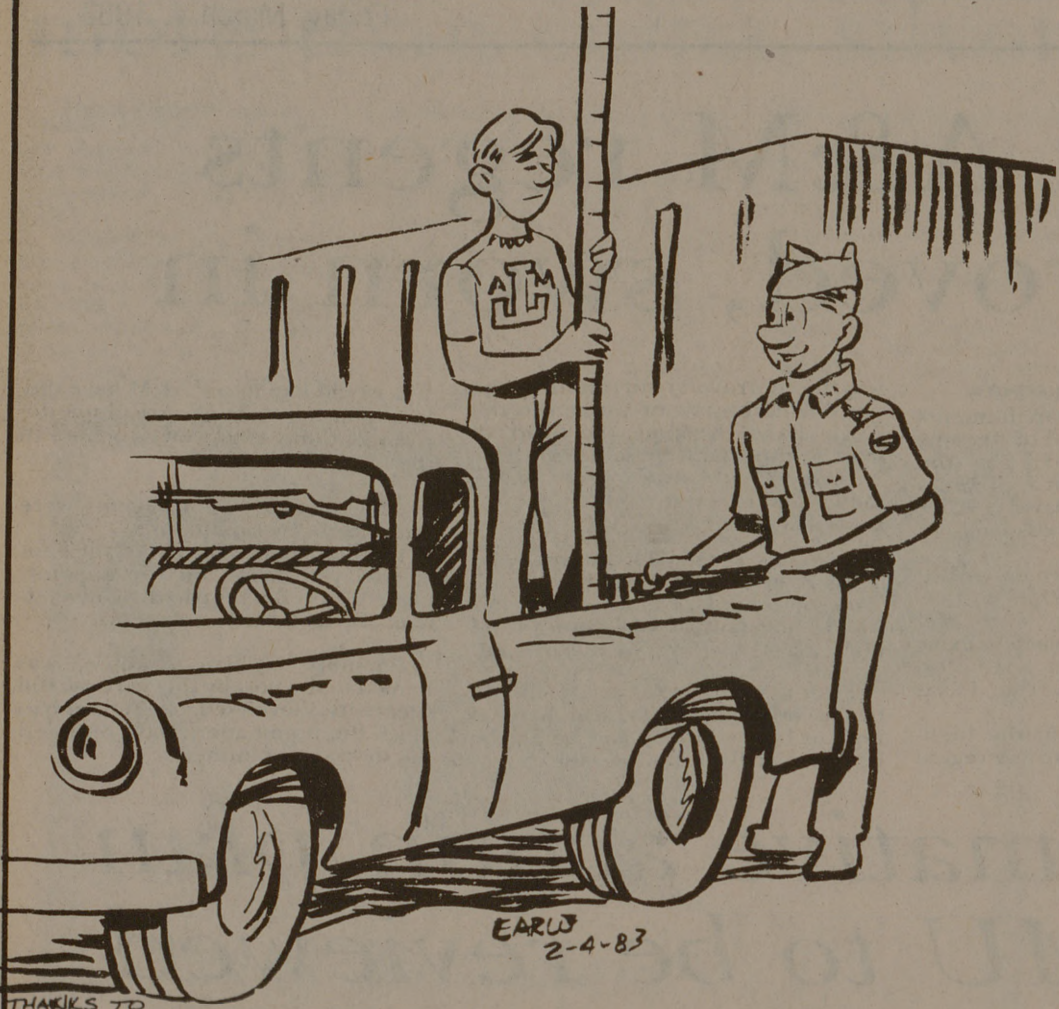


Slouch By Jim Earle



THANKS TO GERALD WINSON

"Have you ever surveyed from a moving truck?"

Federal government auditing

by Maxwell Glen and Cody Shearer

WASHINGTON — Several weeks ago, we wrote a column about the electronics industry's opposition to a new federal regulation that prohibits defense contractors from including lobbying costs in their product price tags. At the time, we were interested in how big a fuss the arms industry was making about so little a cut.

Since then, however, we've learned that there's more to the story. The Reagan administration's honorable disallowance of "advocacy" costs in government contracts only may have been a smokescreen for subsequent regulation which, barring quick congressional action, could neutralize hundreds of non-profit philanthropic groups across the United States. A broad spectrum of organizations is rightly upset about the rule.

For years, U.S. law has prohibited recipients of federal project grants from using such monies to influence lawmakers, the courts or public opinion. Simply put, the notion has been that taxpayer dollars shouldn't be used to beget more taxpayers' dollars.

