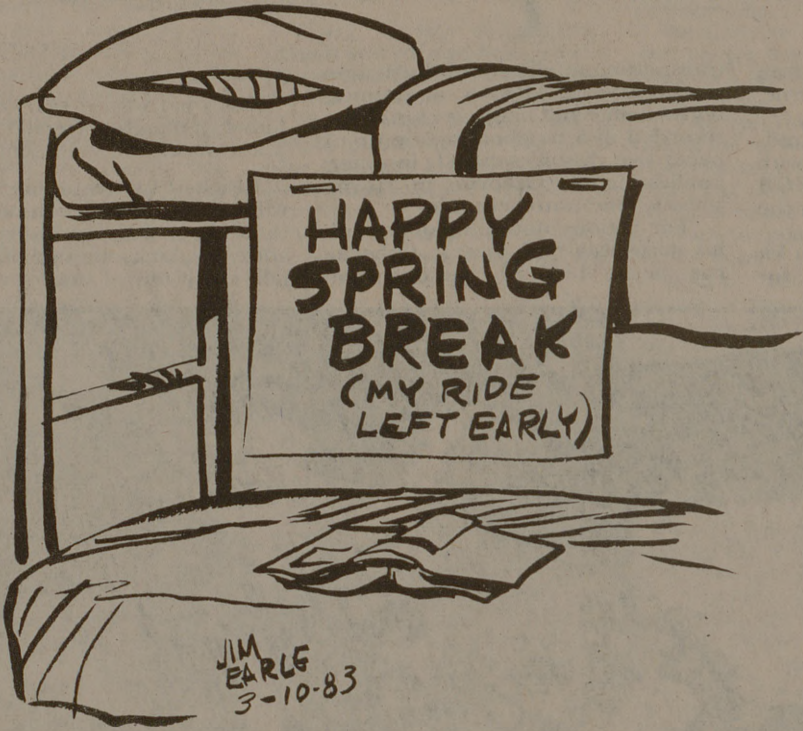


opinion

Slouch By Jim Earle



Reagan asserts compassion

by Helen Thomas
United Press International

WASHINGTON — President Reagan takes most things in his stride. But he cannot stand it when he is accused of lacking compassion for the poor. And he doesn't like it one bit when he is viewed as anti-environmentalist.

As a Californian, that is hard for Reagan to swallow.

In terms of his attitude toward the less fortunate, Reagan made it clear that those charges rub him the wrong way. In a recent speech he ticked off the projected budget outlays for food stamps and other social programs, and quipped "hard-hearted me."

He also feels he has been unfairly tagged as one who does not believe in conservation and preserving the nation's natural resources. A recent poll did not give him high marks as a leader against the nation's polluters, either.

Nor has the controversy engulfing the Environmental Protection Agency and the investigations into the handling of the \$1.6 billion "superfund" for toxic waste disposal helped the White House image as protectors of the public health.

In remarks at Klamath Falls, Ore., where he toured a lumber mill and talked with industry representatives, Reagan said that in 1966, when he was running for governor of California, he addressed a forestry products group in San Francis-

co "and my opponent went out and said that I had said that if you've seen one tree, you've seen them all."

"I never said any such thing," Reagan said indignantly, having never been able to shake the effects of that quote.

The subject came up when the industry representatives asked him if he would consider vetoing new wilderness legislation "which would take millions of acres from our timber base."

Reagan said in the '60s the "big wave" from the conservationists was for setting aside outdoor recreational land. "They were even foreclosing on some mining claims and they were buying up land and using eminent domain to do it," he said, "claiming that it was needed for the future so there would be outdoor recreational space."

"Well, finally when they had exhausted about all they could do with that, then came the environmental surge."

Reagan said the nation now has 80 million acres of wilderness land off limits for private development. "This is land that you cannot have a road in or anything of the kind," he said. "It's there because out of 250 million Americans in this country, we realize that at least 240 million of them are backpackers who want to hike into that wilderness area."

Reagan's joking remark about the astronomical number of backpackers drew a laugh from the lumbermen.

The president said he realized that

some areas "still should be protected... are so unique... I mean in addition to 80 million... but let's be reasonable about that."

