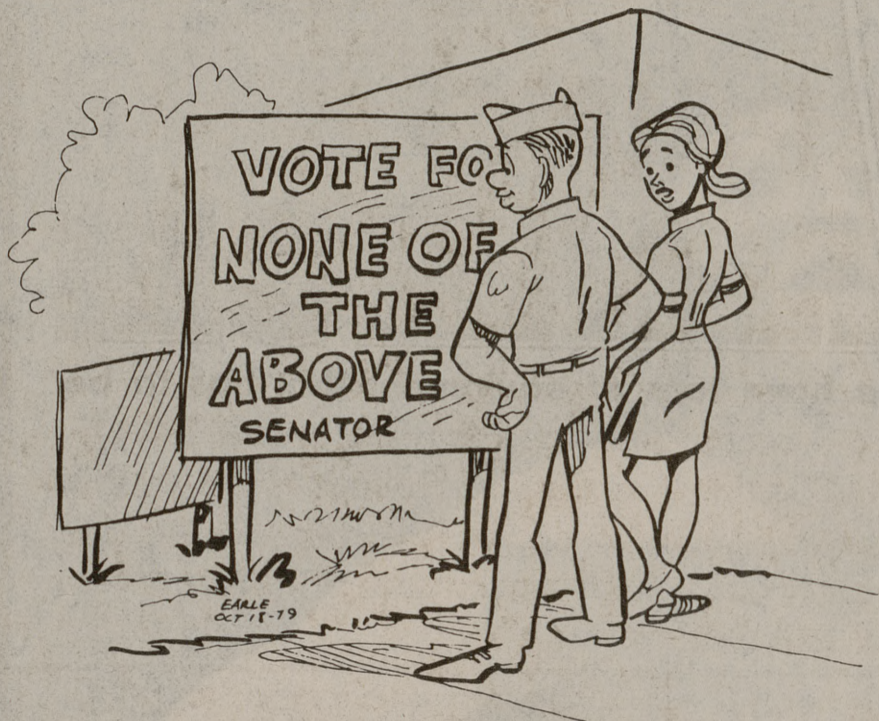


VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

THURSDAY
MARCH 26, 1981

Slouch By Jim Earle



"You mean he changed his name to 'None of the Above' just for the election?"

Stockman is sought by almost everyone

By ROBERT SHEPARD
United Press International

WASHINGTON — David Stockman, David Stockman. It's the highest-rated show on Capitol Hill these days, as the young budget director travels through the halls of Congress spreading the gospel of the Reagan administration.

Some say the show may be suffering from overexposure, but others clamor for more personal appearances by the former two-term congressman from Michigan.

Stockman's roadshow is unmatched in recent years by any other administration official, least of all by a budget director.

Bert Lance, the Carter administration's ill-fated budget director, spent a good deal of time on Capitol Hill, but mostly trying to explain the tangled financial affairs that eventually led to his resignation.

Most budget directors do their work downtown and leave it to others to testify before Congress. Stockman has agreed not only to testify before the full committees of the House and Senate, but even goes so far as to appear before subcommittees — of which there are 189, as he ruefully noted last week.

Almost every working day since early February has seen Stockman at the Capitol testifying before committees, having breakfast or luncheon meetings with members of Congress, or giving informal briefings. In all those contacts he explains why the administration's drastic budget cuts are needed and how the country will — in the long run — be better for them.

Stockman is in such great demand because he is the chief architect of the massive budget cuts Congress is being asked to approve.

Cabinet secretaries are also called to testify, but most members of Congress feel Stockman is the one calling the shots. And this view has been reinforced by the poor performance of several Cabinet secretaries who have testified before committees.

Stockman, along with Secretary of State Alexander Haig and Defense Secretary

Caspar Weinberger, come across as the most knowledgeable and forceful members of the Reagan team, while some of the other Cabinet level officials seem to be struggling to keep up with the frenetic budget-slasher.

One of the most frequent questions put to Cabinet secretaries deals with whether they had anything to say about the cuts ordered in their own departments.

"Did you get your marching orders one by one?" one Cabinet officer was asked last week.

"That's not what happened," insisted the secretary. He said there had been "give and take" in the budget discussions, "but sometimes matters had to go before the president."

The persistent impression is that Stockman usually prevailed in those cases, and thus he is the one to answer questions from members of Congress.

