

Always say it like you really mean it

By WESLEY G. PIPPERT
United Press International

WASHINGTON — President Reagan said in his State of the Union address that in a few years welfare will be less costly and more responsive to genuine need.

Reagan also said that by fiscal 1988, the states will be in control of more than 40 federal programs. He said the trust fund that is being established will start to phase out and excise taxes will be turned over to the states.

Well, now, a lot must happen before those things actually take place.

Reagan was making flat statements about what he is going to do in the future. Like his predecessor, Jimmy Carter, and, in fact, many other politicians, Reagan was saying something WILL happen when what he meant was that he is going to try to make it happen.

In his own message to Congress in 1979, Carter said: "The Equal Rights Amendment will provide women with equal legal status in our country." As the outlook for ERA looks increasingly bleak, it is becoming clear that it will not provide the equal legal status that Carter was talking about.

This was true in recent months when Reagan said flatly he will abolish the Energy and Education departments, which were created by Congress as central parts of the Carter administration's government reorganization plans.

The implication was that Reagan himself had the power himself to abolish the departments, that Congress had nothing to do with it — and thus the dismantling was already a fait accompli.

Many writers wrote it just that way — that Reagan was going to dismantle the departments.

This was misleading, if not outright incorrect. There is much the president can accomplish in reorganization by executive orders. But Cabinet-level departments are created by Congress and their dismantling also must be approved by Congress.

Many congressional observers say Reagan will not be successful in doing away with the Education and Energy departments. Carter brushed aside Reagan's statements a few months ago during his only visit to Washington, saying, "He's not going to do that."

Some would argue that Reagan, so

adroit in his dealings with Congress thus far, has made good on just about everything he said he was going to do and would do so in this case, too.

But at the least, Reagan and the other politicians are guilty of the sloppy use of the English language.

Perhaps the classical languages of Greek and Hebrew best capture what the politicians are trying to say.

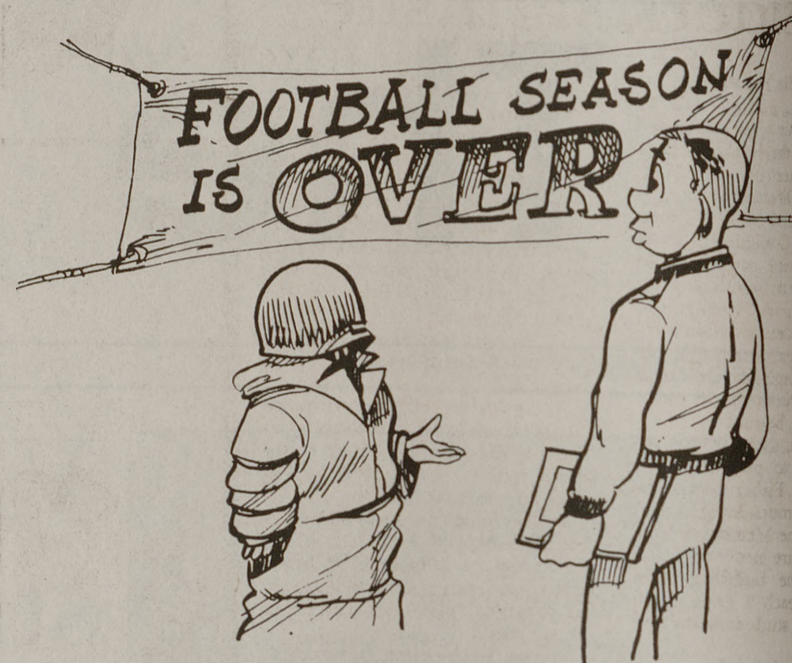
In Hebrew, there is something called the "hiphil" tense. It is used to indicate cause, as in the statement, "I cause this bill to be passed." The Greeks have the conative tense, as in, "He tried to enact that piece of legislation."

