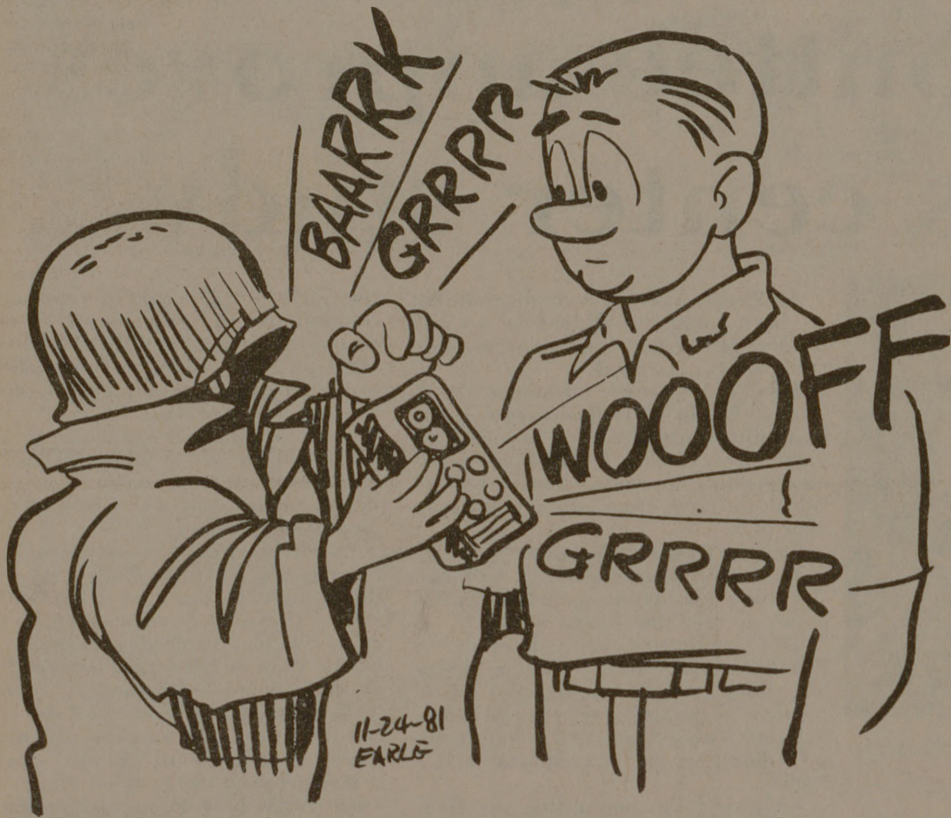


Slouch By Jim Earle



"Hear that! That's an interview I had with Reveille 'bout the t.u. game. That ought to lay to rest any doubts that you might have had!"

To Tell the Truth: an old Washington game

By ARNOLD SAWISLAK
United Press International

WASHINGTON — Some of the shock expressed in Washington about David Stockman's published confessions was about as genuine as the numbers the budget director brandished with such certitude last winter and spring.

If it really surprised anyone in this city that a federal official was using blue smoke and mirrors to argue his case for a given policy or program, they qualify for the same naive merit badge that Stockman gets for believing he could talk into a reporter's tape recorder and not have his words come back to plague him.

What was shocking about it all was the fact that Stockman gave his and President Reagan's political opponents such prime ammunition.

Stockman was supposed to be smart enough to know you don't sell a used car as the former property of a little old churchgoing lady and then tell the buyer as he drives away that the rattle he hears in the trunk is only empty beer cans. That is what shocked the politicians: telling the truth in public.

If that seems a cynical analysis of the Stockman flap and of the morality of political rhetoric in Washington, then consider the following:

— Twenty years ago, when David Stockman was 15 years old, John Kennedy went up and down the country decrying "the missile gap" President Dwight Eisenhower had permitted to develop in the U.S.-Soviet strategic balance. After he became president, Kennedy had his defense secretary declare there was no missile gap.

— When Stockman was 18, Lyndon Johnson warned the country it would be dangerous to give Barry Goldwater the war-making powers of the presidency. Shortly after the election, Johnson began the process that sent half a million U.S. troops to Vietnam.

— When Stockman was 22, Richard Nixon denounced wage and price controls as unfair and unworkable. Before his first term was over, Nixon imposed controls and kept them on until he was re-elected.

— When Stockman was 28, Gerald Ford assumed the presidency and announced that the long national nightmare of Watergate was over. One of his first acts in office was to give Nixon a presidential pardon.

— When Stockman was 30, Jimmy Carter promised to balance the federal budget by the end of his first term. Carter's last budget ended up about \$58 billion in the red.

— When Stockman was 34, Reagan declared he would balance the budget by the end of his first term, and gave Stockman the job of doing it. It now appears no such goal will be reached.

The argument may be made that in each of these cases and in scores of others that could be cited, the candidates and presidents really meant to carry out their pledges, but facts came to light or circumstances occurred that changed the situation.

The argument also may be made that every one of them had a good idea what they were saying was either not true or impossible.

In any case, none of those presidents, however they may be judged by history, ever confessed, especially during their term in office, that they were lying or even that they had been mistaken. Had they done so, they would have been taken for knaves or fools.