That impression is reinforced by the fact that Stockman goes before the various congressional committees prepared to field those questions by himself.

Last week, Stockman went to a subcommittee hearing accompanied by just one aide. The day before that same subcommittee saw a Cabinet secretary show up with 17 assorted aides and deputies.

Stockman is an able defender of the administration's economic program, but his appearances on the Hill do not always go smoothly. Under intense and hostile questioning by Rep. Parren Mitchell, D-Md., a leader of the Congressional Black Caucus, Stockman was moved to shouting.

And last week, after about an hour of answering questions, Stockman had to leave to attend a Cabinet meeting at the White House. But Rep. Mary Rose Oakar, D-Ohio, complained she had not had a chance to ask her questions.

"Either he can stay for a bulk of time or we can just forget it and we can vote the budget down immediately," she said.

Stockman replied testily that he was "not willing to be subjected to those kinds of statements for the efforts which I am making."

Laugh away tuition survey

When Student Government leaders present the results of their student poll on tuition increase to state officials, they should be laughed all the way back to College Station.

The survey, poll, or whatever you want to call it is the most one-sided attempt to stack a deck since gambling boats plied the Mississippi.

The knee-jerk appeal of the form is apparent: "Do you favor the increase in tuition?" is the only substantive question asked. The other seven are designed to provide demographic information about the Texas A&M student body.

In trying for simplicity, the survey obscures a set of circumstances which are as necessary for an understanding of the tuition increase as they are complex. None of the background information which students need to adequately consider the question is provided.

What do students need to know in order

Sidebars

By Dillard Stone

to participate in a survey on tuition? The most obvious is why a tuition raise is being considered at all. To suggest that there's no real perceived need for an increase is to say that legislators are considering this merely to nail students to the wall.

That's untrue. There are at least two good uses for money generated by an increase.

With the near abolition of the ad valorem tax, the schools which are not part of the University of Texas and Texas A&M Systems have no source of construction funds. They desperately need money for permanent improvements on campus, and

the UT- and Texas A&M-shared Permanent University Fund will not, at least in time being, be divided any further.

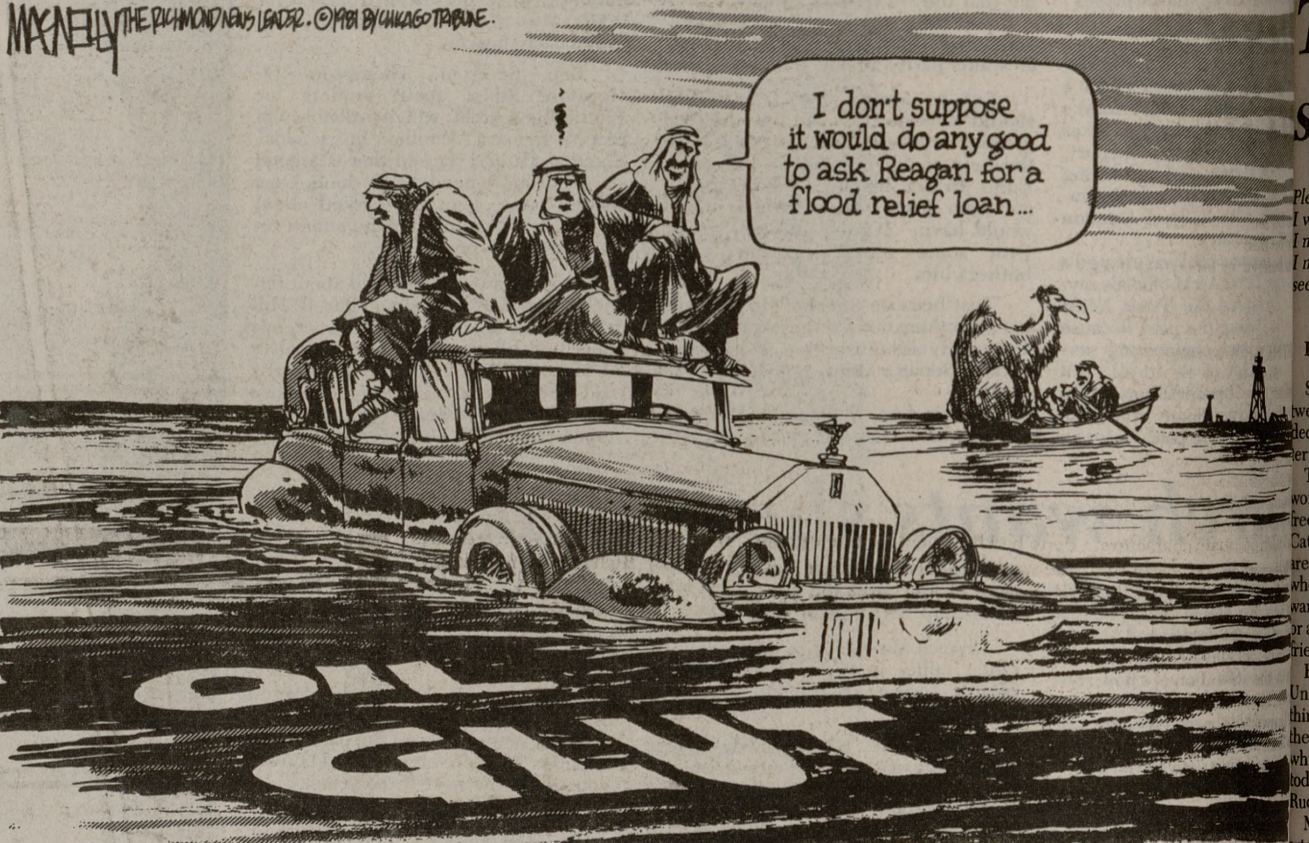
Texas university faculty salaries abysmally low compared to other universities. One option for an increase in tuition is to dedicate the funds toward higher salaries.

