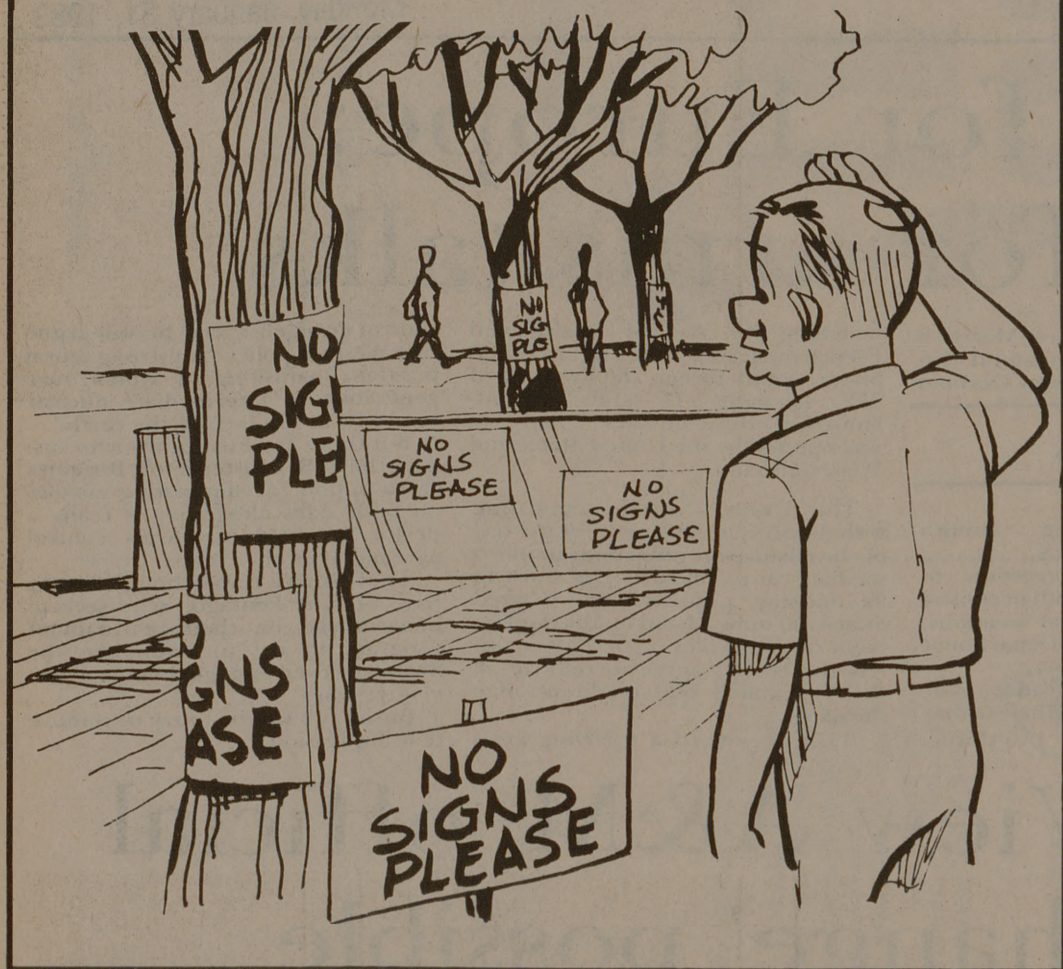


# Slouch By Jim Earle



# Playing for all the arms chips

by Art Buchwald

The trouble with disarmament talks is that every time one side suggests something, the other side rejects it out of hand. The reason is that if one of the parties suggests it, then it must mean it's bad for the other side.

This is how it goes:  
"Kinzinsky, we've decided to disband NATO, withdraw all American troops from Europe, and depend on the goodwill of the Soviets to remain within their own borders."

"This is the most ridiculous proposal you have suggested so far, Downey. How can we verify how many troops are facing us without NATO? Suppose I told you that my government has instructed me to tell you that we are willing to tear up the Warsaw Pact alliance, and let the Soviet satellites fend for themselves?"

