

VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

TUESDAY
FEBRUARY 24, 1981

Slouch

By Jim Earle



"I was so upset about that test that I resorted to studying!"

Lobbyists: Getting, stopping, keeping

By ARNOLD SAWISLAK
United Press International

WASHINGTON — Washington lobbyists have three basic missions — to get, to stop and to keep.

Getting is the process of securing some benefit — a federal aid program, a tax break, a subsidy — for some group, business or region.

It is hard work, often requiring years of agitation, propagandizing and persuasion to get both Congress and the White House to agree on some new attachment to the federal treasury. Lobbyists have spent their entire working lives trying to get one goodie in Washington.

With President Reagan basing his entire budget-cutting proposal on the premise that the federal cow has been milked dry, getting is going to be the toughest job a lobbyist could have for a while. The exception is the defense industry lobby. If your client sells weapons systems, this ought to be open season for getting.

Stopping has been tough work for lobbyists in recent times. It consists of preventing Washington from getting involved in some area of the economy or the society that in the past has been the province of local, state or no government.

It often has pitted stopping lobbyists against getting lobbyists, and during much of the time since FDR brought the New Deal to Washington, the cards were stacked in the White House and in Congress in favor of getting.

But Reagan's arrival ought to make stopping much easier. He says the United States already is over-regulated, and with

the White House taking a jaundiced view of new federal intrusions into the private sector, stopping lobbyists should have a much easier time of it.

Keeping usually is the lobbyist's easiest task. Most often, a lobbyist doesn't have to do anything to keep those federal dollars flowing once a goodie has been embedded in the budget and the bureaucracy. It frequently becomes self-perpetuating, with federal employees in Washington and beneficiaries elsewhere in the country doing the work to keep the benefit alive.

But keeping is now under the gun. The Reagan administration has compiled a huge "hit list" of federal benefits it says have to be reduced and eliminated, and that looks like work for hundreds of once-complacent lobbyists who had little to do other than make sure that the food was warm and the wine was cold when their clients came to visit Washington.

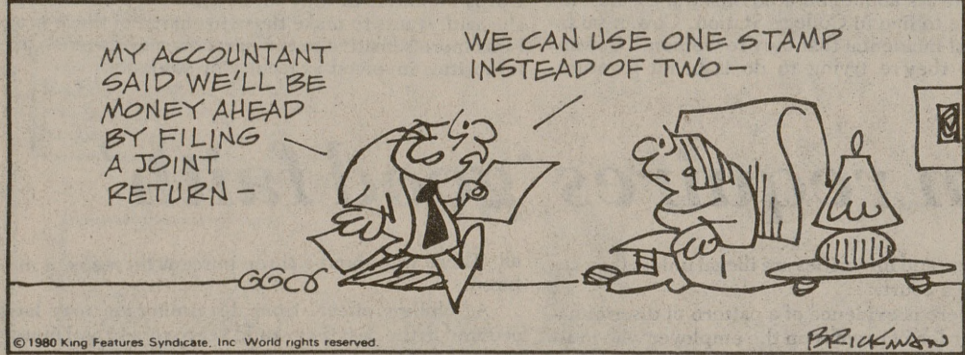
It is impossible to say how this will affect the lobbying industry in Washington, but it could result in a whole new lineup of allies among the special interests.

Ever since the civil rights crusades of the 1960s, coalitions of groups that appear to have divergent interests have been popular among Washington lobbyists. Most of that activity has been aimed at getting something from the federal government, but it is not unreasonable that the same technique might be adapted for keeping.

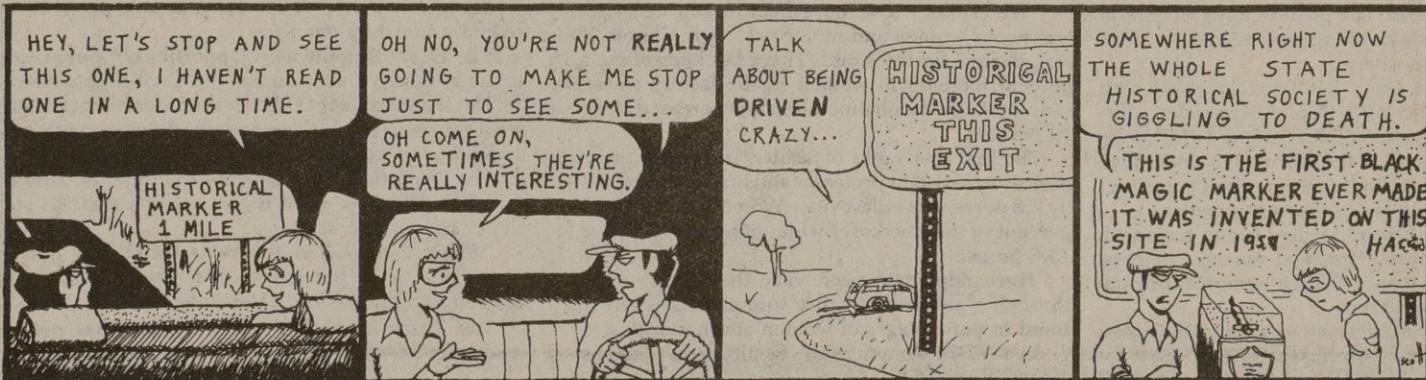
If that becomes the case, members of Congress may find lobbyists on their doorsteps eager to make a case for dairy price supports, food stamps, AMTRAK subsidies and Saturday mail service. Sounds strange, but this is Washington.