The survey simply ignores these questions; instead it strives for knee-jerk tuition, trying to get students to reject the idea of a tuition increase out of hand.

Only when we're prepared with appropriate information can we make responsible answers — but to do that we have to have responsible questions.

Whatever is done with the money goals are worthy, and to not point out tuition increase is being considered is to deny the students of their right to be informed opinion.

It also invalidates any results survey.



Dromedary repellants available

Re-acquiring the green thumb

By DICK WEST
United Press International

WASHINGTON — Nothing about the arrival of spring lifts my spirits more than the profuse re-emergence of gardening tips.

You can have the jonquils and forsythia. My heart leaps up when I behold the blossoming of esoteric floriculture advice in the Q. and A. format that may be seen below:

Q. I am having trouble with vegetable coloration. My carrots are coming up light blue and the tomatoes off-white. What is causing this?

A. The conditions you describe indicate the soil needs more lime. It also might help to add more chocolate and tutti-frutti.

Q. I am bothered by camels getting into my garden and trampling down the rhubarb. How do I get about camel-proofing a vegetable plot?

A. Are you certain they are camels and not dromedaries? A good way to tell is by the hump test. If they have one hump, chances are they are dromedaries. Most camels are double-humped.

Any good garden supply store can provide you with a dromedary repellant. There are several effective brands on the market, among them Drom-Away, Drom-B-Gone

and Shoo-Drom.

Spray a few drops on the rhubarb after a heavy dew and it will keep dromedaries away for up to 20 days.

Camels are harder to deal with. An eight-foot electrified fence is the only sure way of keeping them out.

Q. My squash plants have gone simply ape this year. We eat squash at least twice a day, the freezer is full of squash and I pick an armload every time I go to the garden. What is the best way to get rid of surplus squash?

A. Fill a wicker basket with squash and take it under the cover of darkness to some house in the neighborhood where you can be pretty sure they will give it a good home. Place the basket on the front stoop, ring the doorbell and run like hell.

Q. Every year when I start weeding my garden, I find bulrushes coming up in the

rows where I had planted soybeans.

there any easy way to control bulrushes?

A. Bulrushes taking over a soybean usually means the garden is being heavily watered. You can test this by pinning a rock in the center of the garden. The rule of thumb, the depth of the water will be twice the height of the splash. If the soundings indicate a depth of nine inches or more, it is a pretty good bet the garden is getting too much water. Either turn off the sprinkler or move the soybeans to higher ground.

Q. How can I tell when parsnips are ripe?

A. Pluck a trial parsnip and then smartly with the index finger. If it makes a resonant plunking sound, the parsnip is ready for picking. If it makes a tinny ping noise, leave them in the ground a days longer.

Warped



By Scott McCullar

THE BATTALION

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