"Threats will get you nowhere, Kizinsky. Do you think we would accept the breaking up of the Warsaw Pact military infrastructure for one moment? Our entire defense strategy is based on its existence. But I'll tell you what we will do. We'll do. We'll dismantle all our ICBMs and turn them into plowshares at no cost to you."

"I'm trying to keep my temper, Downey, but if you think my country is going to stand by while you people dismantle your intercontinental missiles, then we might as well adjourn these talks."

"Why do you say that?"  
"The only reason your side would turn its ICBMs into plowshares is that you've developed a plowshare that could do more damage than an ICBM. You know very well we can't turn our SS-20 missiles into plowshares."

"All right, we're willing to give up the plowshare idea. What if we canceled our B-1 bomber program? Would you accept that?"

"Of course we would not accept it. We have spent 200 million rubles developing a defense against it. Put something on the table that will at least make some sense."

"Your side hasn't put anything on the table that makes sense to us."

"What about our agreement to remove all our Backfire bombers out of range of Western Europe?"

"Washington thinks the idea stinks. We never thought the Backfire bomber was much of a threat to begin with."

"But you were the ones who brought up the Backfire bomber in the first place."

"Yes, but we didn't think we'd agree to our proposal. Once we realized it was a bad idea, we thought that you wanted to put a bomber range means it's a much better idea than we thought. Did you tell the Soviets we were willing to back off of the MX Dense Pack program?"

"I did, Downey, and they told me to tell you if you give up the MX Dense Pack program, they will cancel their purchases from the United States."

"Why would they do that, Downey? They thought the Soviets were scared of the MX Dense Pack system."

"They were until you offered to build it. Listen to me, Downey, to play disarmament you have to offer something that the other side needs to threaten us."

"You haven't come up with anything of substance yourself."

"What would you say if I told you I will put every one of our Backfire bombers in mothballs, and let the ones you have now?"

"Get off it, Kizinsky. If you're serious about the arms race, offer something solid I can take to Washington."

# Changes needed in Senate operation

by Steve Gerstel  
United Press International

WASHINGTON — Sen. David Pryor of Arkansas husbands his words with great care, which, just by itself, makes them worthy of consideration.

As last year's "lame duck" session finally staggered toward a close, he chose to unburden himself, putting into words a feeling that must have been shared by most — if not all — of his colleagues.

In effect, the first-term Arkansas Democrat said the way the Senate operates is an ungodly mess and the "lame duck" session made the situation even worse.

"Mr. President, shame, disgust and ridicule have been visited upon this body," Pryor declared.

"Americans are bewildered and sickened by the way we have made a mockery of a once-revered institution," he said. "We have no reason for pride as we slink out of this city."

He blamed neither the Senate leaders nor the Senate's members but the Senate's "method of doing business."

"In an age of high technology and instant change, the Senate continues to employ obsolete and clumsy procedures," Pryor charged. "Instead of lifting off like the space shuttle Columbia, it pokes along at the pace of a one-horse shay."

Pryor did not limit himself to complaint but made specific recommendations that would enable the Senate to operate and escape what seems to be a perpetual stalemate.

For a starter, Pryor recommended stricter enforcement of "germaness," permitting only amendments relevant to the bill under consideration. At matters stand now, there is a no-holds-barred rule, which allows any and all proposals to come before the Senate.

Pryor also called for an absolute end to the "gentleman's agreement" under which one senator can put a "hold" on a

bill or a nomination and prevent it from coming up for consideration.

A third recommendation calls for a "total reform of the filibuster rules."

Any one of these changes recommended by Pryor — excluding several others he made — could bring some order to the Senate.

But change — any change — is painful for the Senate and far from easy to put into effect.

The House, on the other hand, has already instituted a partial limitation on non-german amendments. But unless the Senate does the same, it will have little impact.

To show just how slowly change comes to the Senate, take the example of efforts to televise proceedings — an idea pushed by both party leaders and backed by a majority of the members.