But on Jan. 24, the Office of Management and Budget suggested a new rule that would bar federally subsidized groups from engaging in politics even if their public monies support non-political activities. It advised that subsidized groups organize separate, independently funded offices for political operations.

For the administration, the proposed rule has been a political matter. Right-wing groups repeatedly have denounced

direct government assistance to those organizations that advocate or pursue policies in opposition to their own. Under Reagan, the effort to "defund the left" has become a matter of policy. The Heritage Foundation's 1981 "mandate for leadership" suggested dismantling of "Democratic constituencies" and Conservative Digest has been sounding the attack ever since. Last year the Department of Health and Human Services probed whether Planned Parenthood spends federal dollars on lobbying, but uncovered nothing sinister.

Yet, political decisions about housing, jobs and other facts of life historically have depended on the advice of those who deliver the services. Often those who run such agencies are better informed about, say, refugee resettlement than government officials. The experience in the field of such groups as the American Red Cross, the National Council on Alcoholism and the Audubon Society "is vital to shaping policy," said Matt Ahmann of the National Conference of Catholic Charities to our reporter Michael Duffy.

"The Reagan administration doesn't understand the role of this sector in interpreting the needs of people to public servants," added Brian O'Connell, president of a 450-member coalition of prestigious corporations, charities and volunteer groups known as Independent Sector. "It has a total blind spot on this one."

Unfortunately, the OMB rule, written by chief counsel Michael J. Horowitz, would give non-profit groups a difficult choice between federal funds or loss of political advocacy rights. Harder still, di-

rectors of such social service organizations whom dealing with government responsibility, will have to seem to be for dispassionately delivering the goods for getting out of the business. Either way, a tradition of public-private partnership is doomed to suffer.

One might think that such a regulation would force the Reagan administration to think again about its Representatives of many manufacturing corporations with independent arms — such as Conoco Inc., General Electric, and General Electric already are buttonholing congressmen for the federal record and for court test. Both Rep. Jack Bricker (Texas) and Sen. David Durenberger (Minn.) plan hearings during the week of March. And Horowitz is little to calm the waters, calling president of the National Association of Manufacturers an unprintable name in a recent Executive Office Building for 40 business leaders.

But even such White House appointments as chief of staff James Baker and appointed private-sector initiatives director James B. Coyne are resigning. Apparently, Reagan's flack even from his primary coalition if only to quiet the noise from the placate both sides. If it chooses them, the federal government is the auditing powers needed to spend of federal dollars. As Rep. Barney Frank (R-N.Y.) has said, the new theory, going after a fly with a sledgehammer.

EPA mess nags at Ronald Reagan

by Helen Thomas United Press International

WASHINGTON — President Reagan is finding that the cloud over the Environmental Protection Agency "just won't go away," as one aide put it.

So the investigation will go on, even though the president has tried to cut his losses by some firings and replacing of officials in the middle echelon.

His aides say he is fully committed to supporting EPA Administrator Anne Burford even though there are some rumblings at the White House that he should make a clean sweep of the EPA hierarchy.

It has been Reagan's style to remain loyal to beleaguered top aides who have been loyal to him.

Burford has gone along with EPA budget cuts and the policies of the administration, which some of the career personnel have severely criticized as detrimental.

The president has long felt that the questions of environment were overly exaggerated by environmentalists. During his campaign, he suggested that trees were the cause of air pollution and that the continuing oil slicks off the Santa Barbara, Calif., coast purified the sea breezes.

On his first trip to his California mountaintop ranch, the president looked down from his helicopter window on the oil rigs off Santa Barbara and proclaimed them "a beautiful sight."

Since he has been in the White House environmental issues have not been of prime concern except when a disaster forced recognition of the dangers as in

the case of the dioxin scare at Times Beach, Mo.

But what the president did not bargain for is the heightened understanding and fear of the dumping of toxic wastes by the public at large. There is no question that what once was viewed as strictly a concern among youth has now reverberated throughout the country and the threshold of protecting the public health against nuclear and toxic wastes and pollutants has increased with each passing year.

Since Burford had voted against anti-pollution measures when she was in the Colorado Legislature, there was some question about her appointment.

Preoccupied with his economic program, Reagan did not give the EPA top priority consideration in the early days of his administration.

Reagan has ordered White House counsel Fred Fielding to conduct a review of contacts between White House aides and EPA officials in view of allegations that there may have been political considerations in the management of the \$1.6 billion Superfund to clean up hazardous waste dumps.

