

Slouch By Jim Earle



"What a break! After much hard and secretive work, I've managed to put together all of the final exams given in the course for the last five years. Do you realize that all I have to do is to review these tests and I can get out of studying for the final exam?"

Forget nuclear weapons; U.S. falling behind in diaper race

By DICK WEST

WASHINGTON — In the opinion of the magazine Working Mother, some of this country's best day care centers are operated by the Defense Department.

Commenting that "day care is almost as important to the Pentagon as defense," the magazine gives high marks for convenience, safety and dependability to the baby-sitting facilities on 400 military bases.

U.S. military day care centers are reported by Working Mother to have a 500-kid capacity. They operate under babysitting rules drawn up at the Pentagon with respect to such hardware as playpens and baby bottles.

For instance, Working Mother says "no child may be left in a playpen more than 15 minutes at a time when awake," and "all babies are held for bottle feedings until they are 11 months old."

What Working Mother does not provide, either qualitatively or quantitatively, is any comparison between U.S. military day care centers and those in the Soviet Union.

We have all heard alarming reports that the Soviets have developed superior baby-sitting techniques. Yet it has been my experience that hard information on the Soviet day care capability is hard to come by.

According to some estimates, believed to have originated at the CIA, Russia already has deployed enough bottles and playpens to accommodate nearly 300,000 babies. By those figures, the Soviets appear to have a 6-to-1 edge.

It should be pointed out, however, that many of the Soviet day care centers are equipped with model SS-14 playpens that are inferior to standard American equipment.

The SS-14s actually are little more than modified bassinets, with only one-baby capacity and lacking the easy folding potential of more sophisticated playpens.

U.S. military day care centers, by contrast, all have MB (multiple-baby) playpens whose sides and floors can be readily accor-dioned for quick storage and mobility.

The newer U.S. playpens also are believed to have better slats than some of the Russian models.

The slats of the Soviet Z-200 playpen, for example, reputedly are so far apart that some babies conceivably could get their heads wedged between them.

Other aspects in which American playpens are deemed to have the lead include:

— A greater number of colored bands

— More advanced rollers.

There also is doubt by some day care analysts whether Soviet baby bottles have the heavy-duty plastic composition needed to withstand rigorous day care feedings.

If, as these analysts suspect, Soviet bottles are prone to develop leaks and their shape when thrown from a crib, the mere numbers alone are fairly meaningless.

On balance, although the Soviets may be somewhat ahead in burping tactics, observers agree there is no disposable diaper gap.

Coach Wilson has alumni support

Editor:

We will get right to the point: the retention of Coach Tom Wilson by Texas A&M University.

The news media are having a field day with this and have done so since the day Coach Wilson was promoted to the job when Emory Bellard quit at midseason. Hardly a day goes by that some newspaper, radio talk show, or TV announcer doesn't report a "rumor" from College Station that Coach Wilson's job is on the line.

Speculation by the news media destroys A&M's credibility and our ability to attract the best athletes possible to A&M. Constant innuendos and carping by A&M's Board of Regents devastates recruiting and undermines our maintaining a positive, winning outlook.

Why won't the Athletic Council, President of the University, and Regents issue one of their famous "unanimous" resolutions backing Coach Wilson 100 percent? Why do certain members of A&M's Board and other "influential" alumni choose to purposely undermine and sabotage every effort Coach Wilson has made to upgrade the football program to one of honor, integrity and multiple victories?

The Former Students Association has voted to issue a proclamation unanimously

stating that coach Wilson is doing a great job and urging that he be retained. We want the Board, Council and President to do the same.

Coach Wilson was forced into his job by a shocking, sudden resignation by a good coach. He had not had previous head coaching experience; he inherited players who were threatening to leave the university because of Bellard's resignation; he was given only lukewarm support by the Board and the university administration and certain "influential" alumni who chose to "wait-and-see" before endorsing his selection as head coach; and his short tenure has been surrounded constantly from the very beginning with speculation and rumors about this imminent departure from Aggieland.

Coach Wilson, however, has risen above the turmoil and given these outstanding players he now coaches a cohesiveness and desire seldom found anywhere in intercollegiate athletics. Other coaches, sportswriters and alumni testify to the almost spiritual quality of this year's Wilson-coached team. They are a TEAM, not a bunch of talented individuals looking for individual honors — they win and lose as a team.

