

# VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION  
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

MONDAY  
FEBRUARY 16, 1981

## Slouch

By Jim Earle

## Nonvoters in a stormy C

At the same time the MSC Council was questioning the lack of participation by some nonvoting members, it approved unanimously to add another nonvoting representative — from the Married Students Apartments Council.

Perhaps the voting council members don't see the apparent contradiction in their action, but, having been a nonvoting member for two years, the situation is highly ironic to me.

The council consists of 19 voting members, and nonvoting representatives from the Corps, Residence Halls Association, Off-Campus Aggies, Graduate Student Council, the class councils and The Battalion. The nonvoting members are on the council supposedly to reflect the opinions of their organization's members. After all, the programs of the MSC affect and are of interest to most students on campus; the nonvoting members are there in order for as many students as possible to be represented in the programming decision.

Unfortunately, that input isn't there, for most nonvoting council members simply don't show up. The apparent uselessness of the nonvoting members is what keeps them away; they feel that their time is wasted at council meetings, and council members do nothing to make them feel like viable members of the organization.

The representatives from the graduate council and class councils haven't shown up

## Sidebars

By Dillard Stone

yet this year, and representatives from the other groups have missed more meetings than they've attended. At most two of the nonvoting members have shown up at meetings this semester, and even then they lack the degree of consistency in attendance that is needed.

Why?

To begin with, the nonvoting status automatically connotes an air of inferiority to those who have it. Without a vote, a member can do nothing more than listen to and digest the massive quantities of verbiage, offering an occasional opinion.

And that opinion is often uninformed. If I'm going to intelligently discuss the proposals at a council meeting, I would at least like to know what's on the agenda; but even that is difficult when agendas consistently arrive on the day of the meeting. There's no time for those on the fringes of council consider these matters before the meeting.

(I suggest the council adopt a resolution agreeing to abide in principle — since council doesn't meet the legal definition of a

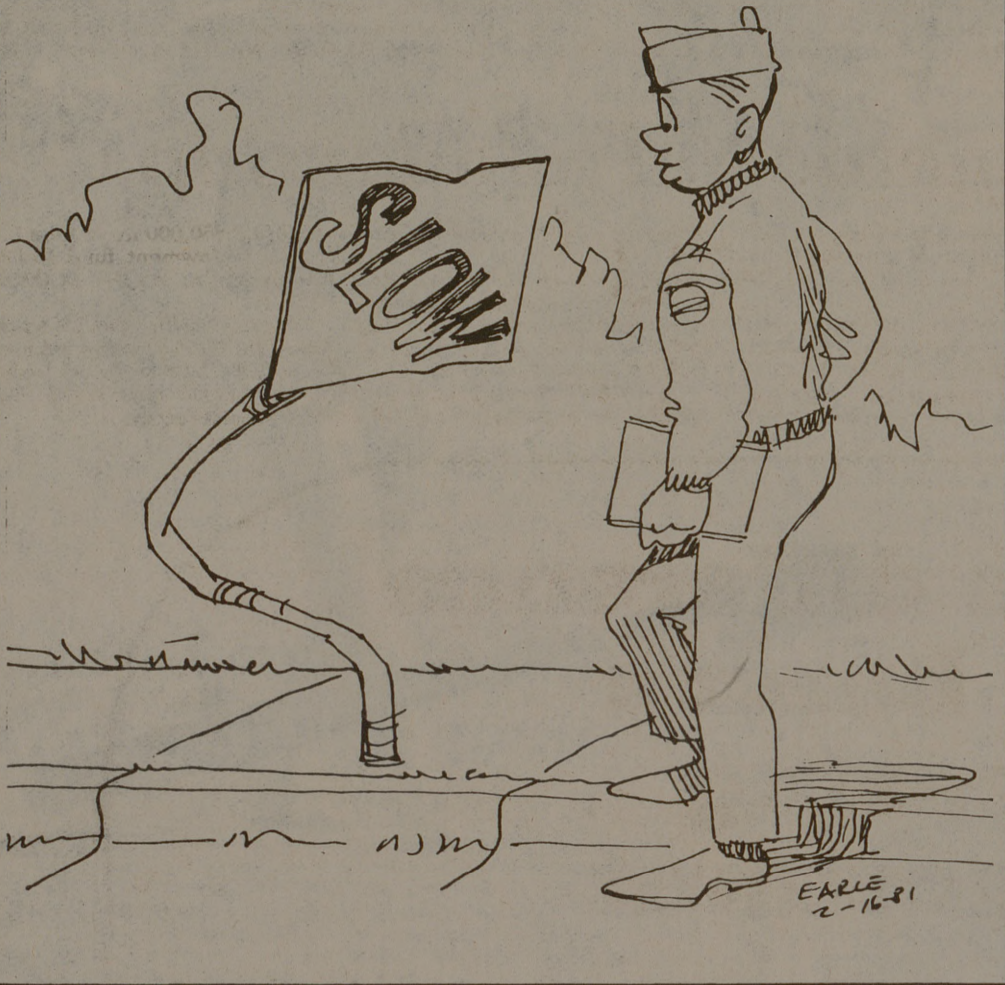
governmental body — by the Texas Meetings Law. Among other things, the law requires posting and distribution of agenda 72 hours before a meeting.)

