outline the association expects scrawlers to follow:

— "... work up to legibility slowly, one letter at a time, then one short word, then a polysyllabic word, until you finally achieve an entire legible sentence."

— "If you feel a need to scribble, call a friend or relative whose handwriting you admire and ask him or her to bolster your determination."

— "If you make it through the day, try it for another day, then another, then another, until you have broken the illegibility habit."

I certainly give the association credit for good

intentions, but I question whether the scrawl-ender approach will work for scribblers who are really hooked on hen-tracking. It's going to require some measures to reach them.

As my contribution to National Handwriting Day, I offer these reinforcing suggestions:

— In hotel lobbies, railroad parlor cars and other public places where writing desks are provided, the association should post a sign reading: "Thank You for Not Scrawling."

— All public libraries designate certain areas as "nonscrawling sections" in which scribbling would be prohibited.

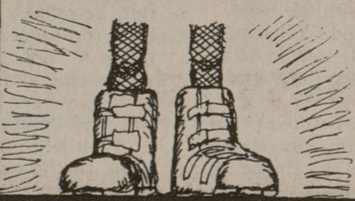
— Each writing instrument turned out by members of the association should bear the following message: "Caution: Scrawling may be hazardous to your penmanship."

## Warped

HOW I SPENT MY CHRISTMAS VACATION: PT. 1 — THIS IS COLORADO (NICE COUNTRY IF YOU LIKE THE COLOR WHITE!) WHITE INCIDENTALLY IS ALSO THE COLOR OF BANDAGES AND PLASTER-OF-PARIS.



THIS IS SOME OF THE EQUIPMENT USED FOR SKIING. BEING FITTED FOR SKI BOOTS IS LIKE SLIPPING YOUR FEET INTO A PAIR OF BOWLING BALLS.



THIS IS THE SKI LIFT. ITS PURPOSE IS TO LULL YOU INTO A RESTFUL CALM ON THE WAY UP, AND THEN SPIT YOU OUT ONTO THE SLOPES...



BUT, IT DOES SHOW YOU LOTS OF SCENERY, (BY ORDER OF STATE LAW COLORADO IS NOTHING BUT SCENERY).



By Scott McCullar

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