If they were going to be precise, they ought to say they hope they can cause something to happen or they are going to try to do something. Or they might use the English subjunctive mood, "Under my proposal, the states would get control of 40 federal programs."

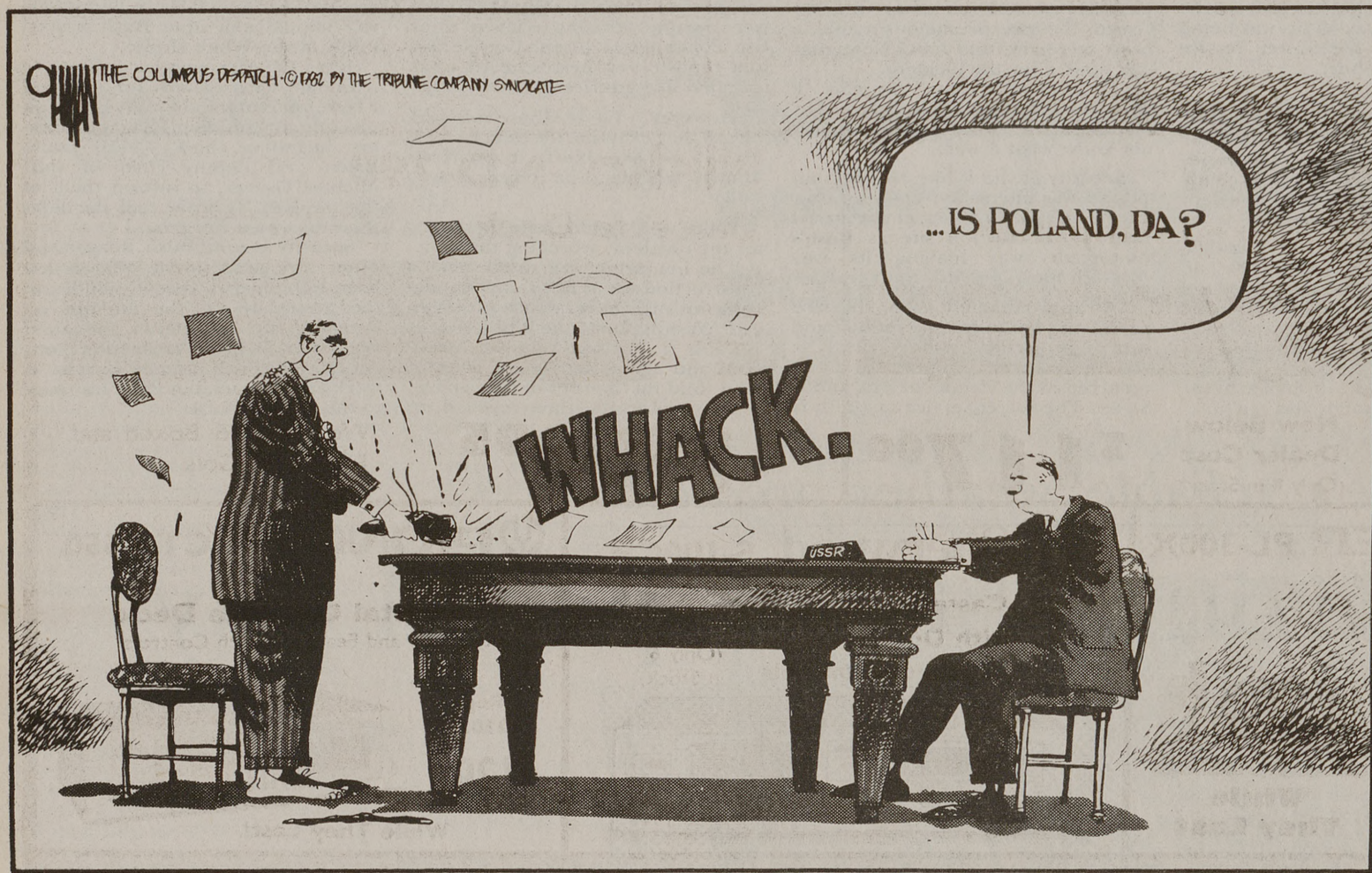
But that might appear to be acknowledging weakness or fallibility. So to show their determination and presumably their confidence, they simply speak very assertively in the future tense.

