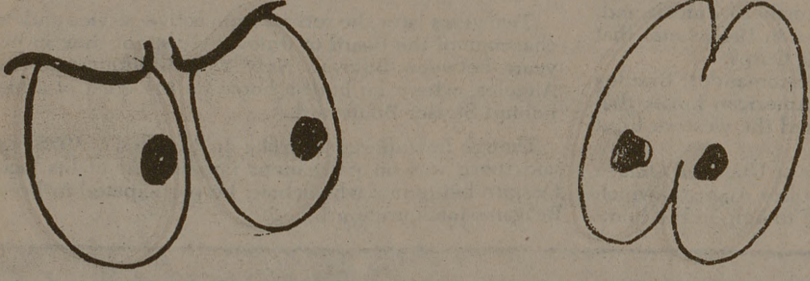


VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

THURSDAY
APRIL 9, 1981

Slouch By Jim Earle



"Let's not get any more talcum powder in a pressurized can, OK?"

Will El Salvador be Vietnam revisited?

By JUAN O. TAMAYO
United Press International

The U.S. Army colonel was briefing journalists deep within the bunker-like U.S. Embassy in El Salvador, jabbing a metal pointer at a map of the nation as he explained how Salvadoran troops were defeating leftist guerrillas.

In the crowd, a silver-haired news photographer who covered the early years of U.S. involvement in Vietnam shook his head incredulously and stage-whispered, "Saigon, 1967."

It was not the first or last comparison of El Salvador with Vietnam since the United States sent 56 military advisers and \$35 million in military aid to help the tiny Central American nation battle Marxist-led rebels.

There are similarities between El Salvador and Vietnam, 13,000 miles away, where the United States chose to "draw the line" against communist infiltration to avert a domino-like fall of neighboring countries.

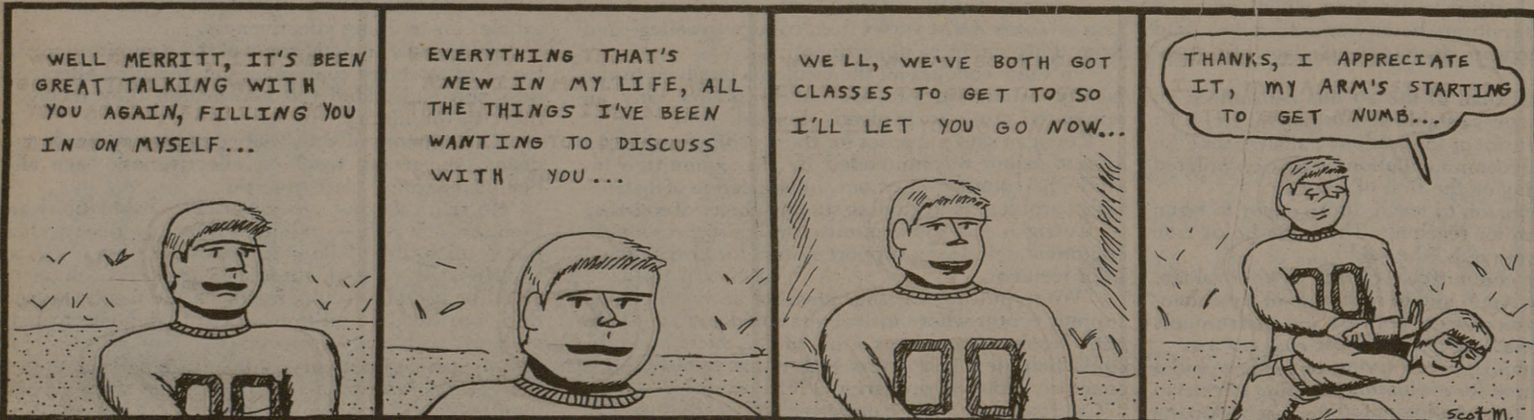
But U.S. diplomats and military officers in San Salvador, who would not comment for the record, cockily see a U.S. victory in the making in El Salvador. Some of them see it as "a second chance to win Vietnam."

