

What's up, Coach? We want to know

A pizza delivery man was attacked in Cain Hall last week. And football players were suspected in the assault.

But Jackie Sherrill won't discuss the situation with the media. A reporter from the Bryan-College Station Eagle

Editorial

was asked to leave Sherrill's office Monday. The same day, a reporter for The Battalion was told that Sherrill is "booked until Wednesday."

Until now, Sherrill has reacted well under the rigorous pressures that have been placed on him since he accepted the coaching position in January. But this is not the time to crack. When his team is in hot water, Sherrill needs to be able to explain the situation and to handle the pressure.

It's impossible to give football players special treatment and then expect them

to be treated like anyone else. The public wants to know what happens when the team has problems.

It's inconsistent to use public relations techniques to attract public attention and then not speak to the media when something goes wrong.

Sherrill has said that he treats the team members like they're his own sons. And he says that his discipline should be private. This is fine if players are bickering among themselves. But when the incident involves other students, the matter becomes public.

Sherrill currently is working with police and University officials to solve the problem. But the public should be informed of those problems and possible solutions.

His "we'll police ourselves" attitude is a common one at Texas A&M. This is the attitude that causes worries of cover-ups, corruption and lack of discipline. And this is exactly why the public wants to — and needs to — know what's going on.

Reagan still thinks MX has a chance

by Helen Thomas

United Press International

WASHINGTON — President Reagan feels he has lost a battle but not the war in the House defeat of funding for the MX missile.

Having noted that the vote took place on Dec. 7, the 41st anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor, Reagan has described the 245-176 vote as "sleepwalking into the future." But he believes with an all-out effort he can salvage the program in the Senate.

No one is betting on that. Sen. Ernest F. Hollings, D-S.C., is leading the fight against the MX, saying that for all of the deliberation, the "dense pack" basing mode for the MX does not meet "even its basic objective of survivability."

"Careful, pragmatic and thoughtful decision-making is required if we are to maintain a strong defense posture," he said. "Our economy has no room for a Pentagon wish list."

Reagan suffered his most serious setback to date on defense spending. After the vote, he charged the House had made a "grave mistake" and called on the Senate "to reverse this grievous error."

"In the meantime," Reagan said, "I plan to do everything I can to take this case to the country."

In a now familiar blitz style, Reagan lobbied heavily up to the last minute for victory on a bill that provided \$988 million to start production of the MX. But both he and his aides knew it was an uphill battle.

Reagan hoped that the congressmen on the fence would do as they have done most of the time: bow to an appeal from the commander in chief, who points out that he is privy to more secret information than they are about the enemy.

In the past few days, the administration also warned that the Soviets had tested a new light missile. But the arguments that without MX the nation would be without an adequate deterrent did not sell.

Reagan also insisted failure to pass the package would give the Soviets more reason to stall at the nuclear arms negotiating table in Geneva.

"I had hoped that most of the members in the House had awakened to the threat facing the United States," Reagan said. "That hope was apparently unfounded."

White House aides attribute the defeat to a misunderstanding about the dense pack basing mode, which would place 100 missiles in closely spaced silos near Cheyenne, Wyo.

But more telling apparently was the money involved and the growing apprehension that Reagan will heavily slash into the budgets of social programs while leaving intact the proposed trillion dollar defense spending over the next five years.

The issue of funds for more weapons vs. proposed cuts in health, education and welfare is very much in the minds of the lawmakers who survived the Nov. 2 elections.

