

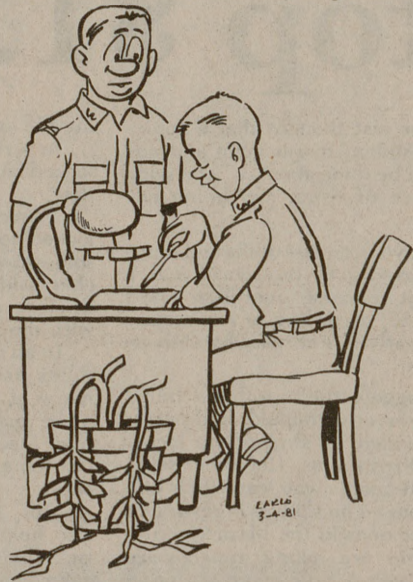
VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

WEDNESDAY
MARCH 4, 1981

Slouch

By Jim Earle



"Now that you've taken up tobacco-chewing, what do you use for a spittoon?"

Will Dems utilize decision in best way?

By DAVID S. BRODER

WASHINGTON — If the Democrats were doing as well in the country as they are in the courts, they would be in great shape. And if the voters of the country understood the importance of the political parties as well as the justices of the Supreme Court do, then some of us could quit worrying about the condition of the two-party system.

For the second time in six years, the learned justices have handed the Democratic National Committee a clear verdict on a vital question testing the authority of the party to control its own nominating procedures — even in conflict with state laws. Last week's 6-3 decision on Democratic Party of U.S. v. La Follette following the unanimous 1975 decision on Cousins v. Wigoda ought to convince even the skeptics that party rules will be enforced against those who wish to challenge them.

The issue in the 1975 case was the right of the 1972 Democratic convention to unseat the duly-elected Daley delegation from Chicago and substitute delegates who met the party's own rules for representation of women and minorities. The issue this week was the party's right to reject delegates instructed by the results of the Wisconsin "open primary." Wisconsin has a long tradition of allowing Republicans and independents to crossover into the Democratic primary — and vice versa — while the Democratic national convention rules require delegates to be picked only by bona fide Democrats.

In the earlier case, Justice William J. Brennan, Jr., upheld the convention decision against state law because, he said, "the convention serves the pervasive national interest in the selection of candidates for national office, and this national interest is greater than any interest of an individual state."

Because "delegates perform a task of supreme importance to every citizen of the nation," Brennan said no single state may be permitted to dictate terms for its delegates that "could seriously undercut or indeed destroy the effectiveness of the national party convention as a concerted enterprise engaged in the vital process of choosing presidential and vice presidential candidates."

In last week's ruling, Justice Potter Stewart applied and reinforced the same doctrine. "The state argues," he said, "that its law places only a minor burden on the national party. The national party argues that the burden is substantial, because it prevents the party from 'screening out those whose affiliation is ... slight, tenuous or

fleeting,' and that such screening is essential to build a more effective and responsible party."

"But," said Stewart, "it is not for the courts to mediate the merits of this dispute. For even if the state were correct, a state or a court may not constitutionally substitute its own judgement for that of the party."

The latest ruling came just as the Democratic were choosing Charles T. Manatt Jr., of California as their new chairman and facing the task of rebuilding from their latest and worst electoral defeat.

The justices clearly signaled the Democrats that the way is open for them to begin the repair of their own distorted nominating process by curbing the number of delegates chosen primaries. States may hold primaries according to their own laws, the court said, but the party is obliged to seat delegates only in the manner and number its own rules prescribe.

The task of changing those rules to reduce the percentage of delegates picked in primaries will not be easy, but it is vital. Women and minorities may well object to any reduction in the "participatory" politics of the last 12 years. They are entitled to consideration, because they have been the most loyal of all the Democratic constituencies.

But the Democrats face one overwhelming fact. Since they rewrote their nominating procedures in 1969 and thereby unleashed the flood of primaries, they have nominated two candidates — George McGovern and Jimmy Carter. In the last three presidential elections, their scorecard shows one narrow victory over an appointed President carrying the banner of victory that had just gone through the worst political scandal of modern times — and two landslide defeats.

The country will rightly judge the political wisdom of the Democrats by their ability to make the necessary connection between the distortions of their nominating process and disasters of their presidential candidates.

The Supreme Court has ended any doubts about the Democrats' right to reconstruct their own convention and nominating system by changing their own party rules. The political imperative for changes that would reduce the number of "grassroots" delegates and increase the influence of officeholders and party professionals is clear.

If the Democrats fail to act in the next two years, it can only mean they have less respect for the importance of their political convention than those nine men on the Supreme Court display.

