

What follows cloture takes more time

by Steve Gerstel
United Press International

WASHINGTON — The Senate for ages pompously prided itself on being the world's most deliberate institution. Now the chamber's two leaders agree that even a laudable practice can be overdone.

Neither Republican leader Howard Baker nor Democratic leader Robert Byrd are talking about abolishing the filibuster — the ancient and honorable practice which leads to much of that deliberation.

Frustrated as many senators are by tedious delays, the filibuster is much too ingrained in the folkways of the Senate for it ever to become extinct. On the whole, senators of all persuasions like the concept of a last resort defense.

"You know, an unbridled majority can be a very dangerous thing," Sen. Russell Long, D-La., recently explained. "They can take a bit in their teeth, you might say, and do some pretty cruel things to people."

What bothers Baker, Byrd and many others is not the filibuster itself but a relatively new practice — the post-cloture delay.

As the rule now stands, it requires the vote of 60 senators to terminate the filibuster — no matter how many senators are present and voting.

That part of the rule has been changed over the years under pressure from liberals — now prolific employers of the filibuster. The standard was first an absolute two-thirds, then two-thirds of those voting and finally a flat 60.

During all those years, senators accepted defeat with great grace, giving their lachrymose stemwinders and sitting down. It did not take long because the rules allowed a senator no more than an hour.

But sometime in the 1970s, there came

to the Senate a huge, hulking newcomer from Alabama, Jim Allen. This most amiable of men, now dead, quickly became a Senate favorite.

Allen became quickly skilled in the intricacies of the rule book and was one of the first to employ what is now known as filibuster-by-amendment. Although the rules limit debate to 100 hours, there is no limit on the number of amendments that can be offered if they are filed prior to the cloture vote.

Byrd, who calls this procedure "the real filibuster," recalled the Senate was paralyzed 13 days and one night on the natural gas deregulation bill by that tactic.

Only last week, opponents of legislation which would have permitted prayer in public schools, girded for the possibility that their filibuster would be ended. They filed 1,415 amendments, out of which only 23 would have been ruled as out of order on technicalities.

This process, once innovative, is now considered part of normal operating procedure to the point leaders sometimes hesitate to even call up a bill for action if even the threat of a filibuster is lodged.

Baker and Byrd, at the time mired in a filibuster, agreed that something has to be done to "adjust that rule to provide a realistic way for the Senate to resolve post-cloture filibusters."

"I believe the time has come when we must address that issue because I think now we have made Rule XXII (the cloture rule) a nullity," Baker said.