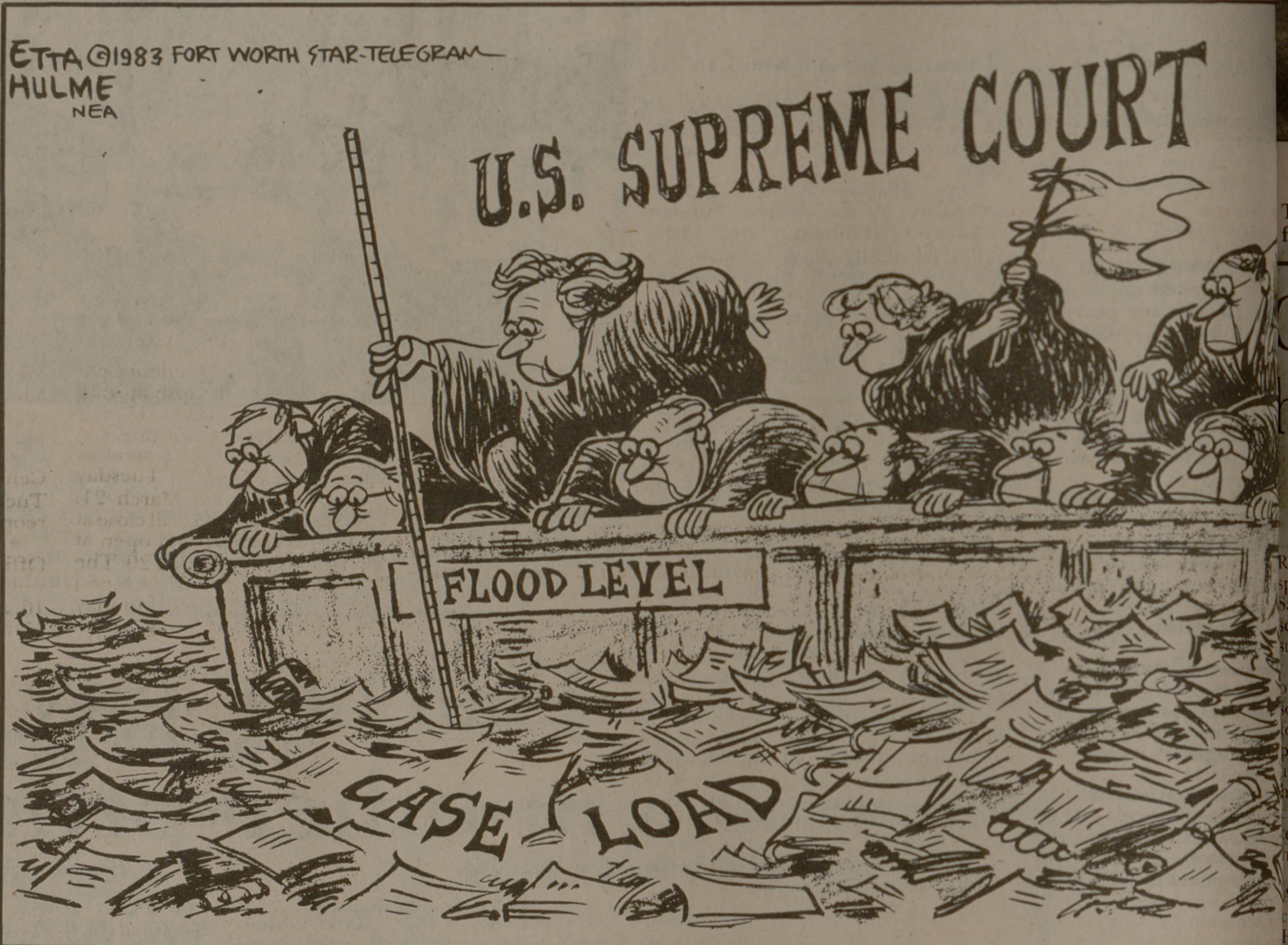
"And we intend to be. And there's a definite reason from an aesthetic uniqueness of the land... to go to wilderness, fine; but not to go to wholesale amounts that they're talking about because that wasn't the idea and the private sector has no objection of rape of all the natural resources. There is today in the United States much forest as there was when when it was at Valley Forge."

White House spokesman James Speakes said that Reagan was referring to the United States "back in Louisiana Purchase."

Reagan said that "there has been a great effort spread over a number of years by the government to purchase more land" and it now owns a third of all the real estate in the States.

He said the bulk of the government-owned land is in the West, "and we've used various devices to do it."

Reagan and the Sierra Club and other conservationists have been at odds since he came into office. He has Interior Secretary James Watt up the administration side, and his full backing to Watt for more lands to be developed by the industry.



Letters: Reagan and the circus

Editor: Concerning Stephen Weiss's "Political Seesaw" letter (March 9):

Although Democratic Party criticism of Ronald Reagan's policies strongly resemble a seesaw, Mr. Reagan's views resemble less a seesaw and more a circus. While campaigning for the presidency in 1980, Reagan told us "The federal deficit provides the chief motive for the debauching of our dollar." The Reagan administration now predicts a 1984 federal deficit of 145 billion dollars. Reagan had campaigned under the battle flag of laissez faire until he spoke to auto workers at the Chrysler plant in Detroit two months before the election. He then appropriately concluded that the federal government's spring of 1980 bail out of the Chrysler Corporation, a move which risked 1.5 billion of the taxpayers' dollars, was the "proper answer."

In a December 17, 1981 press conference, Reagan said he was opposed to any tax increase, while his senior aides were quick to remind him that since September of that year he had been supporting a "revenue enhancement" measure. Reagan had sought election as an opponent to mandatory registration for the draft, but now supports the prosecution of non-registrants.