Suppose we do fire coach Wilson. What

then? Who would want to work here? Who could feel secure for even one week, much less several years, with that type of attitude toward coaching? Good coaches are not found on trees — they grow and develop with the program just as the players do.

Coach Wilson has brought this team a long way. He is just as upset as any Aggie grad or student over the very, very bitter losses we have endured in his tenure, especially this season's. But he is not a quitter. He is a leader, a fine gentleman and a great coach.

Like any other coach, his credentials must start somewhere and that happens to be Texas A&M. Coach Wilson and his able staff are doing all they can to improve and win. BUT THEY CANNOT DO IT ALONE AND THEY CANNOT DO IT WITH THEIR JOBS BEING THREATENED EVERY DAY IN THE NEWS MEDIA!

We are all loyal, dedicated alumni who have not missed a single football game, home or away, in the past 12 years. We ask that you immediately issue a strongly worded resolution giving Coach Wilson your utmost enthusiastic support as the head coach at Texas A&M for the next three years.

His work has barely begun to prove itself. Prove to all Aggies and the rest of the sports world that A&M is not a "coaches' graveyard" with a revolving door.

H.O. Wahrmond, Jr. '44
Tena Wahrmond
H.O. Wahrmond, III, '74
Houston

Editor:

With all the loose talk occurring in the news media concerning Coach Tom Wilson, why doesn't the University president take a stand and give Tom Wilson a vote of confidence to continue his program of restoring guidance and respectability to the football program. Coach Wilson as well as his assistants and even the football players are only being placed under additional undue pressures because of the various rumors.

My two oldest sons, Gary and Neil, class of '78 and '80 were both associated with Tom Wilson, as they both were varsity letterman managers; and they like so many other young men are deeply impressed with Tom Wilson's guidance, honesty, integrity and character.

Why can't the university guide the athletic department and not several, out-of-step

old gentlemen who can't accept life and changes.

John Hampton
Mineral Wells

Editor:

Isn't it time that Texas A&M comes to its senses — that it grows up and stops its racket-like changes in football coaches? How can any coach do his best from the date of his hiring, sniping by powerful interests makes his life worse than Hell?

Has Tom Wilson really had a fair chance? Can anybody do a decent job when a pack of alley rats are biting his heels in every moment, day and night, from the date of hiring? From my time, 1912-16, has A&M had a coach, except possibly D.X. Bible, who had a chance at Texas A&M? Were I the coach in all our great land I wouldn't consider Texas A&M at triple the high salary in all of football, university or professional.

Let's give Tom a real and fair chance.

Palmer (Pat #1) H. Olsen
Clifton, Tex.

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Questions or comments concerning any editorial matter should be directed to the editor.

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On playing chicken and budget cutting

By ARNOLD SAWISLAK

United Press International

WASHINGTON — A prediction — after Ronald Reagan leaves office, he or one of his aides will publish memoirs explaining the full reason the president put Congress through the wringer Thanksgiving week.

The account probably will go something like this:

"When President Reagan took office, he found the presidency so weakened by congressional inroads into traditional executive power that he decided he had to confront the Congress on that issue if he was going to succeed in the White House.

"The problem dated back to the administration of Lyndon Johnson, when the Congress, reacting against his conduct in the war in Vietnam, began trying to limit the war-making powers of the president.

