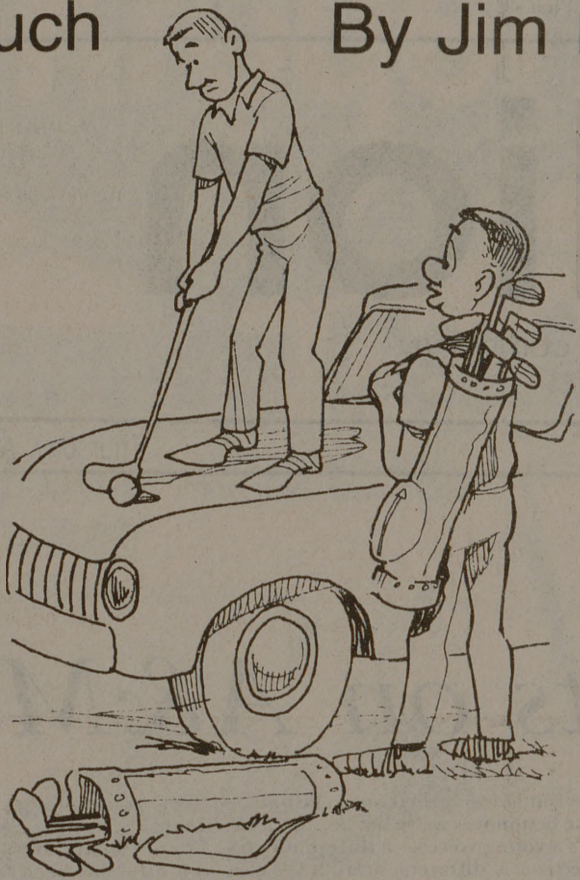


Slouch By Jim Earle



"If it were my car, I'd suggest that you throw it in — and without a penalty."

Speech shadows GOP gloom

By David S. Broder

WASHINGTON — It was just a word change, so casual and offhand that it was probably noted by few of the millions watching President Reagan's prime-time press conference the other evening. But for Republican Party candidates, it had an awful clang of doom.

When Reagan was winding up an answer about the recession, he said the signs indicated that "we are bottoming out and I believe we're safe in saying that we think there's going to be an upturn in the second half of the year."

The second half of the year? All through the winter, the administration view has been that recovery would begin in the second quarter of the year. That change of words is freighted with political gloom for the GOP.

It is a concession on the part of the always optimistic President that the recession which began last July will last at least a year before it begins to relax its grip on this country. It means that the "tragedy" of which Reagan spoke for the unemployed and for farmers, builders, merchants and small businessmen being pushed to the wall will be prolonged. When the country goes to the polls in November, many will still be hurting and for many more the pain will be a recent searing experience.

Particularly is that likely to be true of the jobless. The history of past recessions clearly suggests that rehiring will lag behind the turnaround in sales and production. If the President is right in his forecast, the odds are good that unemployment will be at its peak level during the fall campaign.

Unfortunately, there is no reason to think that the President is erring on the side of caution. The leading indicators of economic trends were down again in February for the tenth straight month. The Commerce Department's chief economist said, "There is no suggestion (the recession) will have ended in March or April." Alan Greenspan and other leading private economists agree.

What makes it worse for the Republican candidates running this year is that there is now almost nothing that can be done to alter the circumstances they will face in November. Reagan at his press conference ruled out any consideration of emergency measures to stimulate the economy, saying that similar efforts in the past simply bought short-term relief at the cost of escalating inflation.

But even if he were inclined to try, the odds would be against any economic medicine being felt in the system in the time that remains before Election Day.

The only stimulus now in sight is the 10-percent tax cut already scheduled for July 1. Administration economists hope that this boost to real income will trigger an upturn in spending that will signal and sustain a turnaround in the economy.

Whether the tax cut will be sufficient to overcome the drag of high interest rates is questionable. Families that have held off on the purchase of homes, cars or major appliances may still balk at the carrying costs of the loans they would need. But even if the tax cut works, the recovery is probably coming too late to reverse the gloomy prospects Republican face.

The trend shows clearly in a series of Asian countries the November congressional election. Last November, when the hope of the recession would end with the return of chilly weather, a Wall Street Journal poll gave the Democrats a 53-40 percent lead nationally. March that led had widened to 55-36.