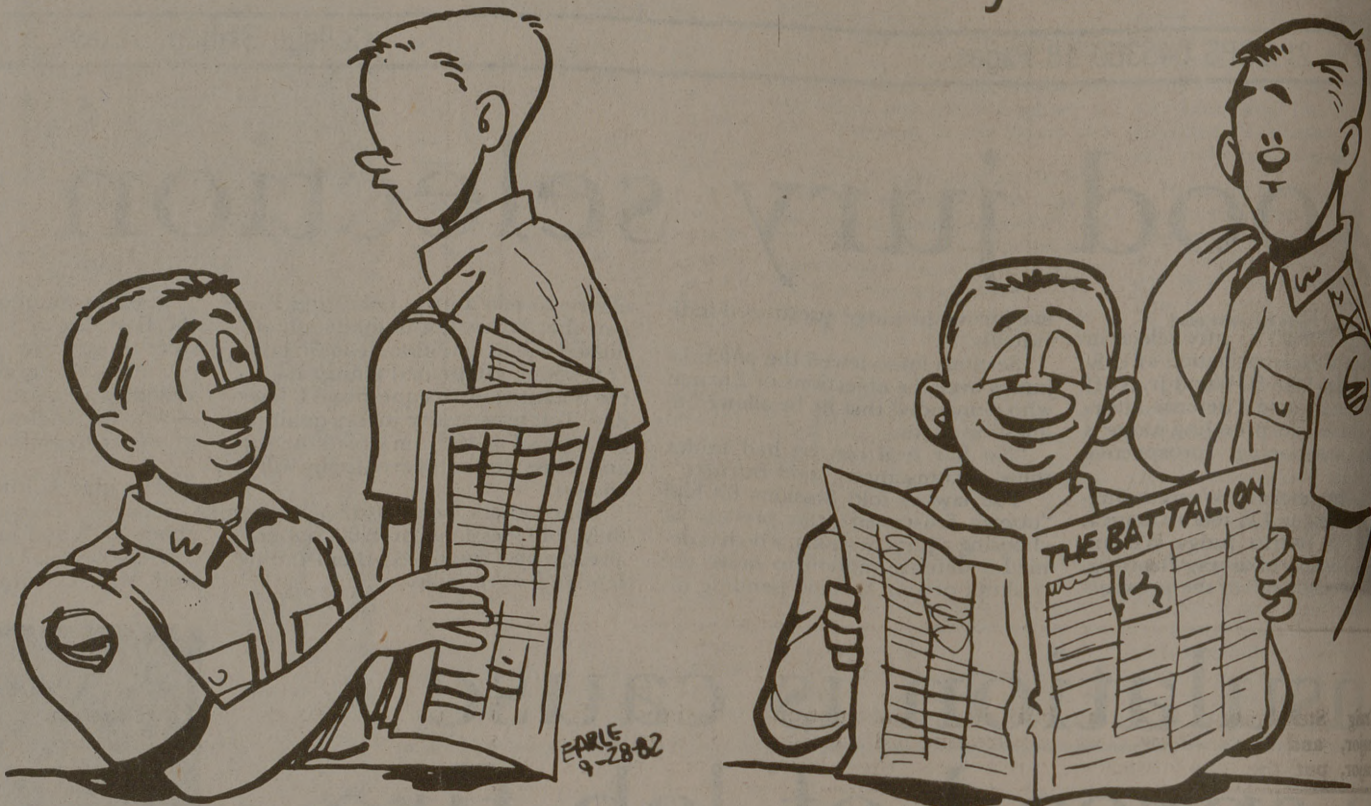
But making changes in that rule is not going to be easy.

Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., who has been hounded by filibusters on school busing, abortion and prayer this year and might seem open to change, is not.

"I certainly don't want it eliminated or watered down," Helms said. "Next week, I may be using it."

Slouch

By Jim Earle



"Want to know what our most revered and oldest tradition is?"

"It's arguing about traditions."

Letters: Aggie response to Spirit

Editor:

As a member of the Class of '86, I would like to respond to Russell McGee and friends about their letter to the Editor on Sept. 20, 1982.

They seemed concerned that the Class of '86 couldn't feel the Spirit of Aggieland. But we Fish do understand and feel the Spirit of Aggieland, or at least I do. I feel it every time I realize that Coach Sherrill doesn't win a football game, the "TRUE" Aggies will make obnoxious signs to be distributed throughout the A&M Campus, and if he loses too many games he can kiss the Aggies goodbye.

It's hard to believe that any university has had three coaches in the past four years. I also feel the Spirit every time an ignorant label is put on anyone on this campus. No one takes the time to ask and try to understand why you didn't go to Yell Practice or the Game, it simply doesn't matter, the only thing that does matter is that you weren't there and therefore you must automatically be a two-percenter.

Another concern was that the freshman could not feel the same spirit that their fathers did. I don't know about other people but my father came to a Texas A&M that was all male, all corps, and it was a time of close-mindedness and ignorance; we didn't even have an integrated society at this time (late 1940's and early 1950's). During this period of time I would have better understood an Aggie such as McGee saying: "Show them that the University will never change and will never bend for anyone." This is a quote that all too often represents the close-mindedness that rules some of the people on this campus.

