

VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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Slouch

By Jim Earle

Shooting results in Austin crisis

Editor's note: Battalion staff reporter Liz Newlin was in Austin Monday to cover Texas A&M University's budget hearing before the House Appropriations Committee and Vice President George Bush's speech to the Legislature. When word came of the attempt on President Ronald Reagan's life, Newlin was drawn into the maelstrom of an anxious government. Her comments follow:

Inside/outlook

By Liz Newlin

AUSTIN — A capital in crisis is an awe-some thing to see.

Its halls become conduits for the latest news and rumors. People stop reporters in the corridors to pump — and give — information. Legislators and by-standers recall past tragedies and look for similarities.

Certainly other capitals were distraught Monday, but Austin felt it was a part of the crisis. For if the worst had happened, the new president was due soon at the airport.

The day starts out calmly enough: Half a dozen workers from the vice president's advance staff and a few Secret Service men sit in a Driscoll Hotel suite watching "Good Morning America." Since Thursday they've been planning for George Bush's 25-minute speech to the State Legislature.

Monday morning hearings, including one for Texas A&M, consume the legislators' time. In one room, children ask the state to recognize the armadillo as the official animal. One child is dressed as the armor-plated mammal, and normally would get good press. But not today.

About 1:30 radios begin to broadcast the first reports. Bush is scheduled to arrive at

the municipal airport at 2:15. He does, but he gets no farther.

He talks to the governor during a 40-minute refueling stop and flies back to Washington. Rumors had him flying several times before he took off.

Back at the Capitol, schoolchildren, tourists and the Ross Volunteers stand in the hot sun to greet the vice president. A postman on his rounds stops at the mailbox behind the RVs — after it's searched for bombs. Photographers and reporters course between the second-floor press rooms and the south steps, asking each other the news. Secret Service men don't tell anything, and state officials say Bush is still coming.

Old-timers recall that Austin was JFK's next stop.

Around 3 p.m. the RVs are released, and the prayer service is set for 3:30. That news just spreads from one to another. At the speaker's stand, Bill Clayton reminisces about Nov. 22, 1963, when he was traveling from West Texas to Austin.

"I'd stopped at for lunch at Brownwood

and heard the announcement speaker, who was serving lunch then. Monday, he says, "We were in office just before the session was over."

Reporters grab anybody they can remember, because real news is scarce. Where two reporters are with a source, there is a press conference. Soon, five reporters will join, and read each other's notes. They will each other to find out who is right while writing down his words.

A real source, Gov. Bill Clements, is the buzzing House chairman what he knows of the president's plans.

The minister from Austin's First Church prays for the president and other injured men.

Clements exits, but he also behind a few other sources. Secretary George Strake and U.S. Rep. Bill Strake boarded the plane with Clayton and Archer was on the plane from Austin, D.C.

Some reporters spot the crowd one, and almost need to fight the Archer, a cool politician, answers well and in detail. Tourists too want him, but they can't cut through the microphones. Occasionally on the look over reporters to see if they are the one who must be important. Usually leave with a quizzical look.

The crowd begins to thin out. Clumps form around TV sets. The story is out — the legislators disperse and the reporters begin to write it.



WE'RE PULLING FOR YOU MR. PRESIDENT

Hiring Haig was risky from the start

By DAVID S. BRODER

WASHINGTON — If political science were a real science — which it ain't — the mathematical formula that would explain last week's strange case of Alexander M. Haig would be: E + WHE = T. Ego plus White House experience equals trouble.

The secretary of state is not the first alumnus of the senior White House staff to provoke a president by the way he handled his Cabinet assignment. The Democratic lawyer who first spotted Haig's talents in the army bureaucracy 17 years ago and who shepherded him through his confirmation hearings in January — Joseph A. Califano Jr. — had a very similar experience.

Califano had been Lyndon Johnson's top domestic assistant before being named by Jimmy Carter as secretary of health, education and welfare. Haig had been Richard Nixon's national security adviser and chief of staff before Ronald Reagan picked him for the Cabinet.

Califano wound up being fired from the Cabinet amid charges of disloyalty. Haig was tottering on the verge of an angry resignation under similar circumstances last week — and might, in fact, leave at any time.

To a reporter who knew both men as talented and energetic operators blessed with a full appreciation of their own skills, it seemed more than coincidental that their Cabinet careers had been skewered by the same sword: running into conflict with their successors on the White House staff.

So I asked Califano if he thought there was an inherent risk for any President in naming to a major Cabinet position someone who "knew too much" about the inner workings of the White House.

