

opinion

Forum productive, but needs polish

The MSC Endowed Lecture Series inaugural address, "The Future of the Western Alliance," presented a unique opportunity for Texas A&M. It is not often that such well-known, experienced and influential people visit our campus.

The lecture series committee should be commended for its efforts. After several cancellations from moderators, they did a good job in getting Marvin Kalb, a capable, articulate moderator.

In addition to the lecture series committee, former President Gerald Ford, former British Prime Minister Edward Heath and former West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt also deserve thanks. Having the three men meet in such settings and share the wealth of their experiences was valuable for Texas

A&M and the Western Alliance.

But, even with the success of the forum, the lecture series committee will no doubt learn from some of the mistakes it made, including a biography in the program that referred to Kalb as Bernard Kalb.

The committee also needs to improve its dealings with the press. There were constant mix-ups in times and places in regard to access to the men. In some cases, our photographers got better cooperation from the Secret Service agents. Other local media expressed similar difficulties.

The idea of the series is a valuable one, and it should be continued. We hope better preparation can alleviate problems with future forums.

Soviet choices and arms control policy

by Robert Shepard
United Press International

WASHINGTON — President Reagan, as did his predecessors, has had to formulate an arms control policy in the midst of a continuing and spirited public debate about what the right course may be.

Leaders of the Soviet Union are in a much different position, of course, but that does not mean they are spared equally difficult decisions. High on their list must be the question of how to deal with Ronald Reagan.

The Soviets can negotiate with him seriously on arms control, or delay in the hope that political forces will force Reagan to change his stance, or they can try to wait until Reagan is out of the White House.

"The Soviets have a very difficult decision to make in terms of strategy," Sen. Joe Biden, D-Del., a member of the Senate Foreign Relations and Intelligence Committees, observed last week.

The United States and its NATO allies are preparing to deploy 572 nuclear armed missiles in Europe beginning late this year. Reagan has said that deployment could be delayed or limited if the Soviets agree to some reduction in their existing missile forces.

Opponents of the U.S. missile deployment are vociferous both in the United States and in Europe, giving the Soviets hope that the West can be talked or bluffed out of the deployment.

The Soviets could decide to bank heavily on that possibility.

"They can do it that way and find that resolve may be there to deploy," Biden noted. In that case they could "lose out on any prospect of getting arms control."

They would then have to deal with the accomplished fact of NATO missiles pointed at the Soviet Union.

"Or what they could do is decide it is more advantageous for them to move now with this administration," Biden said.

"If they don't move soon, if there is not some progress soon" the there may be no chance for agreement for some time,

probably not until after the 1984 presidential election, Biden observed.

"And then what do they have? They have to make a guess — Ronald Reagan runs and there is a 50-50 chance he will be re-elected again."

"I don't think it's as easy for them to wait and see if they can derail (deployment). They may find themselves in a worse position if they do that. I would suspect that it's not nearly as simple as it may seem on the face," Biden said.

Other observers suggest a Soviet pact with the conservative Reagan administration would offer the Soviets more certainty than they could expect from a different administration. Jimmy Carter signed the SALT II treaty, but conservative critics raised such objections it was never submitted to the Senate for ratification.

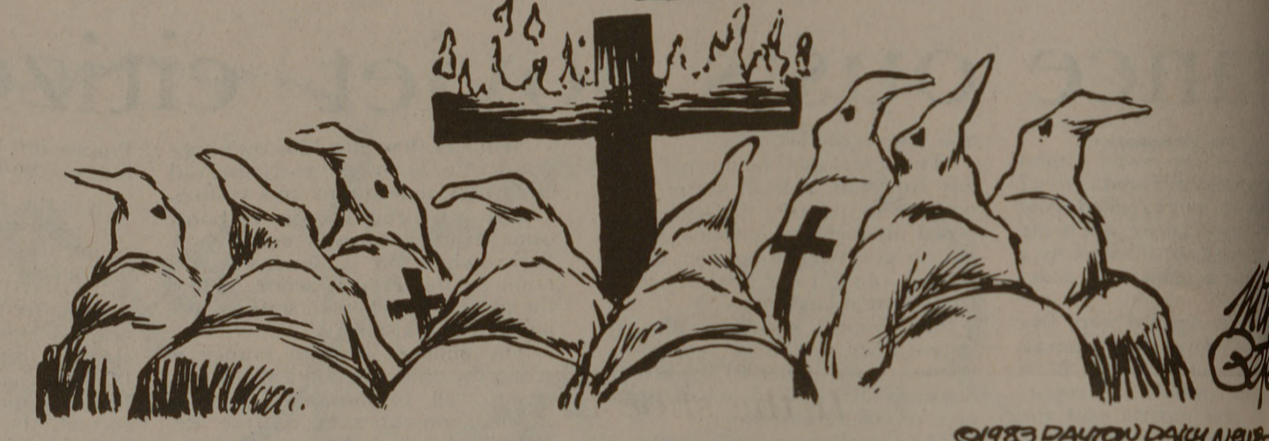
It is unlikely Reagan and his negotiators would ever be accused of giving away too much to the Soviets. If he were to give his assent to an arms treaty and submit it to the Senate, ratification would be almost assured.

