

Slouch

By Jim Earle



"I guess after all the time I changed my schedule, they were pretty glad to see me go."

Meese denies he is in charge on the hill

By HELEN THOMAS
United Press International

Presidential counselor Edwin Meese has a lot of power in the White House, but he says, "total fantasy" to believe he is in command.

Meese's decision not to awaken President Reagan until six hours after American aircraft shot down two Russian-made Libyan jets in disputed Mediterranean waters has been the subject of cartoons and criticism. He also has been jokingly referred to as "President Meese."

Meese is the first to laugh about it all. His favorite cartoon showed Meese telling Reagan that World War III started six hours ago. "Thanks Ed," Reagan is shown replying.

Another cartoon depicts the White House with aides conferring. One of them says, "World War III has started. Shall we wake the president?" And another aide answers, "He needs his rest."

As for the perception that Meese is the man in charge and Reagan has delegated his authority, Meese said in an interview with United Press International: "I think the president and I have the same views — that's total fantasy on the part of the media."

"We know that the president is totally in charge and the rest of us are just here to help him. And I think this is born primarily out by the press apparently not having enough to talk about."

Meese said that no changes in the president's or his modus operandi are contemplated as a result of the Libyan incident.

"He thought it was funny," Meese said, referring to the ruckus over his failure to awaken the president.

"I try not to bother him," Meese said, with details that Meese feels the staff can handle.

Nevertheless, the episode was revealing in the amount of power Reagan delegates and his basic detachment from the day-to-day running of the presidency.

Clearly, Reagan wants to focus on the big picture and to be in a position to make all of the ultimate decisions. But he does not want to be caught up with details which he feels bogged down some of his predecessors, particularly President Jimmy Carter.

Also on style, Meese said that when Reagan presides over discussions of high policy with his top aides, there are no winners or losers.

"He wants all the information laid out before him," Meese said. "He's different from other presidents. He makes his choices. With other presidents the one who loses the argument is cast out as a loser, but that's not true of Ronald Reagan."

Meese said that he himself often takes the role of the devil's advocate and proposes alternate solutions that are not acceptable because he wants Reagan to have the benefit of all points of view, "and he welcomes that."

But Reagan has pretty well insulated himself from any real dissent and the word around the White House is that only team players are acceptable.

Reporters who covered a picture-taking session in Los Angeles when Reagan gathered with several Cabinet members and top White House aides, observed that some 20 men at the luncheon tables were all basically in the conservative columns and the differences in their views could only be described as a slight variation.

And no one would expect that Reagan or his main coterie would tolerate a strong difference of opinion on the philosophy and direction of this administration.

Groups study election process

By CLAY RICHARDS
United Press International

WASHINGTON — Separate committees of the Republican and Democratic parties have begun the job of overhauling the way Americans elect their president.

A third commission, the Duke University Forum, headed by the school's president and former presidential candidate, Terry Sanford, has already completed its research on the topic and is writing its final report.

Members of all three groups have made it clear there will be some fundamental changes in what they believe is a system that is unwieldy, too expensive and most of all does not result in the best person being elected president.

Except for the liberals, who are largely responsible for the system the way it is, almost everyone is calling for what in essence is a return to the smoke filled rooms.

Both parties want to see fewer primaries, a shorter primary season, a greater role by party leaders in picking candidates, and

thus a diminished role by rank and file who otherwise are not involved in party politics. There is also a desire to see the party convention return to play a dramatic role in the nomination process, rather than a dull four-day television show.

Whether Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan go down in history as good presidents, it is perceived as wrong that the best way to win the White House is to be an unemployed former governor with lots of time to campaign.

The current system, politicians argue, requires a two-year, full-time campaign, blocking out such hard working public officials as Senate Republican Leader Howard Baker, who lost to Reagan in 1980, and Rep. Morris Udall, D-Ariz., whom Carter beat in 1976.

The political pros are also unhappy with the fact that party discipline is so weak that candidates think nothing of challenging a sitting president of their own party as

Reagan did Gerald Ford in 1976 and Edward Kennedy did Carter in 1976.

In both cases the party squabbling incumbent president weakened an electoral election battle and both, of course,

While it is unlikely that systems revert to one dominated by the bosses, many would like to see where favorite son governors of New California, Ohio and Florida wield their big delegations.

And they want to find a way to race for the presidential nomination completed sometime shortly after the Iowa precinct caucus and the New Hampshire primary.

The bottom line is that politicians a strong party system makes a democracy. Up until Reagan, every American president since Eisenhower tended to ignore the elected him. And none ever a second term.



Bill could alter astrological signs

By DICK WEST
United Press International

WASHINGTON — Among the more controversial legislation awaiting further action in the Senate is a bill to establish conception rather than birth as the point at which life begins.

You are all familiar with the sociological and philosophical arguments swirling around this issue, so I won't get into that. What I am wondering is how enactment of such a measure would effect horoscopes.

Astrological projections, as currently drawn, are based on birth dates. Which is rather whimsical methodology at best.