That could easily translate into a seat House loss that Sen. Paul Simon (Nev.), the President's closest GOP challenger last week the GOP faces a quick budget compromise, vaguely suggested by Reagan's press conference words.

The numbers have been dropping rapidly for the GOP as the recession has taken a heavy toll on public confidence in the Reagan administration and widely believed to be a Republican-controlled Congress as well.

A Gallup Poll taken in February published last week showed Reagan trailing the opposition in their poll of seven of eight major issues, with the exception being national defense. The success on the inflation issue, which Reagan did some justifying, does not seem to be working to his benefit. And when it comes to unemployment and the economy, the Republicans are miles in arrears.

No longer is there serious talk of Republican gains in November. The operative question is whether the election can be held below the point that would make Reagan a lame-duck President years early.

Ted Stevens: your Senator with a cause

by Steve Gerstel
United Press International

Washington — At least give Sen. Ted Stevens of Alaska proper credit. The man does not shy from a fight.

The bantam dandy rode to the wars again last week in pursuit of what seems to be his favorite goal — more money for the members of Congress.

No one could have been surprised that Stevens led the battle to retain a juicy and very special tax deduction of \$75-a-day for each day the nobles are forced to spend in Washington.

After all, it was Stevens who was instrumental last winter in getting the gimmick on the books.

The Senate gave Stevens a scare. His more circumspect colleagues voted against him several times before the repeal effort was killed on a technicality.

No one will ever know how many of Stevens' colleagues honestly believe they deserve the deduction — previously a flat \$3,000 — for maintaining a second home in the nation's capital.

Most of them just can't stand the political heat generated by that kind of a vote. There is no question what Stevens believes. He not only considers the tax break more than justified but considers members of Congress way underpaid.

There is much that can be admired in a legislator who fights for his beliefs — no matter what the political risks.

In Stevens' case, however, the admiration is more than tempered by the nature of the cause and the Alaska Republicans' whining about having to live in the city of Washington.

"God forbid someone should tell me that the city of Washington is my home," the trigger-tempered Alaskan yelled. "I

detest it.

"I can't think of a worse city in the world to have a capital, and I don't care who knows it," he said.

Well, there's always the Black Hole of Calcutta. Or maybe Juneau.

He complained about the high interest rates, "the worst crime and the worst schools."

Stevens, conceding a little exaggeration for dramatic effect, is not that far off target.

But that raises the question, as the Washington Post did, as to why Stevens first came to Washington 30 years ago, worked for the Interior Department in the '50s and now has been a senator for 14 years. He is free to return home to his beloved Alaska.

What also is less than admirable in Stevens is his total insensitivity to what is happening all over the country.