The situation would be similar to Richard Nixon's decision to resume normal relations with China. Had a liberal Democrat — say George McGovern — tried to do the same thing, he would have touched off a political firestorm.

Reagan's congressional critics complain he is surrounding himself with arms control advisers of a decidedly hawkish bent. If the Soviets perceive the same situation they might feel the time for an arms agreement is now, before the hardliners become any more entrenched in the administration.

And despite congressional objections and efforts to slow the rise in defense spending, Reagan has managed to launch a major rearmament program. Even if Congress makes some cuts this year or next, the weapons building program has the momentum to continue for the next several years. The Soviets will not slow that buildup by refusing to negotiate seriously or acting more beligerent in world trouble spots.

FIRES THAT DESTROYED CHICAGO ...



Batters up ... baseball deals

by Art Buchwald

The income of baseball players seems to be getting more attention from the media than how they play the game. Pretty soon we can expect to hear the sports announcers on television describing a contest like this:

"Coming up to bat is Paul London, the million-dollar wonderboy right fielder. London, who became a free agent last year, is the highest priced left-hander in baseball. His deal is, every time he gets to first base, he receives a \$1,000 bonus and a new automobile.

"On the mound is Too-Tall Dawkins, who was given the Empire State Building as a bonus when he signed up with the New York Yankees. Dawkins, who owns 210 Kentucky Fried Chicken franchises, made an unsuccessful bid to buy Sears Roebuck last week with the trust fund set up for him by George Steinbrenner. Strike one.

"The infield is expecting a bunt. Third baseman Pedro Cappello, who earns \$1 million a year doing commercials for the Wallin Savings and Loan Company, is playing in close. Don Kirby, the shortstop who made \$750,000 last year and held

out this season during spring practice because they wouldn't renegotiate his contract, is covering second base. Dawkins winds up — here comes the ball, London swings — it's a line drive over Pablo Hernandez' glove into right field, and London is safe on first. Hernandez and London have the same business manager and they seem to be having a heated discussion on a tax shelter they're both in.

"The next hitter is Ron Dirksen, who gets a big ovation from the crowd. Ron has a golden parachute deal with the Red Sox. If he is ever traded or hurt, he still gets \$500,000 a year for 10 years, plus 10 percent interest on his money.

"Hernandez has gone over to speak to Dawkins. Apparently London just gave Hernandez a tip on a high-tech stock, and he wants to talk it over with Dawkins, so they can call their brokers after the inning is over.

"The umpire has joined the group and he is writing down the name of the stock. Dirksen is at the plate and play is resuming. Dawkins throws a fast one over the corner and it's called a ball. Catcher Sam Francisco, who does light beer commercials for the Sussy Brewing Company, is

protesting the call. The umpire tries to put his mask back on.

"Here comes the pitch — a grounder to second baseman Bip Doctormoore, tried to corner the copper market last week — he tags London and then goes to first for a double play.

"Two out, and Fernando Gravas comes to bat. Fernando was not expected to play today, when his private Gulliver III had engine trouble in Tampa. Fortunately he hitched a ride in a fielder Max Newman's Lear jet and he suited up in time.

"...The count is 3 and 2. Doctormoore shakes his head to the catcher. This either mean he doesn't like the pitch led for, or Dawkins doesn't want into a condominium deal catcher cisco is developing in Fort Lauderdale. Dawkins throws, and Gravas swings misses for a strikeout. The side is out and Dawkins has earned the Empire State Building from George Steinbrenner today.

"Here comes the Red Sox pitcher Arnie Ballow, who's record in the futures this year is 20 and 1 ...

Letters: Nuclear power question

Editor:

In response to Rube Williams' editorial entitled "Nuclear energy — the Great Debate": Rube, just how safe is nuclear energy? Is nuclear fuel only hazardous to those who "stroll through a containment building" or somehow manage "to eat uranium"?

Have you ever wondered why so many states have refused to let the federal government bury nuclear waste in their backyards? Radioactive waste, even in the smallest quantity and in the most stable burial grounds, is a highly dangerous entity.

Furthermore, given mankind's present state of cognitive imperfection, is it not possible that a series of mistakes could be made in the building, inspection and operation of a nuclear disaster? Was the Three Mile Island accident a mere anomaly and must we, the public, live with the threat of repeated (and possibly more disastrous) anomalies?

Can nuclear energy proponents begin to understand why people all over the globe are frightened and why some cry "No Nukes!"? Why nuclear power is no longer seen as an energy panacea and why many people are turning to the soft energy paths (and are making them work).