I am not for the abolishment of traditions. And I have pride in my school, or I obviously wouldn't have come here, but I came for an education. The rest, no matter how big a part it plays in my life and no matter how much I love the extra-

curricular activities, is secondary. I refuse to let it take over my life in blind faith. I am not a two-percenter (a term that applies to 30 to 40 percent of the student body) just because I want to be different or don't want to participate in something that seems silly to me. I am an individual at a university trying to get an education and have some fun while I do it, just because sometimes that fun doesn't include what everyone else is doing shouldn't label me. I'm an Aggie (a person who attends or has formerly attended Texas A&M*) too.

*Definition provided by Inroll.

Pat Zinn
Class of '86

Lost plants

Editor:

I am the assistant student legal advisor. Two weeks ago a student left two Styrofoam cups near the information desk on the third floor of the YMCA Bldg. One is marked L542-Beans and the other is marked L542-Oats.

If the owner wants them back, please stop by my office in room 306 of the YMCA Bldg.

P.S. Both plants are doing quite well, thank you.

Barry D. Clark
Attorney at Law

Exam complaints

Editor:

This time I have to complain! The Mechanical Engineering Dept. has just

informed the M.E. 212 classes of the tails of their exam on Sept. 29. This common exam for some 1,000-plus students to be held at 7 p.m. on Wednesday night in, unbelievably, G. Rollie Williams Coliseum!

That's not the worst part, though. This test is to be taken on our own L542-BOARDS! This has got to be the most ridiculous arrangement for an exam ever devised. Taking a common exam in a crowded room is difficult enough, but to be forced to write on a board balanced on your lap is utterly insane! Is this supposed to test our knowledge of the subject, or our dexterity and endurance? I must ask, is this, in fact, an attempt to INCREASE the "flunk-out" rate of an already termed "flunk-out class" in an overcrowded department?

Richard Robinson

Editor's note: This letter was accompanied by 22 other signatures.

In memory of Adams

Editor:

The passing of Lt. Col. E. V. Adams was a great loss to Texas A&M and the Spirit of Aggieland.

For the 3,000 of us who marched and played for him, however, the lieutenant colonel lives on.

So long as even one of us considers group ahead of self, duty in place of privilege and the quest for perfection ahead of all things Lt. Col. Adams will never die.

Each time the band forms at the north end of Kyle field for "Hullabaloo" we will recall.

Joe Buser

Aggie soccer club praised by student

Editor:

Last year, the Aggie Club soccer teams were given varsity status. This was a first for the Aggie teams, and a very rewarding one for the school in light of their performance, particularly the women's soccer team.

The Aggie women's soccer team finished No. 1 in the region. In 1981, they represented the region in the National Tournament in North Carolina and finished No. 8 in the nation. This performance for a first year varsity team was exceptional. Coach Jim Butt and Ms. Kay Don are to be commended for outstanding leadership and coaching ability.

This year the A&M athletic department decided to drop the soccer program from varsity status back to a club sport. This would relieve the department of the financial burden of the soccer program which costs less than 2 percent of the total athletic budget.

The impact of the decision to demote the soccer program may not be apparent to everyone. The fact is that as a club sport, (rather than a varsity sport) the teams cannot enter the National Tourna-

ment when they win the regional title. Also, the region will not be represented by the best team in the National Tournament (the team that will probably represent the region will be that school in Austin, which will finish second in the region, as they did last year). Finally, the 1982 A&M women's soccer team is as strong, if not stronger, than any team that will compete in the National Tournament. I was at the National Tournament in 1981 and observed the action first hand.

If the Athletic Department doesn't believe these facts, invite the winner of the 1982 National Tournament to A&M for a match on Kyle Field and watch the Aggies win.

A&M has a women's soccer team that can represent Aggieland well at any level of competition.

Surely, the Athletic department cannot restrain these women, their coaches and Texas A&M from the recognition they all deserve from excelling in the most popular sport in the world.

Ron L. Estes
Cleburne, Texas

The Battalion

USPS 045 360

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