But Sen. Russell Long of Louisiana does not like the idea. Long made it abundantly clear that efforts to bypass his opposition would mean trouble for the Senate — in the form of dreaded delay.

Take another example. The two party leaders appointed a panel on Jan. 3 to study ways to change the rules. The bipartisan group has not yet met.

A serious "germaness" rule would run into heavy opposition from senators who fear their pet projects may never get a vote — except as a rider to a bill destined for the White House.

Elimination of the "hold" provision — especially on nominations — would run counter to the gentlemen's club atmosphere, a state of mind considered very conducive to getting anything done in the Senate. It did, however, get badly frayed during the "lame duck" session.

And any tinkering with the filibuster rule — as the last 20 years has shown — comes only at the expense of a bloodbath on the Senate floor.

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The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Communications.  
Questions or comments concerning any editorial matter should be directed to the editor.

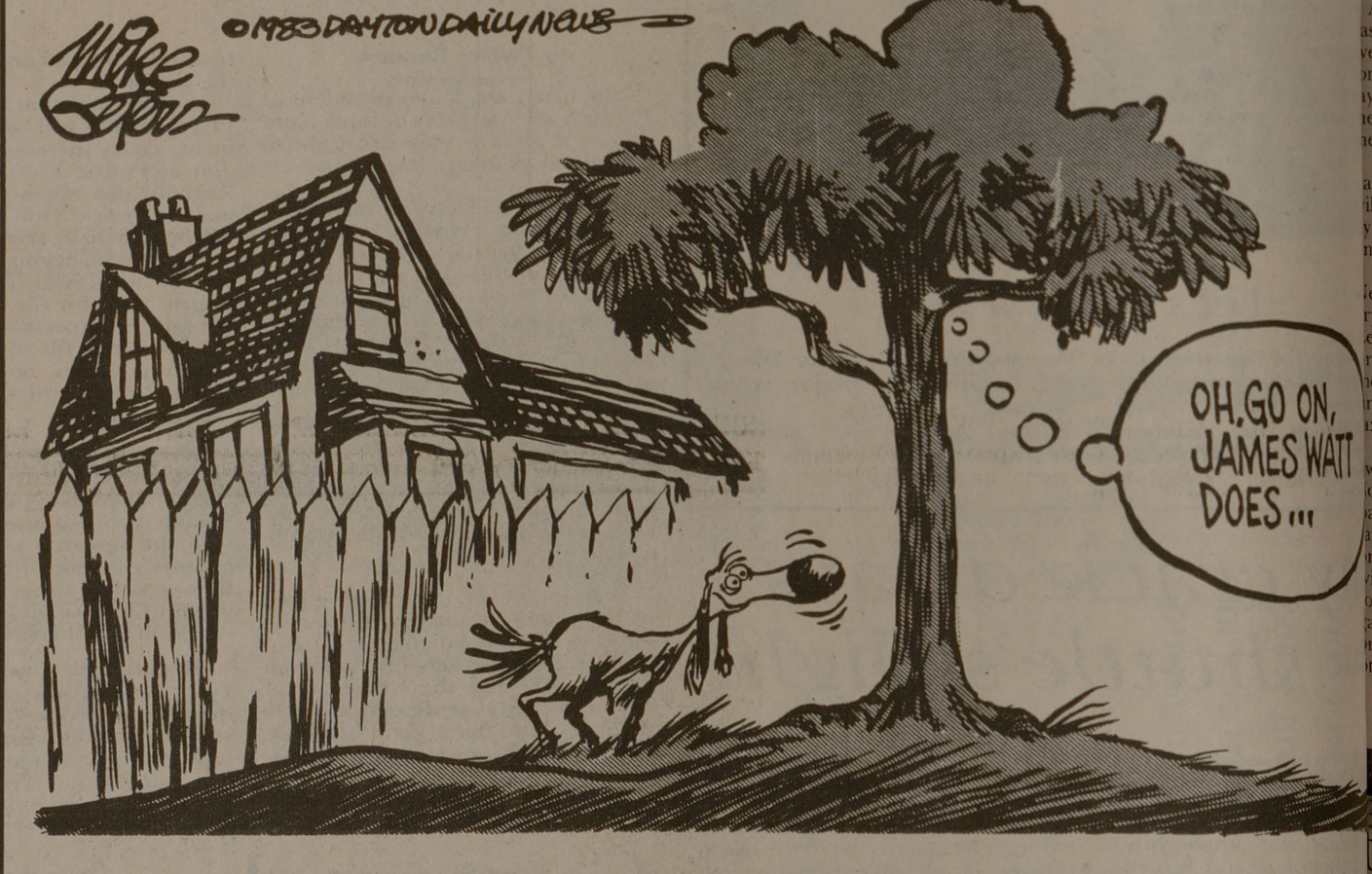
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# Letters: Campus security problem