In mankind's stream of energy consciousness, nuclear power has played a crucial part. A part presently controversial and certainly fading.

Larry Mutter
Dennis Burns
Susan Bulmer
Graduate students

Growth and change

Editor:

I was pleased to see Mr. Art Buchwald's satire piece on April 1, on one particularly dynamic aspect of our economy: growth and change.

I completely agree with what appears to be Mr. Buchwald's point, given that personal security is more valuable than personal liberty. Obviously, what this na-

tion needs (given this premise) is an "Equalization of Opportunity" bill, which would prohibit all private business reorganizations and activities except those permitted by the government. This would insure that no needy soul would unjustly lose his or her job unnecessarily under the heel of the pursuit of the "Almighty Dollar."

Of course government would play an active role in this bold new plan, making certain that complete objectivity and fairness would be exercised in its enforcement. Why, just look at what a job the government has been doing for so long in other regulatory and social areas, like the Environmental Protection Agency or the Social Security program ...

Frank Knickerbocker
306 Redmund

Easter thanks

Editor:

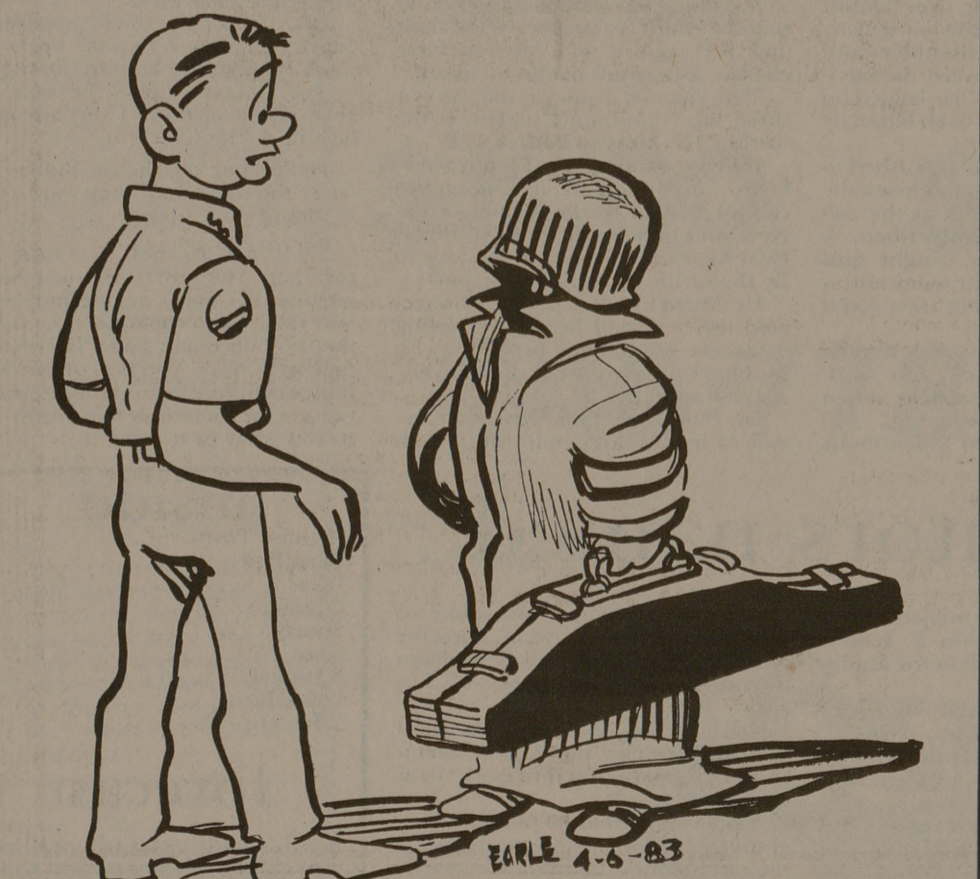
Laurels to the Texas A&M University Century Singers, under the direction of the very talented Patricia Fleitas, who formed and presented an outstanding program of Easter music at the Lounge on Wednesday night — strange circumstances — competing with the noisy departure of International participants.

Five A&M cadets accompanied the group with trumpets, trombones, French horn. Father Bill Brooks was the conductor. Such pretty women, handsome men, beautiful voices — anyone would be so very proud of this group.

Hope it's an annual affair — making a Blessed Easter.

Helen Johnson

Slouch By Jim Earle



"An armadillo carrying case — you're kidding. You are kidding, aren't you?"

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The Battalion also serves as a laboratory for students in reporting, editing and photography within the Department of Communications.

Questions or comments concerning any 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 exceed that length. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit style and length, but will make every effort to preserve the author's intent. Each letter must also begin with the address and phone number of the author.

Columns and guest editorials are also welcome, but are not subject to the same length constraints. Address all inquiries and correspondence to The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843, or phone (713) 261-1.

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