"It's a fascinating question," he said. There is no great risk, we quickly agreed, in a president moving someone from a White House staff job to a Cabinet secretaryship in mid-administration. Lyndon Johnson did that with Larry O'Brien; Richard Nixon, with Caspar Weinberger; and Jerry Ford, with Don Rumsfeld — each time with success.

The problem, Califano said, arises when someone who has learned his way through the political maze by working inside a previous White House comes in at the start of a new administration as the head of a key Cabinet department. "You can start at 150 miles per hour," Califano said. "I was able to go like gangbusters while the Carter White House staff was still getting up to speed."

"If you're a human being," he added, "you'll take advantage of what you know, at the expense of guys who can't move that fast."

That is exactly what Haig did. On the day Reagan was sworn in, Haig handed him a memo outlining procedures for handling national security matters that would have given Haig himself total control of Reagan's foreign policy. Presidential counselor Edwin Meese III and White House chief of staff James A. Baker III were able to block that power play. But Haig pressed relentlessly ahead on both bureaucratic and substantive issues, to the point that six weeks into the new administration, Time magazine did a cover story on him, headlined: "Taking Command. The World According to Haig."

Califano, again: "That's where the trouble comes. Human jealousy enters. The guy who has been on the White House staff has contacts all over town, including the press. Everybody likes attention from the press, and until the White House guys develop their own contacts, they can't get the attention the Cabinet member gets."

That is certainly part of the story — but only part. From the White House staff viewpoint, an aggressive, fast-moving and publicity-conscious Cabinet member is a serious threat. The new President's men suspect, and often with good reason, that the Cabinet officer has a policy and political agenda of his own, which he can push at the President's expense.

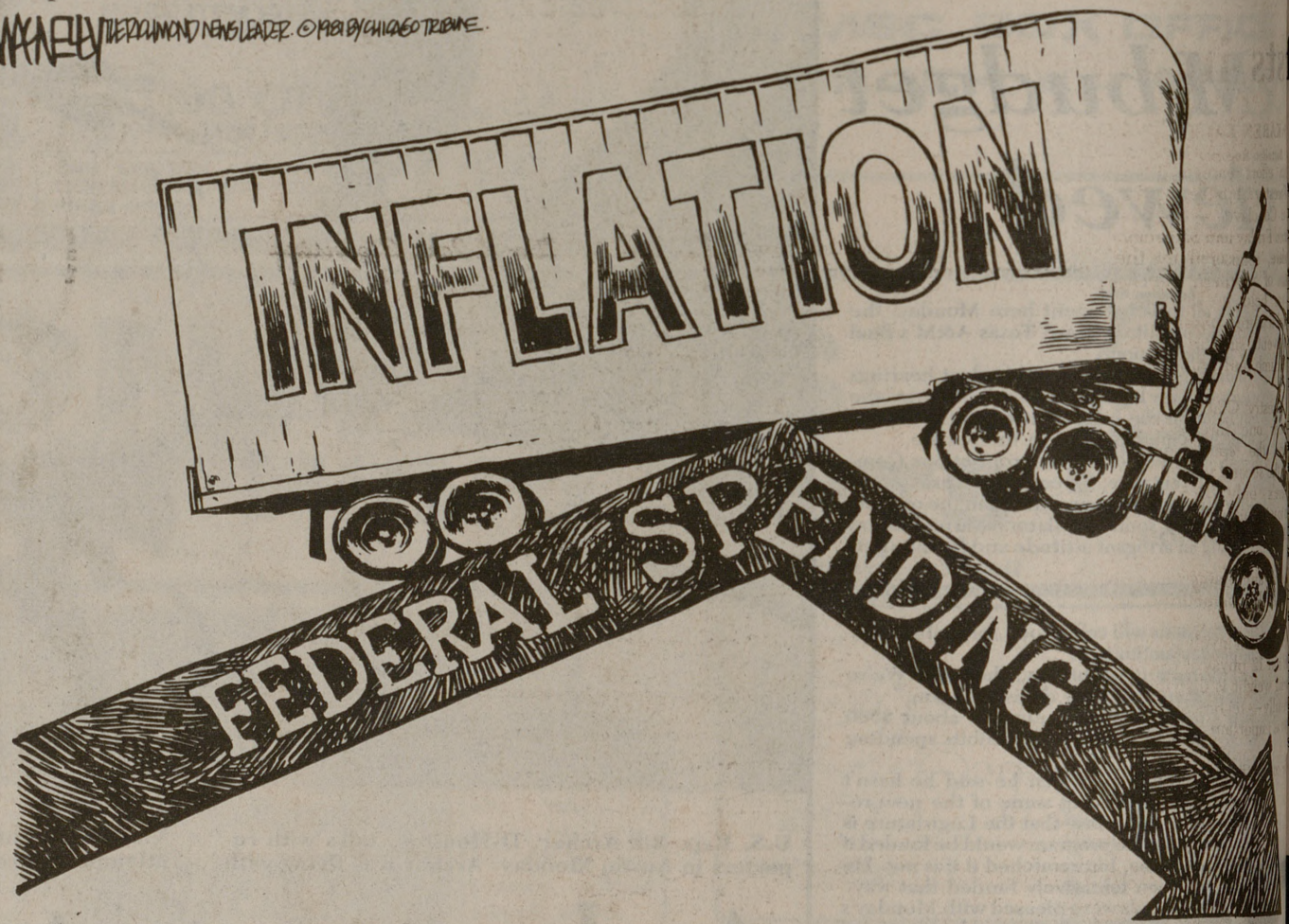
Haig is criticized for promoting the El Salvador civil war into a major focus of policy debate at the very moment that Reagan wanted to concentrate the attention of Congress and the country on his economic package.