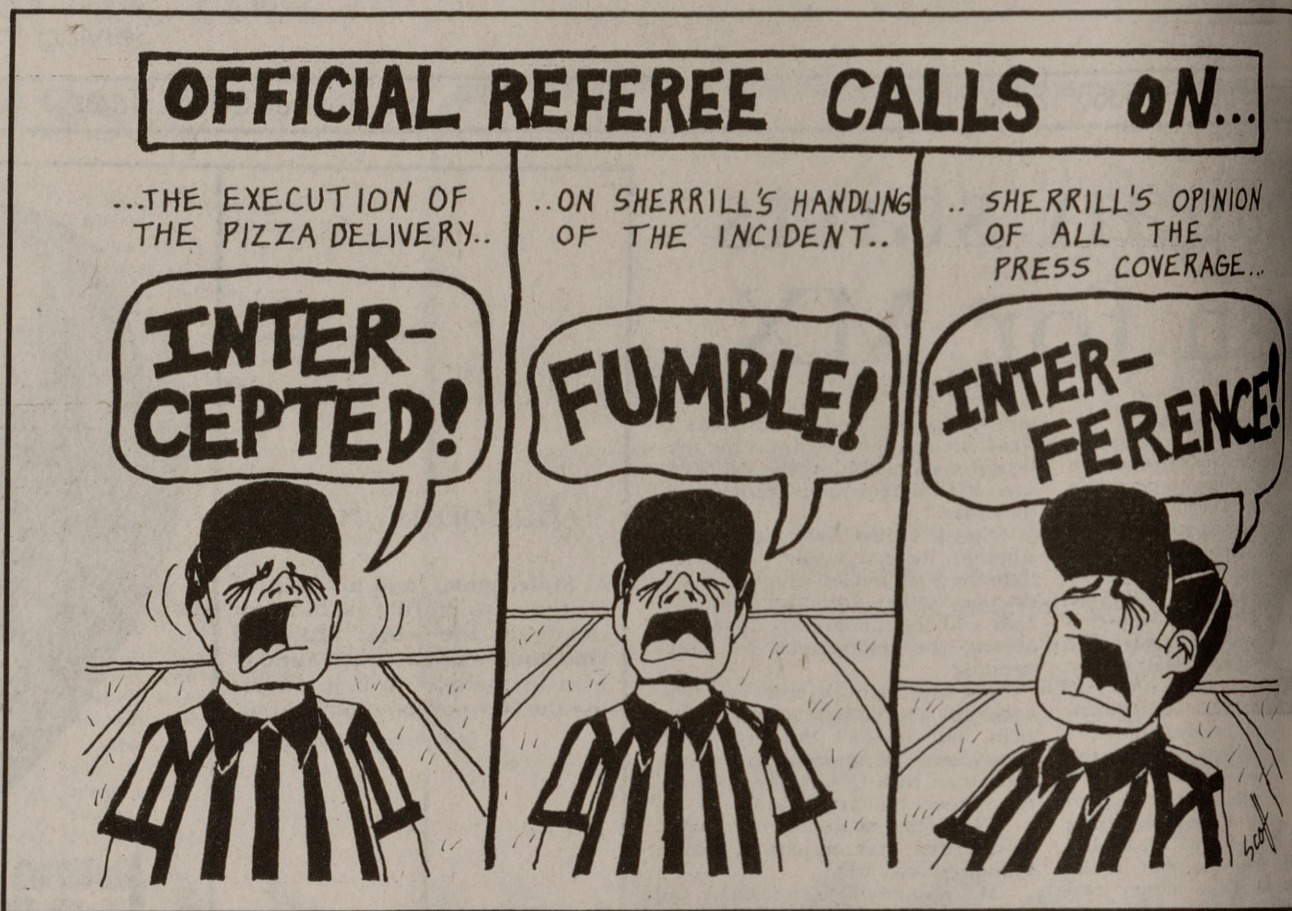
Furthermore, the latest 10.8 percent unemployment figures, or 12 million out of work in the Christmas holiday season is having its impact on where the money should be spent.

To some extent the nuclear freeze program, led by the U.S. Catholic Bishops, may also have had an impact on congressional action and the growing mood in the nation.

White House spokesman Larry Speakes had said the House vote "is not the last inning in the ball game." But Reagan aides admit chances of reiving MX funding in the Senate are not promising.

With the new Congress next year, the Democrats will have 26 more seats in the House. Up to now, Congress has given Reagan a blank check on defense spending. But a new skepticism is arising, and forecasts of a \$200 billion deficit do not help.

Some observers believe it will be back to the drawing board for the Reagan administration to determine what is saleable in a recession.



Telling the truth in Congress

by Art Buchwald

The Pentagon is seriously considering the use of lie detectors to test the veracity of its 3 million employees as well as defense contractors, and government workers in other departments. They say they want to use the polygraph tests for security reasons.

I have no objection to Defense resorting to lie detectors providing that the top people take them, too, particularly when testifying on The Hill concerning the military budget.