El Salvador, they point out, is only one-eighth the size of South Vietnam but has one-fourth its population — 4.8 million people packed into 8,260 square miles, compared with 19.7 million people spread out over 67,108 square miles.

That gives the 3,000 to 5,000 Salvadoran guerrillas little room to move around, especially since their Massachusetts-sized nation is extensively farmed and doesn't have the impenetrable jungles of Vietnam, they say.

Surrounded by rightist-ruled Guatemala and Honduras, the rebels can't set up a "Ho Chi Minh Trail" supply line, and are unlikely to be backed up by regular army units, such as the battalions North Vietnam sent into the South.

Warped



Intolerance demeans education

By AMY ANDREWS

"Go back to your own country!" "Hit the beach!" "If you don't like it, get out!", and the classic "Highway 6 runs both ways." These along with the cherished "Aggie horse laughs" filled Rudder Theater Tuesday night during the heated question-and-answer session following former hostage Richard Queen's analysis of the Iranian crisis. They came from the majority of the audience in response to the questions of some of our foreign students: "How could the United States support the corrupt government of the Shah at the expense of the human rights of millions of Iranians? Shouldn't we draw a line on our manipulation of foreign cultures for our 'national interests'?" I was appalled at the heckling and hissing they received for expressing their views.

Granted, some of their comments may have been inappropriate. First, the floor was open for questions to the speaker, Richard Queen. The purpose of the program was to hear Queen's account and analysis of the situation. It was not an open forum for airing personal opinions — radical or conservative. Secondly, the charges made had little relevance to Queen's role in Iran. He had been there for four months interviewing applicants for American visas. It was not his fault that the State Department chose the policies it did, and he made that very clear. It is a shame that, as a free speaker at our university, he was doomed to

Reader's Forum

be the target of such emotional outbursts simply because he was, by the fall of the dice, involved in the crisis. I feel that the audience became far too emotional and lost sight of Mr. Queen's purpose as a speaker.

Much more disturbing, though, were the ridiculing responses of the audience majority. Could no one sense the value of their statements? I maintain that instead of drowning out these sentiments with childish hissing, as a student body we should be much more sensitive. Our foreign students speak based on an experience and cultural background very different from the upper-middle-class American's, and whether we like it or not, the majority of this world is different. Their comments, misguided or confused as they may have been, did represent the sentiments of millions of people. We can't just shut our ears and recline into the familiarity of our own culture with the idea that "we're right — they're radical." We need to understand these countries, especially since we are forced to interact with them. Whether we are using these countries as economic resources (i.e., oil,

cheap labor, etc.) or as battlefields where we are going to stand tough to the Soviet Union, we need to remember that humans do not live there, and they don't necessarily think like Americans. As the future teachers, engineers, businessmen, and military personnel of this country, the students of our campus need to see that a failure to understand foreign values will inherently lead to a failure of our own interests. It caused our failure in Cuba, Vietnam, and Iran. Will we ever learn? Therefore, the foreign student on our campus offer an invaluable resource and service that must not be scorned. We need more understanding and knowledge — not hissing.

I realize that Texas A&M is a homogeneous school. Consider, for example, our standing as the most segregated public institution in the United States. However, part of our education is to expose the way we view the world, and a "love it or leave it" attitude toward those with conflicting attitudes can only reduce the quality of that education. Some may claim that the Aggie way is the all-American way in essence, but based on the reactions of Tuesday's audience, I'd have to disagree. The American way is freedom of speech and dissent, but a "Good Ag" only thinks "Good Bull" to maintain a thoughtless (conservative) status quo

Amy Andrews is a freshman accounting major.

It's your turn

Barbaric behavior disturbs reader

Editor:

I've just returned from Richard Queen's presentation. Needless to say, I was amazed at the barbaric behavior displayed by a few choice members of the audience.