I myself was born a Capricorn. Theoretically, here are some of my zodiacal features:

— "You are calculating, always contemplating the usefulness of other people and of material goods."

— "In love, you are cool, reserved, possessive, faithful and suspicious — all at the same time."

Had I been born just five days earlier, I would have been a Sagittarius and would have had a different set of personality traits, physical characteristics and career expectations.

Had labor pains hit my mother on Dec. 21 instead of Dec. 26, I would have been "graceful, quick to learn and good at impro-

vising, intelligent, faithful and loyal." And, in love, "platonically rather than passionate."

Now anyone who knows me well will tell you I come much closer to fitting the second set of specifications. Which leads me to believe that by the time I was delivered my mother was about a week overdue.

And what of the millions of premature babies? Each year, thousands of infants who normally would have been, say, Scorpios enter the world as Libras, Virgos and even Leos.

Would anyone seriously suggest their Scorpio charts are still valid?

No. Common sense will tell you that our ruling planets, if indeed we have such things, are determined at the moment of conception and not the time of birth.

Born a Capricorn, I presumably was conceived sometime between March 21 and April 19. Under the Senate bill, I would be an Aries, and any sort of objective analysis would confirm that I am the Aries

type through and through.

Let us see what Llewellyn's Moon Book has to say about individuals whose ruling planet is Mars:

"You are intellectual, with a sensitive and keen as your body."

"Courageous and adventurous, you a pioneer spirit; ever seeking new arenas to conquer."

"You are a first-rate leader. In love you are daring, passionate and demanding."

And so on and so. All of which fits a Spandex body suit fits Bo Derek.

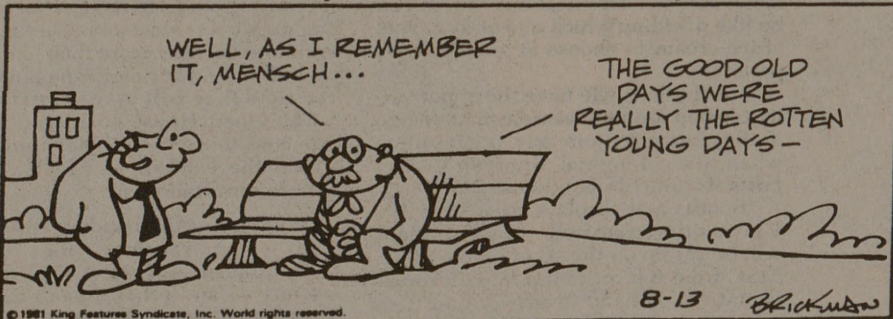
The daily horoscopes are more close target, too.

A recent Capricorn entry, chosen, dom, speculated that "you may be in a financial position that you realize, conjecture was completely out of with reality."

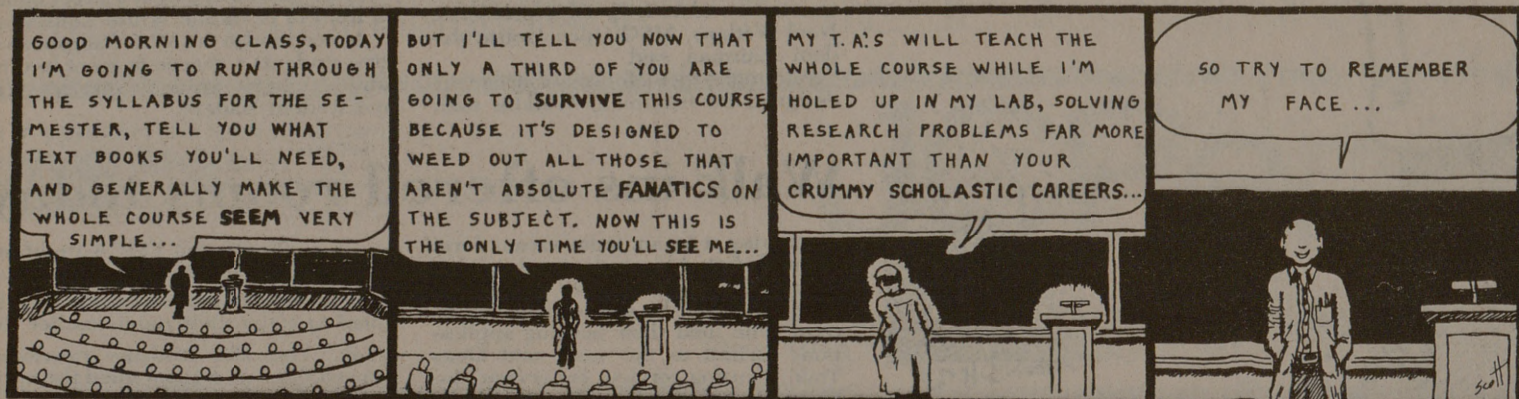
But the Aries entry ("Make good that fine talent you have.") was right on money.

the small society

by Brickman



Warped



By Scott McCullar

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