the small society

by Brickman



Warped



Keeping the pledge at lower cost

Editor's note: This is the second of a three-part Guest column giving one man's views of U.S. strategy and costs during the Vietnam War.

Guest
Column

By RICHARD S. LE VIEUX

The Nixon Administration was committed to ending the war with the Kennedy commitment intact. The table above shows, as the troops came home, casualties dropped dramatically to 1964 levels by the end of 1972. And yet the reduced military forces still continued to fulfill the Kennedy commitment.

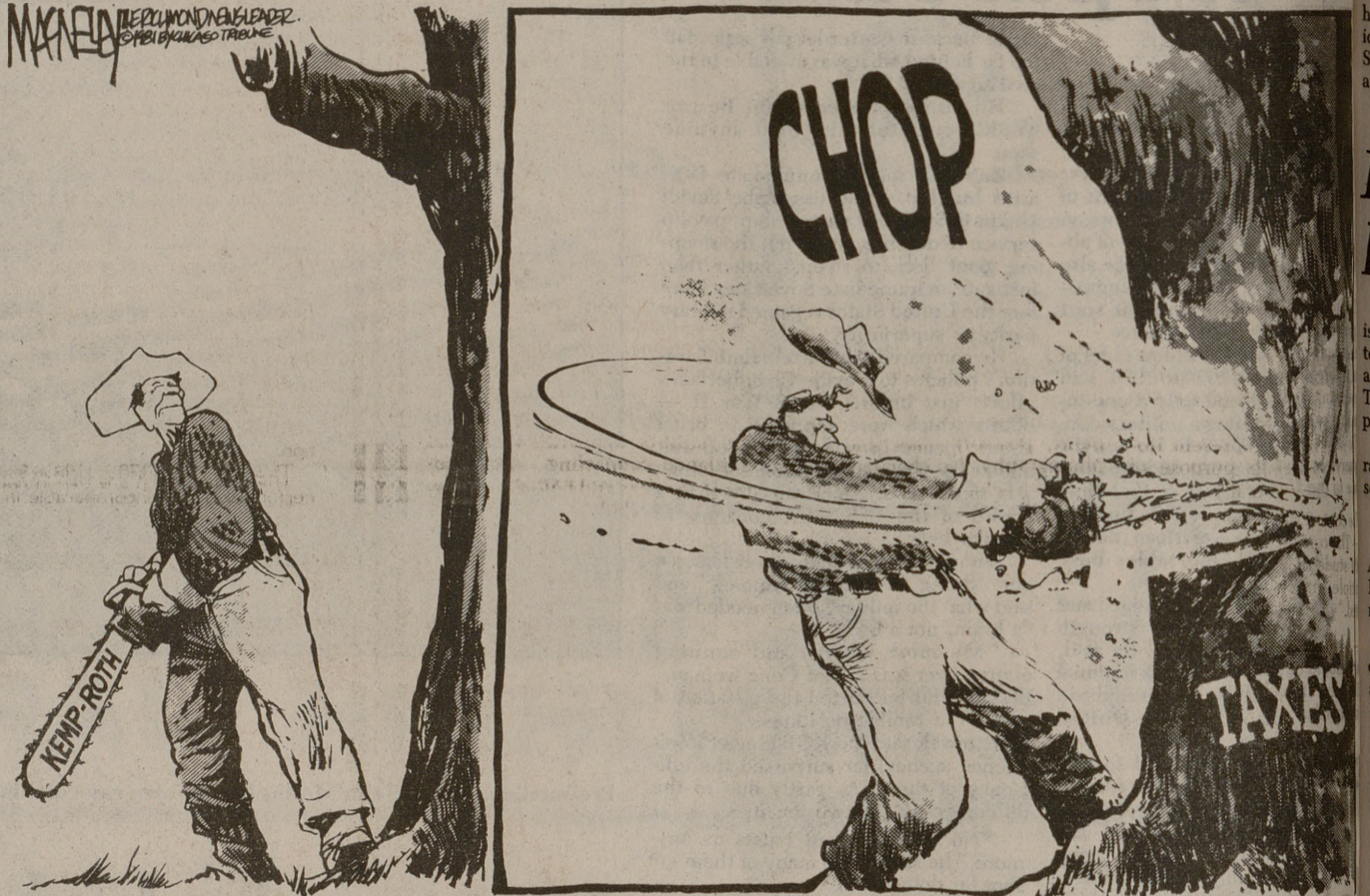
The explanation for this paradox is simple. Instead of limiting the destruction of military supplies to the "front lines" (always the most expensive place to do so), these enemy supplies were destroyed further and further behind the front lines by consistent, intense application of U.S. Air Power. A maxim discovered long ago was that when one side no longer has any military supplies, the war is over for that side. American military forces in the Philippines surrendered to the Japanese in April 1942 only because they had no expendable military supplies left with which to resist the Imperial Japanese Army (although our military