To describe the insulting chain of events leading up to the recent reorganization decision would occupy more space than I have. But the gist of my criticism is an absolute waste of eight hours spread across two nights — to do nothing more than reiterate a set of decisions which had been predetermined in a meeting of voting council members, a meeting to which many of the nonvoting student members were invited. That meeting was held on the night prior to the meeting where reorganization was finally approved.

It's easy to see why nonvoting members are apathetic and lose interest in council proceedings — why bother to come at all such a major decision will be made without your input?

The argument can be advanced that nonvoting members accept a council's responsibility when they accept their student leader positions, and that they should know enough about representing their organizations that they'll show up at all meetings. But if their presence isn't going to be felt, and if it's in fact actually discouraging, why bother?

Welcome to the fold of representative married students — I hope your initial enthusiasm is not diminished by the bureaucracy you're about to enter into.



## Early birds to get the nominations

By CLAY F. RICHARDS  
United Press International

WASHINGTON — For those who have lost track of time, the 1984 New Hampshire presidential primary is just three years away.

While many are still sick and tired of the 1980 campaign, the next battle has already begun in at least three camps where there is a strong political belief you can't start too early.

Political supporters of former Vice President Walter Mondale have filed with the Federal Election Commission for a committee to explore a possible presidential campaign. Sen. Edward Kennedy is poised to take the same action.

The technical action of filing would allow Mondale and Kennedy to raise funds to support their political activities. It also allows them to raise funds to make contributions to Democratic candidates — and in the process pile up political debts to be collected in 1984.

At the same time Kennedy and Mondale are forming skeleton campaign organizations.

Mondale has taken up residence in a Washington law firm and more than a dozen of his former top aides are staying around the nation's capital to prepare for what is an almost certain bid for the White House.

When Republicans gained control of the Senate, Kennedy slipped to minority status and had to give up most of the 100-member-plus Judiciary Committee staff that was quickly converted into a campaign organization in the 1980 race.

Another hint of preparation for 1984 comes from no less a source than the man in the White House — Ronald Reagan.

At the recent Washington Press Club "Salute to Congress" dinner, Reagan had some advice for a freshman congressman

who had complained the inaugural balls were so crowded that he had not been able to use the tickets he had paid for.

"Congressman, hold on to them," Reagan quipped. "They'll be good in four years."

A little more explicit view of Reagan's plans came from his political alter ego, Lyn Nofziger, currently the White House political adviser.

"We'll be back in three years with the same guy," Nofziger said.

"If anybody has any doubts about Ronald Reagan not thinking down the road three to four years from now and are thinking 'oh boy I'll run for president in 1984,' you'd better change your party."

The fact that Reagan will be almost 74 by the time of the next campaign doesn't bother Nofziger.

"This man who just celebrated his 70th birthday doesn't look like it, sound like it or act like it," he said.