Editor:

Well, once again the campus police has demonstrated its effectiveness at protecting society from that most heinous of crimes ... PARKING VIOLATIONS. Of course a few attempted rapes and a stabbing managed to slip by, but, at least, we know that our streets are safe for the staff and alumni to park on.

At first glance it would appear that there is a serious neglect of student safety. But, of course, the students aren't important anyway. At least this seems to be the prevailing opinion of Texas A&M's administration and financial backers. Who needs students; we've got a football coach.

In all sincerity, security problems will exist even with the most extensive safeguards. However, it would seem logical to place an officer to patrol the parking and dorms of the commons since the last three attacks have taken place there. This patrol would preferably be made on foot and should only worry about protecting the students and not their "quota" of tickets.

I don't really expect this to happen but, maybe, the new head of the department might be a little open-minded and remember that police are here to protect and serve.

Michael Lane  
Aston Hall

### Coaching situation

Editor:

Who does Shelby Metcalf know and why is he still head basketball coach here?

Let's look at the record. First, Shelby's claim to fame — most SWC conference

victories of any coach. BIG DEAL! He's been coaching longer than any other. Ol' Guy Lewis at Houston is third in the country in total victories, but only his last five or six years have counted in his SWC total.

Shelby has been coaching for 20 years. He's still in search of his 200th SWC victory. He now averages less than nine a year.

Shelby's teams historically and sometimes hysterically lacked discipline. Who can forget the time Mike Thomas stormed off the court and into the locker room. All this because his coach, Shelby, took him out of the game. Boo Hoo! Did Shelby take any action? H-NO. He started the very next game.

One thing about Shelby, his is consistent. Consistently mediocre. He consistently gets Texas' and the nation's best players (i.e. Rudy Woods) but consistently finds himself without a bye in the SWC post-season tourney.

This year we are in luck. SWC officials have voted to institute a 45 second shot clock. Great! This should keep Shelby from going into his unique version of the four corners. The four corners offense is terrific but can only be ran properly by the most disciplined players. Something A&M seems to lack.

No need to hear cries of "Bring back David Goff," or "We need David Britton or Vernon Smith." Just put it simply to Jackie Sherrill, "Dump Shelby."

As far as a replacement goes, there is one clear and obvious choice — ABE LEMMONS.

Tom Dobrez '83

### Movie blues

Editor:

I don't know who is in charge of running the movies shown on campus during the "Aggie Cinema." I do know that I've condemned Neil Diamond's "The Jazz Singer" to Rudder Theater, in running it where it could be seen by most of all heard, to its full potential (namely Rudder Auditorium). My son should be forced to listen to stereo albums on their kid sister's hi-fi record player. The effect was much the same.

Showing "The Jazz Singer" in Rudder Theater is like watching "E.T." go back to the screen. Those of us who went out into the rain and snow on Wednesday night in order to see Neil Diamond's fantastic movie were greatly disappointed at the film shown to this extremely excited audience.

Laura L. G.  
Veterinary

### Checkbook found

Editor:

This is a letter of thanks to the person who found my checkbook in the road near Northgate. It must have fallen out of my jacket pocket as I dodged cars while singing University Drive, but I didn't know it was gone for a couple of hours that I had been here when you called that you had left your name. All I just wanted to say thank you.

Mike Ship

## The Battalion

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