The struggle over turning over documents to congressional committees and the invoking of executive privilege by Reagan led to days of conflict and suspicion.

The president has indicated that some of the problem may be with the probing media in dealing with the headline making story.

But it is hard for the media to ignore six congressional committees investigating the same story.



Letters: Reader praises art program

Editor:

I would like to commend the College of Architecture and Environmental Design for offering an informal discussion session with scenic designer/art director Chris Nowak. I was equally pleased to find the session reported in the Feb. 24 edition of The Battalion, insofar as my teaching specialty is design and technical theater. During the session, I found myself in general agreement with Mr. Nowak, although I'd like to offer a few observations in counterpoint to his.

First, I find that there is an intrinsic value in the study of theater arts within a liberal arts setting, considering the complexity of theater and its production. For the designer there is, of course, no limit to the need of study of art and architecture — their history and practice; and there is no limit to the need of study of the complexity of dramatic literature and its expression on the stage. It could be argued that television and film do not require this same training due to their technological nature but that is a moot point.

Secondly, I do not find that "to be in this field, you really need to live in a large city like New York." Confronted with career decisions the last three years, with the Chicago Off-Loop Theater an in-

teresting option, I found the opportunity of "pure" design (however you define it) to be more often available within university theater. This is only true to those that can consider their position to be that of designer and educator. By the same token, a strong self-image as "a designer" and, as indicated by Mr. Nowak, contacts are the keys to success within the professional theater.

Once again, I offer my gratitude to the College of Architecture and Environmental Design for presenting Chris Nowak in an open forum. For those that find themselves drawn to this area of design I hope that you will avail yourself to the opportunities afforded within the College of Architecture and Environmental Design and the Theater Arts Program at TAMU.

Alan M. Donahue  
Designer/Technical Director  
Theater Arts Section

Exam complaints

Editor:

I would like to make some comments about the last Mechanical Engineering

213 common exam. I think that it was not designed to test the extent students' knowledge of the course material since the exam consisted of only problems each worth 35%. Although partial credit would be given, it is comparable to a hit or miss in sense, you could blame your horse if you were well prepared in problem except the kinds that were on the exam.

A more equitable and fair way to test the subject matter more evenly would be to let you ace it unless you are thoroughly familiar with the material would revert to the 10-problem format.

If the Department of Mechanical Engineering was aiming at bringing averages to record lows, I think it has been successful. But if it was intended to test the students' knowledge accurately, it is an entirely different story.

I hope the exam coordinator will take this point of view into consideration when the time for the second exam comes.

I also would like to hear from students and others interested in the matter.

Biju M...  
P.O. Box...

USPS 045 360

Member of Texas Press Association Southwest Journalism Conference

The Battalion

Editor: Diana Sultenfuss  
Managing Editor: Gary Barker  
Associate Editor: Denise Richter  
City Editor: Hope E. Paasch  
Assistant City Editor: Beverly Hamilton  
Sports Editor: John Wagner  
Entertainment Editor: Colette Hutchings  
Assistant Entertainment Editor: Diane Yount  
News Editors: Daran Bishop, Brian Boyer, Jennifer Carr, Elaine Engstrom, Johna Jo Maurer, Jan Werner, Rebeca Zimmermann

Staff Writers: Melissa Adair, Maureen Carmody, Frank Christlieb, Connie Edelman, Patrice Koranek, John Lopez, Robert McGlohon, Ann Ramsbottom, Kim Schmidt, Patti Schwierzke, Kelley Smith, Angel Stokes, Tracey Taylor, Joe Tindel, Kathy Wiesepape  
Copy editors: Shelley Hoekstra, Jan Saaner, Chris Thayer  
Cartoonist: Scott McCullar  
Graphic Artists: Pam Starasinic, Sergio Galvez Thompson  
Photographers: David Fisher, Erica Brown, Jorge Casari, Ronald W. Emerson, Eric Lee, Irene Mees, John Makenly, William Schulz

Editorial Policy

The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting news-

paper 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 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.

Letters Policy

Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length, and are subject to being cut if they are longer. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length, but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must also be signed and show the address and phone number of the writer.

Columns and guest editorials are also welcome, and are not subject to the same length constraints as letters. Address all inquiries and correspondence to: Editor, The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843, or phone (713) 845-2611.

The Battalion is published daily during Texas A&M's fall and spring semesters, except for holiday and examination 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 credited to it. Rights of reproduction of all other matter herein reserved.

Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.