Slouch

By Jim Earle



"At least we think it is; there may be a bowl game that we don't know about!"



Letter: Worldwide issues ignored

Editor:
It is good to see that Aggies have concern and enthusiasm enough for their reputation to sit down and write letters to The Battalion deploring the unethical treatment of Coach Tom Wilson. By openly condemning Texas A&M's Board of Regents, these Aggies have asserted to the citizens of Texas and the nation that the questionable actions of a few individuals in the administration are far removed from the traditional Aggie principles of integrity and sense of fair play.

Yet just as I am impressed by the outpouring of sympathy for Coach Wilson, I am distressed by the over-occupation of my fellow Ags with University affairs, whether they be social, political, or sports activities at the expense of interest in world affairs. I would expect that in a university of A&M's international reputation as a leader in academic excellence, one should find a substantial number of students interested in worldwide developments, especially those that could permanently affect the future of this country.

Last week the U.S. government vetoed a U.N. Security Council resolution condemning Israel's formal annexation of Syria's Golan Heights and asking U.N. members to take voluntary sanctions against the Zionist state. The U.S. veto was uncalled for and unnecessary, because in real terms, the U.N. resolution was less than a slap on the wrist to the Israelis. On the other hand it demonstrated once again to the world in general and the Arab world in particular, that the U.S. was a powerless captor to Israel's every whim and fancy.

Nobody here at Texas A&M, and indeed the U.S., seems to have heard the consequences of this latest development on future American-Arab relations. What people here do not know is that Israel's lobbying groups and allies in Washington are doing nothing less than dragging America's reputation through the mud of the Middle East. Even America's oldest friends in the Arab world are beginning to seriously doubt whether the

U.S. government can ever cast off the yoke of Zionist control on its foreign policy. For too long now, these Arabs have waited for the American people to take interest in and understand the Arab position in the ongoing conflict. Plainly put, it is the dilemma of 2.5 million Palestinians made homeless by the arrival of 3.5 million Jews from Europe and elsewhere, and the plight of a million other Palestinians suffering the worst kinds of oppression under the iron-handed rule of the Israelis.

Thanks to the latest in ultra-sophisticated American weaponry and massive economic aid (close to \$18 billion in the last 10 years), Israel has managed to achieve military superiority over its Arab adversaries. Yet, the Israelis know that they cannot maintain this superiority forever. And to guard against the day when the Arab states catch up with them militarily, the Israelis have embarked in a well-planned program of provocations designed to stir up Arab hatred of the U.S. Beginning with the attack on Iraq's nuclear reactor and the bombing of Beirut's downtown residential district, Israel's ultimate aim is to put the Arab states on a collision course with the U.S. Arab leaders today have been put into the difficult position of either falling back on the Soviet Union, which gives at least mouthed support to the Arab cause, or pursuing the hopeless avenue of U.S. foreign mediation in the conflict given Israel's powerful influence on U.S. foreign policy. Worse than this, Israel's actions and Washington's docileness provide ample fuel for dictators like Khadafy to justify an outright military confrontation with the U.S.

Finally, forgive me for ending this letter on a somber note, but it is really necessary for thousands of their youth to die in some far off land before Americans can see the forces pulling the strings of their government.

Nabil Al-Khowaiter '83
Secretary of Information
Organization of Arab Students

Safety should come first

Editor:

I would like to inform The Battalion staff, the students and the faculty of Texas A&M about a fire in the Petroleum Engineering Lab, Saturday morning at 3 a.m.