It doesn't seem too much to ask Secretary Weinberger, his top assistants and the high-level brass to put on electrode when they face a House or Senate Armed Services Committee. With the help of this equipment all of us might be better informed as to what a weapons system will really cost.

"The congressional committee will come to order. General, are you comfortable? Let's just test the polygraph machine to see if it is working. What branch of the service are you in, sir?"

"Nothing can stop the United States Air Force."

"The lie detector checks out fine. We'll now proceed with the questioning. Could

you give us some idea what the B-1 bomber will cost?"

"Two-hundred million dollars."

"Hmm, the polygraph seems to indicate that is the wrong answer."

"I'm afraid I wasn't specific. Yes, I do."

"To get it in the air it will cost \$234,567,891.50."

"Good. Now this would only be the bare plane and not include such items as radar, communications, bomb racks, cruise missile launcher and parking lights?"

"That's correct, sir. We might add on another \$40 million for the equipment, give or take \$5 million."

"The polygraph is acting up again, General. How much did you say?"

"Sixty-five million dollars."

"Very good, General. Now may I ask you about the tests the Air Force has made on the B-1? Are your people satisfied that the contractor will bring in the plane at that price without serious overruns?"

"We're certain of it, sir. They should deliver it on schedule without any bugs in it."

"The needle seems to be flying all over the place. Are you sure of this?"

"No, sir. We're not. But we're not on the plane."

"We're going to give you the General. We just want to know we're getting for our money."

"Every plane has bugs in it."

"Don't pout. We know that brings to the question of the C-17 plane. We understand a lot of that showing up in the wings. How much it cost to put on new wings?"

"Half a billion dollars."

"Would you like to try that again?"

"I meant to say a billion dollars electrodes are giving me a headache."

"We're sorry about that, General. We actually the idea for introducing detector came out of the Defense Department. Since you people have been it so successfully we decided to do it too."

"We're only using it to find out who the whistle-blowers are in the department and who is leaking detrimental information to the press. We would never use someone discussing the Defense Department budget."

"Why not, General?"

"Because when it comes to spending testimony, we're not ourselves officers and gentlemen."

Blind dates — beards and cologne

by Dick West

United Press International

WASHINGTON — There are times when information obtained by public opinion surveying points to nothing more significant than the need for more public opinion surveys.

I would place in this category two national polls conducted by some public opinion surveyors calling themselves The Merit Report. One poll came up with the less-than-startling information that most single persons regard blind dating as a poor way to meet members of the opposite sex.

The other found that most women regard clean-shaven men as more attractive than those who grow moustaches or beards.

The results of the first survey were, of course, predictable. Everybody knows that a high percentage of blind dates turn out to be lemons. So the poll merely confirmed truths that already were self-evident.

The second poll can be more egregiously faulted. It tends, unjustifiably, to give beard-growing a bad name.

It has been my experience that growing a beard enhances, rather than subverts, one's sex appeal. What is needed, obviously, is a third survey that would determine the percentage of male blind dates who are bearded.

I suspect, however, that the percentage of bearded men who resort to blind dating is extremely small.

Blind dating almost always involves a third party, who either coerces or cajoles the party of the first part and the party of the second part into going out with each other sight unseen.

—But bearded men as a group aren't the types who easily succumb to coercion or cajolery. To the contrary.

Most of the bearded men I know are resolutely steadfast and unyielding. And that goes for bearded women, too.

In evaluating surveys, it always helps to know a bit about the surveyors. The Merit Report is underwritten by a cigarette company. Which may explain its interest in a poll on whether the use of cologne makes a man more appealing to women, or whether artificial scents turn the other half off.

The verdict appears to favor the use of cologne. But does it not stand to reason that most women find the aroma of ocean spray, a bosky dell or piney woods more attractive than ordinary tobacco smoke?

So what does this portend for the future of cigarettes?

And while we are asking pointed questions, how many of the women met their cologne-wearing escorts on a blind date?

Back when I was single, I personally it a point of honor never to wear cologne was part of my code to bachelorhood. The women I dated a chance to meet charms without being olfactorily stimulated.

I mention this now as a prelude to pointing to single members of the fairer sex. you have a blind date with a clean-shaven poll-taker who reeks of cologne, en

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