Mr. Queen was holding a question-and-answer session with those who cared to come forth and present themselves. Everyone was instructed to ask only one question and make it short and to the point. All was going well until an individual began blurting out a torrid of accusations in semi-distinguishable English, as if Richard Queen himself was the ex-Shah. This was out of line with the format, but nonetheless, somewhat entertaining. This was to be but the tip of the proverbial iceberg.

Followed by this were five or so more righteous crusaders. None had the decency to ask any pertinent questions, or any questions at all for that matter. They were only concerned with turning the presentation into a political circus. Even after the ushers were successful in sending the m back to their seats they insisted on interrupting others by yelling from their seats at the back of the theater. This behavior is totally inexcusable. The incident made a mockery of the presentation and was an embarrassment to A&M.

To our Iranian "friends," who have again fostered ill feelings between us: when will you ever learn that your childish yelling and screaming will only do you more harm than good? Now excuse me for stooping to your level, but if you detest the United States and Americans so much why don't you just get the hell out — I know I never invited you!
Greg Cizik '82

Go home, Iranians

Editor:

On the evening of April 7, former hostage Richard Queen came to Rudder Theater to speak about his experiences while he was held hostage in Iran. The question and answer session which followed got a little rowdy when some Iranian students

started asking questions.

This letter is addressed in general to all Iranian students in this country who like to cause trouble, and in particular to those Iranians who gave Mr. Queen such a hard time the other night.

First off, I think it takes a hell of a lot of nerve for you people to come to our country and take advantage of our colleges and universities, and then turn around and criticize America. There aren't just a whole lot of places in the world where you could get away with that.

Secondly, if you are so anti-America, leave! It's not as if we're twisting your arm to make you stay here. Unlike some other countries around the world, this one is free; you may come and go as you please.

Considering the circumstances, I'd say you people ought to count you blessings and keep your mouths shut.

Daniel Boone

Remember guidelines

Editor:

When former Iranian hostage Richard Queen spoke at Rudder Theater on Tuesday, the behavior of the crowd during the question-and-answer period should be brought to attention. The program director, Bill Livingstone, set the guidelines for the questions. One short question per person was specified. Several of the persons who came to the microphone not only asked several questions but made statements of opinion. The reason that this was undesirable at a presentation of this nature was that there were several people waiting to also have a turn at the microphone. In the future it would be a good idea to remember these guidelines so that as many persons as possible will be able to have

their turn at the microphone.

Tom Weirich

Support for Warped

Editor:

This letter is a rebuttal to criticism of the Warped comic strip. My roommate and I feel that one of the strongest statements that can be made today is the words of Ayn Rand: "I swear by life and my love of it that I will never be for the sake of another man, nor another man to live for mine." We respect the opinions and wishes of others but when some people try to obliterate Warped from existence, they are asking others to cover their eyes for them "to live for another man." We do not think that The Battalion must conform to the wishes of these few. Shall we ban cartoon Tank McNamara because it offends some sports fans and party pants? The Battalion is put out for college students, who are supposed to be responsible enough to decide what they like or don't like, what to read and what not to read, and to know the difference between making a demand and expressing an opinion.

Great Scott! We don't always like Warped, but if we stop liking it, we stop reading it, not ask that The Battalion stop printing it. In fact, in our personal opinion survey, three out of four people polled stated they liked Warped.

We will not be held liable for any misstatement of this article, nor the use of this article, or portions thereof, in a term paper without the written approval of the authors.

After all, our opinion may be a little warped also.

Jay C. Ellis
Dane Robinson
Richard Zimmerman

By Scott McCullar

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

LETTERS POLICY
Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length, and are subject to being cut if they are longer. editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for length, but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must also be signed, show the author's name and phone number of the writer.

Columns and guest editorials are also welcome, and 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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