Give Greeks at A&M a chance

By EILEEN WALL

Hey, you know me, don't you? Come on, I know you've seen me and my kind walking around campus. We're the ones with the alligator shirts, khaki pants and those little brown shoes with the white soles. Yeah, you know, the Fat Rats, the SBs, the Greeks.

What's that? Know all about us, you say? Seen Animal House three times? Hey, you should be an expert then, right?

Wrong. Believing that all there is to Greeks is parties and alligator shirts is as absurd as believing that all Texas A&M students are living embodiments of those ridiculous Aggie jokes. And I don't know about you, but I'm perfectly capable of changing the light bulbs in my room without the help of 2,999 of my Good Ag friends.

Maybe the reason people are so slow in their acceptance of Greeks as humans is they know so little about them, and in light of this I'd like to enlighten you a little, and maybe even dispel the toga party image by explaining some aspects of Greek life. Greeks, please pardon me while I sound like a pledge test.

First, the basics. Who is a Greek? Besides an inhabitant of the island of Greece, or a descendant thereof, a Greek is a member of a social sorority or fraternity having a name composed of Greek letters. Most are nationwide. Currently, there are 13 national fraternities and 10 national sororities at A&M.

Now onto what the Greeks do: **Rush** — Not the kind on the Houston freeways. Rush refers to the process

Reader's Forum

through which new Greeks are sought by sororities and fraternities. It usually consists of a series of get-togethers to which prospective members are invited to meet the group.

Philanthropy — Although social in nature, sororities and fraternities do other things besides party. Each group has a charity or community service project for which they raise money. These philanthropies range from cardiac aid to multiple sclerosis.

Scholarship — Yep, we're here to get an education, too. All groups have scholastic requirements for membership, as well as programs that include such things as study hours or tutors. Panhellenic gives a scholarship award to the sorority with the highest GPR.

Housing — Yes, Virginia, there are fraternity and sorority houses at Texas A&M. While not all groups have houses, most plan to build or acquire houses in the future. The existing fraternity houses are scattered throughout Bryan and College Station, while existing sorority houses and planned sites are concentrated in the Athens Drive area, off of Dominik in College Station.

Panhellenic — Pan who? Pan-hel-lin-ic is

the governing body of sororities. Its main task is overseeing rush and promoting the Greek system, but it also controls things like how many mixers the sororities are allowed to have each semester.

Interfraternity Council (IFC) — The IFC is the governing body of the fraternities. While IFC is not directly related to Panhellenic, the two groups do work together on all-Greek projects, such as last year's All Greek-United Way Kitchen. Currently, they are working on a proposal for recognition by the University.

So now you've had a crash course in the Greek system.

So what? Big deal, right? What does it mean to the average Ag anyway?

The point is, the Greeks have an important contribution to make to the students at this University; we're not, as some believe, out to overthrow the school. We simply offer a niche in a school of 30,000-plus students, leadership training, scholastic guidance, and something Greek call brotherhood (or sisterhood). That's no revolutions, no communist doctrine. Our growing numbers indicate a need for these things.

This isn't to say we're not proud to be Aggies, on the contrary, we're damn proud — we're Aggie Greeks. My sorority doesn't make me any less proud of my Aggie ring; it makes it that much more special.

We're not asking for anything you wouldn't give to any fellow Ag, just a chance to make our contribution.

BLR
Eileen Wall is a senior journalism major

It's your turn

Poor spirits leave bad taste in mouth

Editor:
I've been at A&M a long time, and have seen and appreciated many of our fine athletic teams. I have never seen any team with as much class and effort as our 1980-81 basketball team. I only wish I could say as much for our crowds. The poor attendance and the rude conduct of our crowd this year leaves me with a bad taste in my mouth and the fear that we may be heading towards the pits of sportsmanship where the likes of Arkansas and Cougar High now reside.

It used to be said that Aggies don't boo, but now we boo and shout obscenities with the best (or worst) of them. I can only remember one time, before Monday night, that someone sitting in the student body threw ice on the court, and he was bodily assisted from the coliseum by those seated around him and asked not to return. I only wish that would have happened Monday night.

The spirit that we like to brag about is a spirit of mature and sportsmanlike conduct, even under the greatest duress. I only have this to say: If you don't have the maturity to control yourself at a mere game, especially one in which your actions cannot affect the outcome, then how will you manage to cope with the unfairness of the "real world" that awaits you? I shudder to think, and I suggest you learn, and soon.

P.S. My vote for Vernon and Rynn for the Aggie Hall of Fame.