When not reading from a script, Reagan's act is even harder to follow. It would be "enlightening and informative" to see if Reagan still defends his positions that the progressive income tax is a "system spawned by Karl Marx" or that the true basis for the New Deal was fascism.

Greg Rickard
4110 College Main

Realistic attitudes

Editor: I think it is about time we adopted a

responsible and realistic attitude toward pre-marital sex. It does no good to try to deny its existence or to try to punish those who "do it." Nor is it right for us to try to force our own moral judgements onto others. It is fine for others to try and persuade people to follow a certain moral code, but trying to limit teen-age sex by denying teen-agers easy access to contraceptives is ridiculous and detrimental to the long term good of society.

In response to Ms. Stevens' letter of March 3, I would like to say that her solution is ridiculous. She suggests that if you want to have sex, get married. Do you really feel that this is a rational solution? We already have a high divorce rate. Shall we increase that by having more marriages based on physical desire? And what about teen-agers who get married in order to have sex. Ms. Stevens feels that a teen-ager's parents should be informed when they get contraceptives. Will a married couple have to get their parent's permission in order to get contraceptives? Why not just lock everyone into a chastity belt until their wedding vows are said.

Furthermore, limiting the availability of contraceptives to teen-agers would not have the desired result of decreasing teen-age pregnancies. Rather, this would increase them. Teen-agers are not going to stop having sex because they can't get contraceptives. They're going to stop getting contraceptives. This is not a new problem; sex before marriage has been around as long as marriage. The focus of this issue is how to decrease the number of teen-age pregnancies.

Surely a more responsible and realistic attitude would be for teen-agers to accept the responsibilities that go along with sex — this includes preventing any "accidents," or "punishments," as you would like to call them.

Oh, and by the way, sex and lust do mean kind of the same thing. I looked it up in Webster's just in case I was mistaken. Lust — strong sexual desire; Sex

— anything connected with sexual gratification. Pretty much the same, don't you agree?

Lea Anderson

Parked car wreck

Editor:

Help! Someone played derby with my silver '80 Citation time between Feb. 25 and March 3 parked in the Red lot behind L. Both the front and back doors driver's side were hit while a car was carrying out of their parking place. who has any information about please give me a call.

To the person who did it: I read you may have panicked when you car and just didn't know what to do is your chance to get rid of your feelings. Thanks!

Gena Kirby

Stereo stolen

Editor:

Dear Aggies: Did any good Ags see a theft in 61 between Saturday, March 5 and Wednesday, March 9? My yellow GT was broken into and the car was stolen. The car looks like a corvette. It was parked in the first the northwest corner under the light. A \$100 reward is being given information leading to the arrest and conviction of the guilty party.

Gregory

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Proposed program to aid liquor safety

by Dick West
United Press International

WASHINGTON — Most people probably agree with the maxim, "If it's worth doing at all, it's worth doing right."

But how many would subscribe to the addendum, "If it's worth doing right, it's worth over-doing?"

The latter platitude is the motto of Dale Lowdermilk, head of one of this country's most panicky safety organizations. As was perhaps inevitable, he fears the campaign to curtail drunk driving in America doesn't go far enough.

Lowdermilk, in private life a Santa Barbara, Calif., air traffic controller, is especially dubious about efforts to make bars, taverns and other such establishments more careful about serving "the last drink" to patrons who obviously are in no condition to drive competently.

His most immediate cause for alarm is a measure introduced in the California legislature to require the posting of "scorecards" in drinking places.

The charts would set forth the state's legal definition of intoxication and list the number of drinks it takes to impair the average person's driving ability.

"The concept of a 'scorecard' can, in and of itself, encourage competitive drinking," Lowdermilk warns in his latest media communique.

To be on the safe side, he recommends that the government assign monitors "at every location where liquor is sold, consumed or retained, home refrigerators included," to discourage "inebriated rivalry."

By me, however, the most salient pro-

vision of his safety program would be the administering of "slur tests" to bartenders. Under this section, "everyone who leaves a socially sanctioned intake facility" would be required to say: "The sixth sick sheik's sixth sheep is sick."

Failure to achieve vocal clarity and proper enunciation "shall constitute a felony offense and an immediate arrest shall be made," Lowdermilk insists.

I admire that recommendation, if for no other reason than its scientific authenticity. Researchers long have recognized there is a direct correlation between driving an automobile, particularly in rush hour traffic, and reciting tongue-twisters.

Both require steady nerves and a high degree of mental and muscular coordination, not to mention navigational skill, in order to reach a given destination.

As a general rule, a commuter whose consonants run together during the recitation of "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers" is the commuter most likely to run over the curb and hit a mailbox, or some unsuspecting pedestrian, on the way home.

By the same token, a driver who stumbles over "she sells seashells by the seashore" is a pretty good bet to run into a ditch, or fail to stop in time to open the garage door after turning into the driveway.

I salute Lowdermilk for his perspicacity, and caution, and offer but one amendment to his program. Rather than station government "monitors" in joints where competitive drinking is apt to break out, I would assign umpires or referees.

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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) 843-2611.

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