Right now, political Washington's judgment of Stockman appears to be divided between the two choices above. After all, if a man can't learn the way the world works by the time he is 35, is there any hope for him?

Program provides misinformation

Editor:

The Friday presentation of the International Students Association demonstrated how easily even liberal-minded professors can be duped by Marxist-Leninist propaganda to influence U.S. policy in Central America. The key-note speaker, Dr. Margarita Melville, echoed the rhetoric of the "Democratic Revolutionary Front," the support arm of the Unified Revolutionary Directorate (DRU). The DRU is the general executive body of the El Salvadorian left and was formed in Havana Cuba in May 1980. (ref.: U.S. State Department Chronology on El Salvador, Sept. 1979 — Fed. 1981, pp. 3-18). The DRU also had a representative on the program panel to support Dr. Melville.

Dr. Melville wants to persuade us that the United States should not aid El Salvador. Her argument was noticeably void of condemnation of the USSR and Cuban instigation of guerilla insurgency. Should we follow her advice, the peace would conveniently be assured by Marxist-Leninist in

Reader's Forum

the same manner as in Nicaragua today.

Congressional mail from many private individuals influenced by such talk can cause our congressmen to be hesitant to act with economic and/or military aid necessary to prevent unwanted Marxist domination. For the Leftists to succeed it is not necessary to persuade us to refuse aid, but only to create enough dissension that we are unable to act in a clear, unified, and timely fashion.

A panel of students chosen to represent their various nations were not given fair warning they would be pitted against such experienced propagandists. Consequently, the TAMU students were not as prepared as they could have been with counter

documentation and polemic. However, El Salvadorians themselves, sitting in audience, made it clear by their questioning that they do not share her views; they need U.S. aid.

El Salvador is as near to us as Washington, D.C. or California and a threat for El Salvador is also a threat for the U.S. We cannot ignore the crying needs of our Central American neighbors and the current Cuban-Cuban subversion. If we do, we realize we also condemn our own nation's eventual salvation — Castro style.

Whether the International Students Association planned the program for misinformation, I do not know. However, whether intentional or not, the effect was the same; one of disinformation, polarization, and misunderstanding rather than information, harmony and understanding. Dr. Melville said she was very pleased with the meeting.

Gerald
Old

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It's your turn

Preregistration lacks personal help

Editor:

Students need more individual attention during preregistration. We are herded together and rounded-up into long lines and are expected to know exactly what courses we should take without receiving advice. All advisors do is sign our cards and send us on our way.

I am a freshman this year and I don't feel like I know what courses I should take or even want to take. I need help! When I have tried to find my advisor, he has been out of his office and unavailable for appointment. It is hard enough having to think about next semester without the added frustration of not having any help from advisors.

As advisors function now, they could be replaced by a rubber stamp. Advisors should advise. I should not be penalized because my advisor has too many students to work individually with each of them.

One solution would be authorizing more faculty members to be advisors. This might be a good practice for more departments to adopt. It would speed up preregistration, and allow time for more individual attention. I know it is too late for this semester but maybe some departments might wish up by next semester's preregistration.

Leslie Bruno

1700 SW Parkway

should also be credited with many advances in computer science, defense, medicine, and environmental studies.

JSC provides many jobs in the Houston area. It allows for healthy steady growth of communities that surround the space center. Closing JSC would destroy a vital part of the Houston economy.

The government wastes billions of taxpayer dollars each year supporting losing teams like the Chrysler Corporation. Instead of closing JSC, the government should keep together one of the last winning teams in the country.

Frank Fuller
Plantation Oaks

or upset about, for then you will be "stupid" too, obviously?

Lynn Hudson
Leatrice Moore

Support Wilson

Editor:

I feel the time has come for me to state my opinion on the coaching situation that exists here at A&M.

I believe that Tom Wilson has the good job under the pressures and situations that he has faced.

I have seen the results which the coaching of head coaches can have on an excellent football program. I have also seen the results that the type of back-stabbing that seems to be going on at this university have on a sports program. I hope that the Board of Regents and their "silent partner" will decide to keep Coach Wilson.

I hope he will decide to stay, although I wouldn't blame him if he left for "greener pastures" where a coach is given time to mold a good team. The oldest saying in coaching is "a coach's job usually depends on those that know the least about his job."

I wonder if anyone remembers that Wilson was picked no better than 6th in the Coaches' Poll. Inexperience is the reason most often given for this rating. Well, the Aggies have the experience and will be all set to take the conference by storm next year, finishing this year at 8-4.

Come on Aggies and alumni, let's be supportive of Coach Wilson instead of trying to harass a man who has tried his best to lead A&M a good football team and is on the verge of succeeding.

Buckley Lee Turk
Ross Dale Rutherford

THE BATTALION

USPS 045 360

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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 300 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.

The Battalion is published daily during Texas A&M's fall and spring semesters, except for holiday and examination periods. Mail subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester, \$33.25 per school year and \$35 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request.

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Save space center

Editor:

Closing down the Johnson Space Center would be the worst mistake made in the history of aeronautics.

The men and women at JSC were responsible for placing men on the moon and developing the first reusable space craft. They