Saturday morning, a friend and I spotted what appeared to be a fire in the Petroleum Engineering Laboratory. After confirming that it was a fire, we attempted to find a fire alarm switch. There were all kinds of signs informing the public that these laboratory facilities housed dangerous experiments, but ironically, there were no fire alarm switches. Our next objective was to use an emergency phone located in one of the nearby elevators; that idea failed since no one would answer it (this phone is supposedly monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week). Finally, we had to get into a car and drive over to the Physical Plant and report the fire in person to the dispatcher. It took us five minutes to report a fire to the authorities.

I can not understand why there are not any fire alarms, emergency phones that work or smoke detectors within the boundaries of a hazardous area. The University was fortunate in that damage was minimal and no one was injured during this incident. I know that money is in short supply (especially after spending \$2.5 million on a new football coach), but I wish I could tell my friends back home that I am going to a University that places Safety First.

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Cut welfare if you must but save our lunches

by Dick West
United Press International

WASHINGTON — One of the most enduring federal tax shelters, seemingly impervious to congressional attack, is the so-called three martini lunch.

With President Reagan now talking openly about closing certain loopholes, anti-lunch forces may be emboldened to mount a new assault during this session. But Congress, true to tradition, can be expected to retain the expense account lunch in all of its many-splendored variations.

If ever you find yourself wondering how this write-off acquired its protected status, it may be because you only think of lunch as an occasion for the intake of nourishment.

To grasp its real role in our society, you must think of lunch as a venerable institution, almost as politically sacred as apple pie and motherhood, as formidable in its way as the anvil lobby and the military-industrial-footstool complex.

In that regard, permit me to introduce Louise Bernikow.

I don't know whether Miss Bernikow would take kindly to being identified as "the voice of the expense account lunch." But a reading of her recent book, "Let's Have Lunch," might convince you the title is richly deserved.

As the subtitle, "Games of Sex and Power," suggests, there is, or can be, a great deal more to the noon meal than mere ingestion.

Anyone acquiring this book with a naive expectation of learning something about food is in for a disappointment. The subject is barely mentioned.

What Miss Bernikow is imparting is some of the fine points of lunching. "They don't teach lunching in school but they ought to," says a friend of mine, Harmon Books.

It is this educational gap that Bernikow apparently is striving to close. "Fashions change, markets hemlines rise, waistbands tighten, lunch goes on," she writes.

And when a waiter appears on the horizon, can a tax break be far behind? "Nearly everyone who goes in for time lunching has an emergency name that came to life only on rare forms," the author confides.

"It is smart to keep the list current and pay particular attention to the columns."

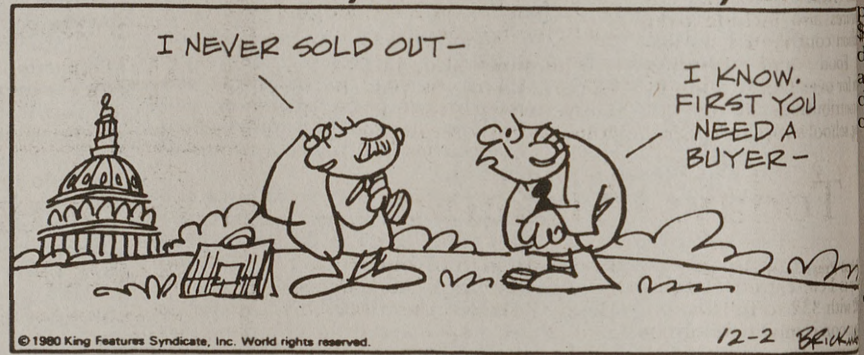
Miss Bernikow seems to be recommending that the IRS frown on the practice of deducting lunches as business expenses if the guests are deceased.

That strikes me as a fairly narrow interpretation of the tax code, but I suppose she knows whereof she speaks.

While I can't say for certain whether the administration will take issue, there is one bit of advice Miss Bernikow would endorse: If you want to help keep the deduction of lunch expenses from being taken by a dead congressman to land

the small society

by Brickm



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The Battalion

USPS 045 360

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Southwest Journalism Conference

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

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