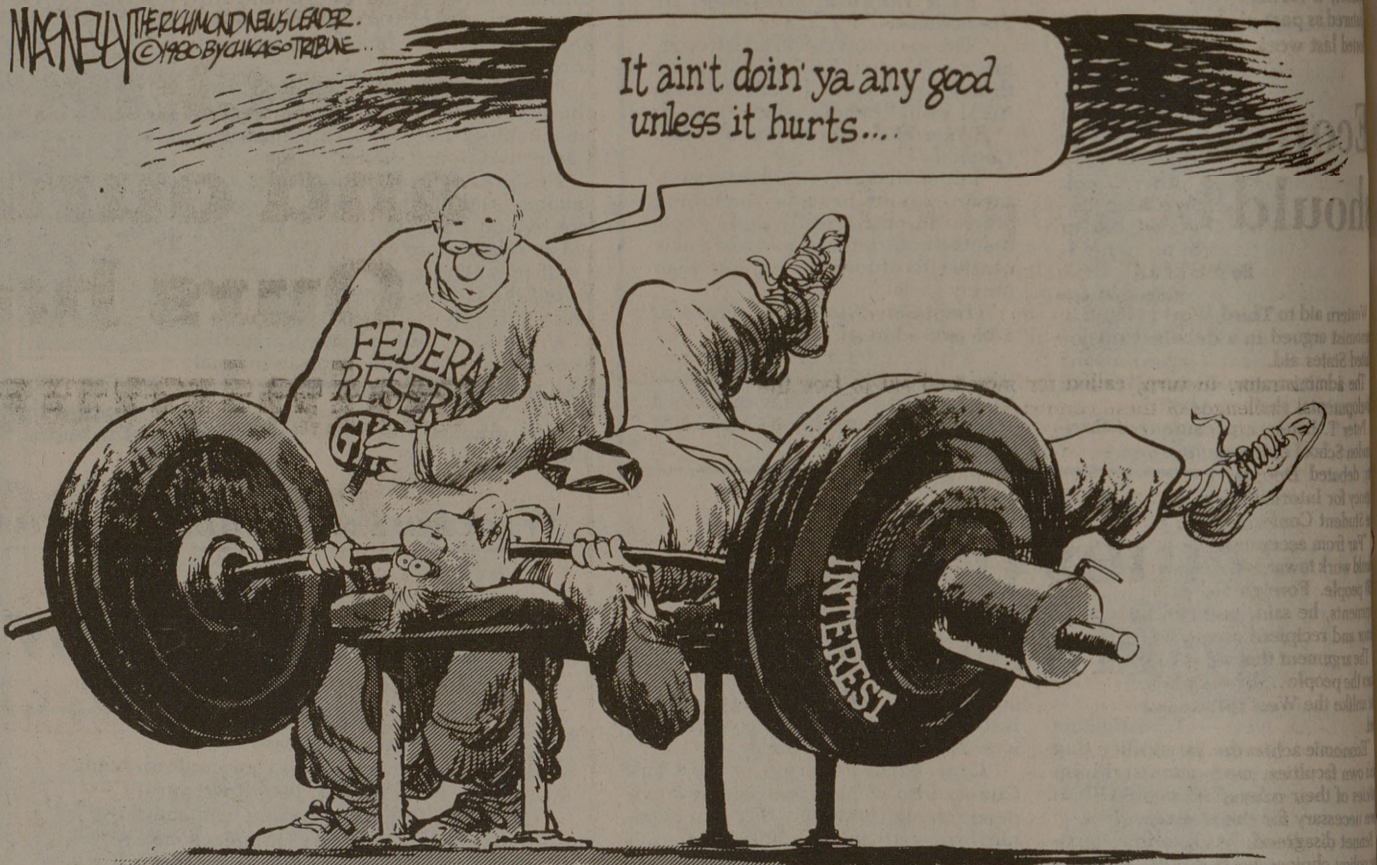
A review of recent political history shows that the road to the White House often begins four or even eight years earlier.

Richard Nixon started right after his 1960 loss to collect the political IOUs around the nation that made him unbeatable when Reagan and Nelson Rockefeller challenged him for the GOP nomination in 1968.

Jimmy Carter's term as governor of Georgia ended in 1974, giving him two full years to run for president unencumbered by a full-time job.

After losing the 1976 nomination to Gerald Ford, Reagan organized "Citizens for the Republic," the political committee that financed him as he spent the next four years on the chicken dinner circuit to secure the 1980 nomination.

So while it's still a long way down the road to 1984, Reagan and Mondale know the benefit of being the first on the track.



## It's your turn

## Apartment-dweller sings the blues

Editor:

I've been a resident of apartment 4M/Scandia since Aug. 25, 1980. I was the first to move into the apartment at that time. I just want to mention that we've had problems here ever since that first day, and I really feel that these problems should have been corrected before anyone moved in. I know that the deposit you charge us is for this purpose, and that you automatically deduct a cleaning fee. You know, we've learned to go directly to maintenance to get anything done around here. But even that's not working anymore; and when there's no hot water in the mornings, the time has come to complain! Let me give you a summary of our troubles:

(1) The first day in the apartment, the following problems were encountered:

a.) the refrigerator was inoperative. We got a new one the next day.

b.) Three stove burners were inoperative. We got three new coils the next day.

c.) The kitchen floor was cracked and warped. A few months later that was fixed;

the concrete slab under the kitchen/living-room floor was taken out and a new one set in. The refrigerator was put in one bedroom. The furniture was put on the porch. We enjoyed eating out for a few nights.

d.) The bedroom door was off the hinge and someone had punched a hole in it.

e.) The bedroom window pane was too small for the window. We had another one put in.

f.) Someone had built a fire in the bathtub. None of the drains worked properly.

g.) The place was generally dirty and trashy.

(2) The following week, we noticed a few more problems:

a.) The ceiling above the bedroom closet

was cracking and pieces were falling down. Elsewhere, places were cracking, especially after a rain.

b.) The closet door was warped and came off the track every time we decided to move it.

(3) We got everything pretty much fixed up now, except for one thing: no hot water in the mornings (or afternoons).

I feel that you should take care of the apartments you have now before you get together new ones. I also feel that the people you inconvenienced by taking their things out should be reimbursed for their troubles.

Thank you very much.

Sharon Stiller

## Warped



By Scott McCullar

## THE BATTALION

MEMBER U.S.P.S. 045 360

The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Communications. Questions or comments concerning any editorial matter should be directed to the editor.

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Letters to the Editor should not exceed 350 words in length, and are subject to being cut if they are longer. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length, but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must also be signed, show the address and phone number of the writer.

Columns and guest editorials are also welcome, and are not subject to the same length constraints as letters. Address all inquiries and correspondence to Editor, The Battalion, 216 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, \$33.50 per school year and \$35 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request.

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