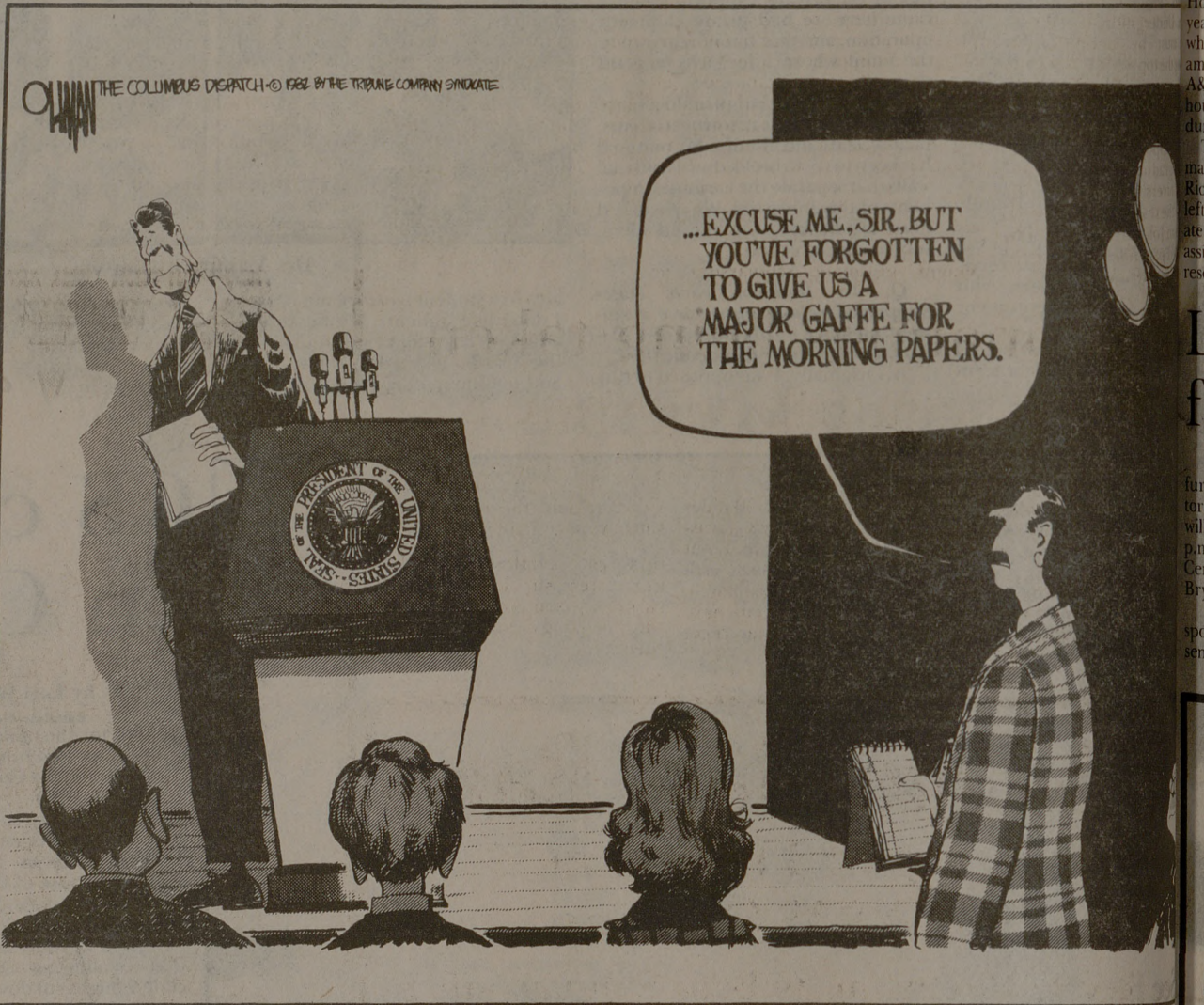
How can a senator argue for a personal tax break or added pay at a time when many Americans are really up against it?

How can anyone sympathize with Stevens when he says that he is selling his home because "it costs too much to own a house in this town" when people are having their home mortgages foreclosed?

How can Stevens forget that he makes \$60,000 a year as a senator and in 1980 added another \$15,000 in honoraria and in that same year picked up another \$39,000 to \$128,500 in outside income.

Stevens is one of the least affluent of senators but the Senate is very much a haven for the very rich.

But, in making his fight, perhaps Stevens should stop casting envious looks at the bank balances of his colleagues and ponder instead the distress of the poor.



Letters: Candidates, election process both lacking

Editor:

For the second time this week I have made my way to the Texas A&M polls only to find (also for the second time this week) that I feel qualified to vote for no more than 30 percent of the candidates listed on the ballot. This seems to be a common problem that rests not only with the student political system, but with the candidates themselves.

The fact that Student Government does impose a maximum campaign budget on the student candidates is a good one because it prevents a candidate from spending in excess to launch an impressive campaign. Incidentally, impressive campaigns seem to have quite an effect on the outcome of the A&M elections — especially campaign signs. This fact brings to light another kink in the election process. Since few students are aware of the credentials and political opinions of the candidates, many voters are cast for the candidate with the most original campaign signs. Unfortunately, the most qualified candidates are not always the most creative.

I do not wish to imply that the campaign budgets are too low, but I do think they could be applied more effectively. Campaign signs are fine and they are a good way for a candidate to gain campus exposure. However, more emphasis should be placed on personal campaigning by the candidates and their top supporters. The area around Rudder Foun-

tain is an excellent location for campaigners to make "lunch hour" speeches asserting their opinions on campus issues. Dunn Hall did in fact try to organize a "Meet the Candidates Night" to be held in the Commons, but the organizers met with very little response from the candidates and the event was cancelled. Apparently, there is not only a problem with the election process but with the attitudes of the candidates and the campaign methods that they employ.

The Battalion did a great service to the student body by publishing their "Voter's Guide" prior to the election. However, this guide only listed the names of the senatorial candidates. It did not give a single clue to the way these candidates would vote on particular issues or what legislation they might propose in the interests of their constituents.