But Califano made the right point when he observed that "tension between the Cabinet members and White House staff members is inevitable. A skillful President can use that tension to serve his own purposes," by letting it force into the open those critical issues on which the President himself — and no subordinate — is entitled to the final say.

But a less-than-skillful president is liable to let the tensions build to the point of explosion, costing him the services of able, energetic and experienced people. Carter lost Califano that way, and Reagan last week was on the verge of losing Haig.

Hiring such men in the first place is a risk. But good Presidents are those who can make the risky decisions work.

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It's your turn

Basement thanked for jazz

Editor:

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the MSC Basement for bringing to this campus one of the best modern jazz guitarists, Pat Metheny, and his fine group of accomplished jazz musicians. We felt like Basement did a very fine job in coordinating the entire event.

We would also like to commend the 700 plus people who attended the concert. It seemed as though the people who were there were very knowledgeable of the proper conduct and were very much "in time"

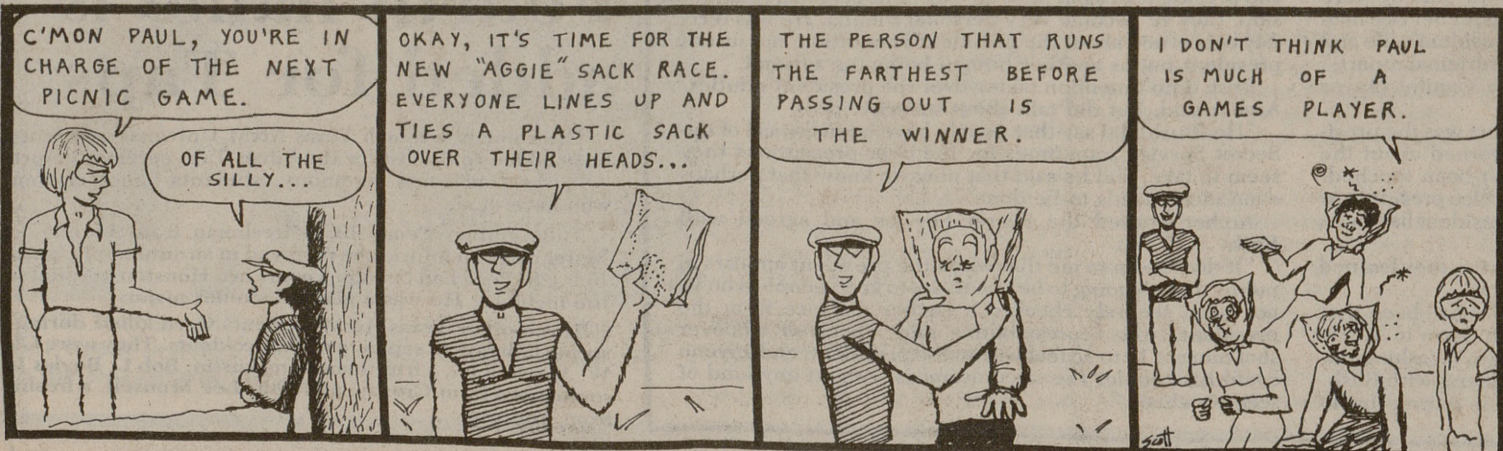
with the emotion of the group. This made the concert an even more satisfying experience for us.

Finally, we would like to thank the Pat Metheny Group itself for a very intense, very polished effort which brought the responsive crowd to its feet a number of times. We honestly felt like the group

almost enjoyed playing as much as listening. I hope this type of response convince the Basement that there is jazz following at A&M and that them to bring more big name jazz to the school. Thank you!

Jeff
Mike

Warped



By Scott McCullar

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