force there represented better than 70 percent of all the Allied power in the Southern Pacific, including Australia). Never before or since has such a large American military force surrendered.

It should be beyond debate that from 1961 through 1972 Southeast Asia did not fall to communism. The price we paid in the lives of our youth and in our money from the national Treasury (\$150 billion), to say nothing of perhaps a half million Southeast Asians, is another subject. If the commitment was not worth American lives, then the Kennedy commitment was hypocrisy on the part of our government. If it was worth one or more American lives, then one is quibbling about how many... unless one is thinking about malfeasance, dereliction of duty or treachery in carrying out the commitment.

The total collapse of the American position by the end of 1972 caused events of following two years (from January 1973 to April 1975) to go unnoticed and thus unappreciated. By 27 January 1973, the U.S. combat forces had departed South Vietnam. On 7 November 1973, Kennedy commitment was de facto shambles by the War Powers Resolution passed by Congress over a Presidential veto. Still another 13 months had to pass before North Vietnam could again acquire sufficient military supplies to re-invent neighbor to the south. Abandoned by the authoritarian government of South Vietnam fell to the totalitarian government of North Vietnam (though not as quickly as Poland did to Germany in 1939, 50,000 were required instead of 30 days). And Kennedy feared would happen to South Asia did happen.

What the really concerned citizen should be asking is how the U.S. military during the '69-'72 period could fulfill the Kennedy commitment with fewer and fewer troops and with correspondingly lower cost than during the '65-'68 period? And keep Southeast Asia free for another 10 years without any American combat in South Vietnam!



It's your turn

Illegal parkers bother disabled

Editor:

I'm writing this letter in compliance with the fact that the handicapped parking spaces on this campus are unkept and extremely misused. I am not severely handicapped, but nonetheless I have to park in the disabled areas. Many times I have driven up to a disabled spot and found a car parked there, one without a disabled sticker of any type. Most of the time I realize that they are only parked there for a short while but I have to go on and find the next spot which is sometimes far away from where I'm trying to go. Anyone with less than 60 hours that is disabled has to park with the rest of his class when the disabled spots are taken up. Some of the disabled spots on this campus are not marked well enough for the non-disabled to distinguish them as such. If all of the areas had the handicapped symbol of a person in a wheelchair then they would be much easier to distinguish. And on the weekends I've seen many illegal parkers in these spots but no tickets on them. Hey, I am disabled on the weekends as well as the weekdays! And what about those in wheelchairs?

Gary Jackson

Not all are good Ags

Editor:

I just read Mr. Wagner's letter (2/18) and I couldn't agree more. It is important to keep A&M pure. After-all there are only certain kinds of people that make good Ags.

In past years homosexuals have tried to form on campus. They obviously don't fit in here — they talk funny and don't know how to have a good time. But, A&M pulled together and, with the help of Texas law, withstood the Gay scourge.

Now the Greeks are trying to come on campus. They dress funny and spend too much time partying. Besides, other schools have Greeks. They simply don't show proper Aggie spirit. There is no doubt their request needs to be turned down.

I am afraid that we have been lax in our vigilance and allowed several subversive groups into our midsts. For example, students — they spend all their time studying and sometimes seem more interested in graduating than in joining the "Aggie fraternity." The Student Government doesn't care either. Those people spend all their time hanging around the SPO planning their political careers.

Our watchdogs in the system have let us down from homosexuality, but their job is done. They must stop the vile threats by fraternities and sororities. They also review existing organizations so we can "Keep that brotherly spirit" and pray say "some of we are Aggies, and the Aggie are some of we."

David Witt

THE BATTALION

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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, but not subject to the same length constraints as letters.

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