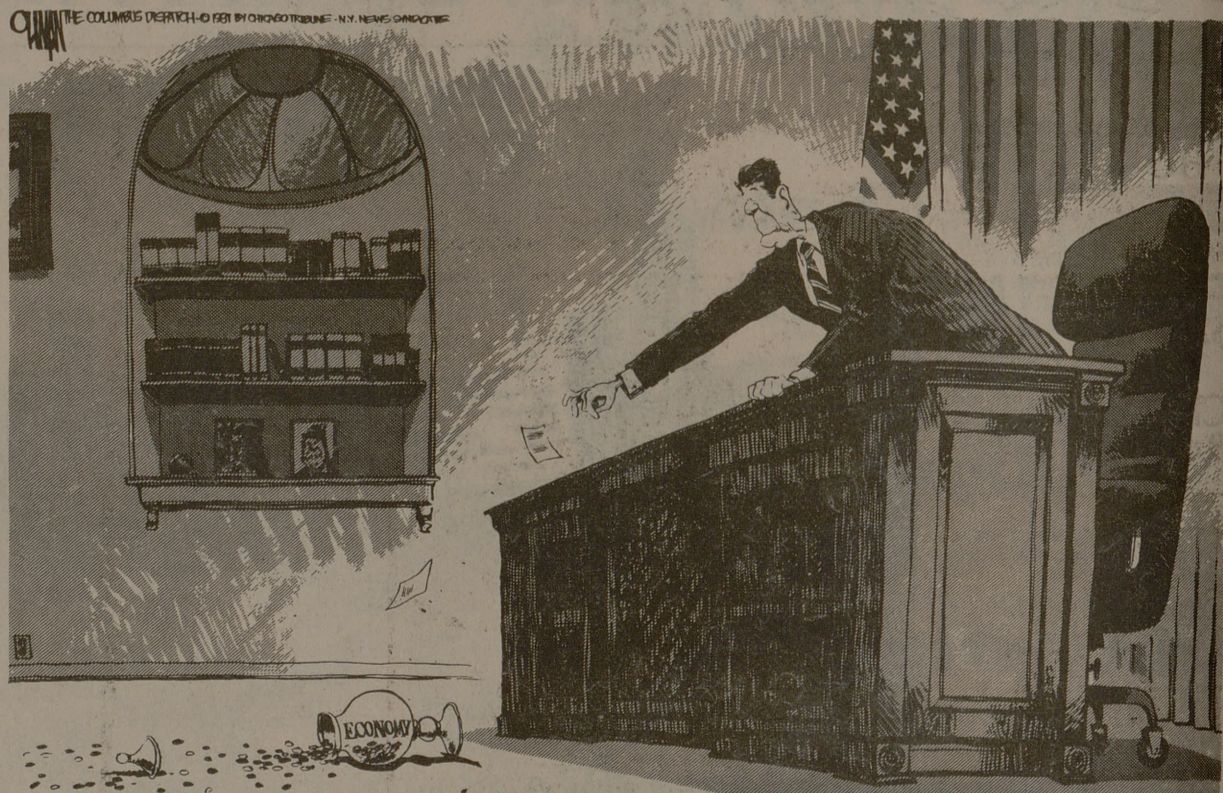
"Heightened by Richard Nixon's handling of Vietnam, it resulted in legislation that restricted presidential authority to commit U.S. military power in areas of the world where the president believed American interests were at stake.

"Watergate made it easier to curb the presidency. Congress took advantage of the situation to further limit presidential authority to withhold appropriated funds from domestic programs.

"When Gerald Ford became president, his only recourse against runaway federal spending was the veto, which he used freely, but with mixed success. Jimmy Carter came to office to find a Congress so hostile to the executive that it was difficult for the president to get his programs considered, let alone approved.

"Reagan was fully committed to budget cutting, but that was only the visible part of his agenda. He could not declare his intention to restore presidential prerogatives because that would have interpreted as a power play and strengthened the opposition. To re-establish presidential preeminence, President Reagan had to bring Congress to heel on the budget."

This bit of anticipated historical writing is prompted by the feeling that there was much more to the hectic Thanksgiving week confrontation between Reagan and Congress than a couple of billion dollars.



To be sure, that is a lot of money, but the battle was over a temporary spending measure that eventually will be replaced by individual money bills. Reagan will have almost a dozen more shots at spending he believes is out of line.

The stop gap "continuing resolution" Reagan vetoed was freighted with more psychological significance than budgetbusting spending because his leadership momentum, established during the spring and summer, had stalled after the fall recess.

Had the President ignored congressional nibbling at his spending cuts with the continuing resolution, he might have lost the ground gained earlier in the year. So he stood fast in what he described himself as "a game

of chicken."

Reagan's victory in his confrontation with the Senate on sale of the AWACS radar planes probably was more to the point of nailing down presidential power than the budget fight, but in Washington's shark-infested waters a president can't afford to let Congress draw blood on any issue during the formative period of his administration.

The worst Reagan got out of the budget battle was a standoff. At best, he may have convinced Congress that it has to go along with him to get along with its business. Which it may become clear when the compromise measure that that broke the deadlock expires on Dec. 15.