Matthew N. Belden

Turnout disappointing

Editor:
I would like to express my strong disappointment at the meager turnout for the Aggie basketball team's biggest game of the year. It is a pretty poor argument for a new coliseum when only 4,300 people can make it to the first game of the Southwest Conference playoffs. I bet if the football team was involved in any post-season play Kyle Field would be filled over capacity. Unfortunately G. Rollie White was only filled to half capacity. For all of you who couldn't make it, you missed a fantastic game, but the 4,300 fans who were there more than made up for the lack of Ags by showing immense spirit and sportsmanship. Since there were only about 3,000 students present which is about 10 percent of the students, I figure

the term 2 percenter should be changed to 90 percenter. Gig 'em 10 percenters!

Does anyone know what an Olsen Field is?

Stephen E. Langsdorf '83

Summer jobs

Editor:
I would like to correct an error that appeared in Friday's Battalion article about the Student Government "Summer Jobs Program." It was stated that the campus Placement Center is not very active in finding summer work for students. This is not true. An estimated 500 students found summer work through the center last year. During the past semester alone, over 200 companies were interested in interviewing prospective summer employees.

Student Government wishes to complement this Placement Center's service by attracting jobs in companies that normally do not conduct interviews here (i.e. the firms of former students.) Through cooperation between Student Government and the Placement Center, we hope to provide Aggies with the best possible service.

Students interested in summer work should check these areas:

1. The "Summer Jobs" binder in the Placement Center's library.
2. The "Pink Sheets" in the Placement Center (for regular employers who also need summer help.)
3. The "Summer Jobs Program" file in the Student Government office, beginning April 13.

Roger McConnell '81

Aggies abroad

Editor:
As 45 Aggies who are studying abroad, we can truly say that being away from Aggieland can be a trying experience. We

were delighted last week to have received several copies of The Battalion. It is a great feeling to hear news of events happening around the campus. We would like to thank B. Keith Williams, the Department of Landscape Architecture, and The Battalion for their efforts in helping us feel that we are still a close part of Texas A&M.

Daryl Benkendorfer '81

Editors note: This letter was accompanied by 44 other signatures.

Tribute to Scott

Editor:
I'd like to take this chance to pay respects to a great man, a great professional, and a great friend of Texas A&M. William J. Scott, executive chef at the MSU Food Services facility, who passed away last week.

He was a highly regarded professional who will be sorely missed from students and the administration of A&M on out through the residents of the Bryan-College Station area. Anyone who was fortunate to have made contact with this man knows the professionalism that I've mentioned.

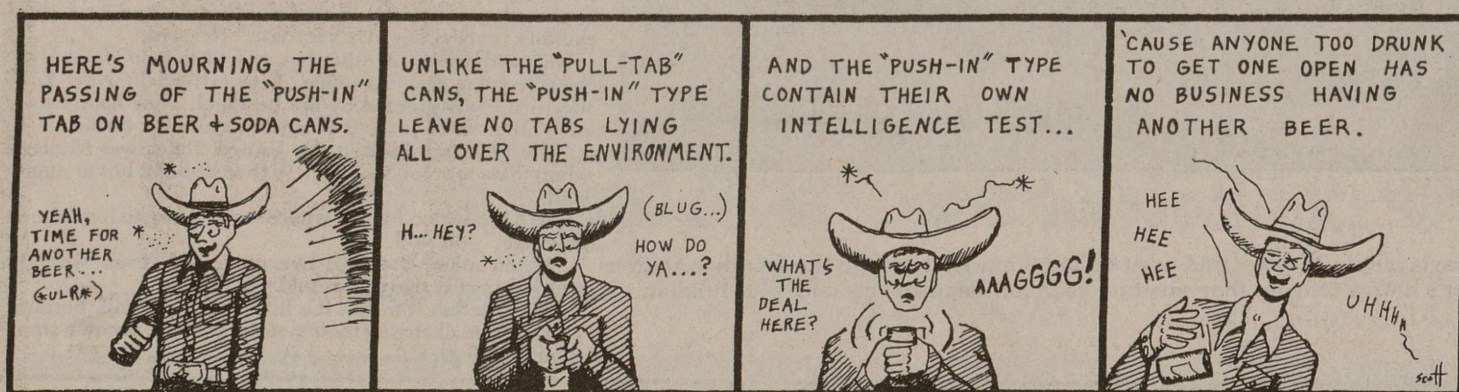
I was most lucky to take on the role of protegee to this man for the final year and half of his life. During this time he was able to convey a small portion of his knowledge. Hopefully I will use that as a base for learning in the future. I wish to God I could give my mentor one more "thank you" person.

I am just one of the many people who will miss Mr. Scott. Those of us in the Food Service Dept. certainly hope he will be remembered in everyone's prayers.

Peter O'Connor '81

Editor's note: This letter was accompanied by 39 signatures.

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.

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