I sincerely believe that an informed student body would be more inclined to vote in the election of their peers — at least more than the scant 6,000-plus that did appear at the polls.

Katherine Hurt '85
Mosher Hall

More thievery

Editor:

To the gentleman who helped himself

to the left rear-view mirror off my Suzuki 450, parked near the library Monday night: We don't need your kind here!

T.S. Fehrman '80

useful as a buying guide. Bring back Vic.

Chris Thomas '83

Editors Note: This letter was accompanied by eight other signatures.

Record reviews lacking

Editor:

We are writing this letter to publicly declare our frustration and disgust with both the style and content of the meager record "reviews" in the Focus supplement. Many Battalion readers are genuinely interested in your record reviews as a source of information concerning recent album releases. From Daniel Puckett's superficial treatment and questionable insight we gain nothing. Recently his reviews have been too short, too short-sighted and totally off the mark. We refer in particular to his insufficient reviews of new albums from Joe Carrasco and the Cars. Although he may have turned a few quaint phrases and unloaded some time-worn cliches, his reviews consistently seem flat and unimaginative.

Whatever happened to Vic Sylvia's reviews? We agree that at times they were a bit bizarre, but at least they had some understanding of the album and were

The Battalion
USPS 045 360
Member of Texas Press Association Southwest Journalism Conference

Editor: Angelique Copeland
City Editor: Denise Richter
Assistant City Editor: Diana Sultenfuss
Sports Editor: Frank L. Christlieb
Focus Editor: Cathy Saathoff
Assistant Focus Editor: Nancy Floeck
News Editors: Gary Barker, Phyllis Henderson, Mary Jo Rummel, Nancy Weatherley
Staff Writers: Jennifer Carr, Cyndy Davis, Gaye Denley, Sandra Gary, Colette Hutchings, Johna Jo Maurer, Hope E. Paasch, Daniel Puckett, Bill Robinson, Denise Sechelski, John Wagner, Laura Williams, Rebeca Zimmermann
Cartoonist: Scott McCullar
Graphic Artist: Richard DeLeon Jr.
Photographers: Sumanesh Agrawal, David Fisher, Eileen Manton, Eric Mitchell, Peter Rocha, John Ryan, Colin Valentine

Editorial Policy
The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting newspaper operated as a community service to Texas A&M University and Bryan-College Station. Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the editor or the author, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of

Texas A&M University administrators or faculty members, or of the Board of Regents.
The Battalion also serves as a laboratory for students in reporting, editing and photography within the Department of Communication.
Questions or comments concerning 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 exceed this length. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit for style and length, but will make every effort to preserve the author's intent. Each letter must also be signed and include the address and phone number of the writer.
Columns and guest editorials are also welcome, but are not subject to the same length constraints as letters.
Address all inquiries and correspondence to: The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843, or phone (409) 261-2611.
The Battalion is published daily during Texas fall and spring semesters, except for holidays and vacation periods. Mail subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester, \$33.25 per school year and \$35 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request.
Our address: The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald Building, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843.

United Press International is entitled exclusively to the use for reproduction of all news dispatches prepared by it. Rights of reproduction of all other material reserved.
Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.

Folk medicine

By Chris Battalio
The difference between American medicine and those of other countries is folk medicine. Folk medicine is a blend of traditional Chinese medicine, Ayurvedic medicine, and other traditional medicines. It is a blend of science and art. It is a blend of the old and the new. It is a blend of the best of both worlds. It is a blend of the best of all worlds.

Dr. Melvin Friedman
A&M geology professor Friedman has taken over as the assistant dean of the geology department. He is a graduate of Rice University and has been at A&M for 15 years. He is a member of the American Geophysical Union and the American Meteorological Society. He is also a member of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists and the American Association of Economic Geologists.

In addition, his activities of the University Honors Program. Undergraduates who must be chosen by the top scholars in the department. A&M may receive 100 hours for supervising during their senior year. The appointment of a graduate of Rice University, left by the resignation of Dean John Harlan, assumed part-time research duties.

Local for Pa

Donations of furniture and more tornado victims will be accepted from 10 a.m. today and 10 a.m. tomorrow at Central Baptist Church, 600 South Bryan. Local radio stations are sponsoring the drive to send three trucks to

Agg

See Bicycling in front of Street.

