

opinion

Election problems an annual headache

At last we know the winner. Joe Jordan is the 1983-84 student body president. But the election that he won — and all the other races — were plagued by a number of problems that need to be solved before next year.

First, three names were left off the ballot, even though filing for offices

Editorial

closed March 11. Election workers had more than a week to make sure this ballot was letter-perfect.

Election officials said that 'only' 300 votes had been cast when the first errors were discovered. No one is sure how

many votes were cast before the second mistake was found.

Second, only about 17 percent of the student body voted in this election. This was blamed on a lack of student workers to man the polls. But some of the polls that were open were not clearly labeled, especially for that all-important first day of voting.

Third, tabulating results presents a serious and recurring problem. For the third consecutive year, computer problems delayed election results. Isn't it about time the computer program worked?

The runoffs seem to have been spared these problems. Maybe next year the main elections will be run as smoothly.

No bargain vacations for traveling Parisians

by Art Buchwald

"Is Paris Burning?" You bet your sweet croissant it is.

President Francois Mitterrand, in order to get his financial house in order, has just issued the most controversial edict since he took office. He has told the French if they want to leave the country on vacation they may only take the equivalent of \$427 with them, and they can't use their credit cards outside of France's borders.

This is the equivalent of pulling an Iron Curtain down on French tourists who, contrary to myth, are far more passionate about their vacations than their love affairs.

I just received a letter from a Parisian friend.

Cher Ami:

You have probably read by now that your crazy French President has made it impossible for us to leave the country for a while.

Until his proclamation, our main concern was the placement of American missiles on the Continent. Now our only worry is how we can get out of France in the summertime.

Everyone knows the one thing that makes the Frenchman happy is to travel abroad to see how primitive other cultures are. Once we taste their food and drink their wine, we come home reinforced in our belief that France is still the only civilized nation in the world.

Besides, a trip outside the country is the only opportunity we have to get away from foreign tourists who make our lives so miserable by telling us how happy they are that the French franc is so weak and that Paris is once again the tourist bargain it used to be.

I am not saying the French are not to blame for this sad state of affairs. We all voted for Mitterrand because we were bored with watching Giscard d'Estaing on television. Mitterrand said he was going to do a lot of stupid things, such as nationalizing all the banks and the industries, which sounded like good fun at the time. But he never said anything about only letting us take the equivalent of \$427 out of the country for our vacations.

Had he mentioned this just once in his campaign, he wouldn't have even won the votes of his own family.

When I told Giselle that we couldn't go to England for our holidays she was grief-stricken. Giselle hates the English and was looking forward to spending four weeks there, so she could show the children how miserably the British live, how awful the weather is, and how fortunate they are to be French.

My brother Gerard already had made his reservations for Portugal this summer, just to let the family see how bad European plumbing really can be.

Uncle Jacques was prepared to go to Switzerland, which he despises, but considers the perfect vacation spot because it is the dullest place in Europe. When he returns to the madness of Paris, he feels like a new man.

Now our entire family must cancel their plans and find a place in France for our holidays, which is impossible, because nobody expected the French to stay home this summer.

The reason I am writing to you at this time is that if you had any plans to come to Paris this year, please let me know. Do not bring any money with you. I will be happy to supply you with all the French francs you need at a very good rate.

If you spend enough money here I could come to the United States and you could repay me in dollars without that idiot Mitterrand being any wiser.

I must be honest with you. America was not my first choice, particularly since Giselle is afraid the children will have a good time and spoil the vacation for all of us. But we will have to take this chance just so we can get out of the country for a few weeks.

If you weren't planning on coming here, I urge you to do so. If Mitterrand does not rescind his order by August 1, you could be witness to the second French revolution.

Last week, 10,000 people marched to the Ministry of Finance gates shouting, "Vacances, liberte," and do you know what Mitterrand said when he heard the noise? He said: "Let them eat credit cards."

Ancient roots of new nation

Editor's note: This is the third of a four-part analysis written by members of the Israel Club in conjunction with Israel Awareness Week.

by Y. Weitsman

On Monday, Israel will celebrate its 35th Independence Day. That new nation, which was born in the midst of a war for survival and in the shadow of a terrible holocaust, traces its roots back to the dawn of history. It gave humanity the concept and belief in one God, the Commandments and laws of justice and mercy, the inspiration and teachings of the Prophets and the vision of the Messianic Era.

The history of Israel begins some 4,000 years ago with a small monotheistic clan, maintaining their unique faith

while in a pagan world. It is a story of a continuous struggle for physical and spiritual survival of the few against the many, of exiles to Egypt and — 1,000 years later — to Babylon, to be followed 600 years later by yet another exile to a wide diaspora. It's a tale of tribes and kingdoms united and divided, of successful and disastrous revolts, of victories and more frequent defeats.

Ancient Israel was utterly destroyed twice and its people went to exile three times. Exile and destruction were, unfortunately, all too common events in human history, but the annals tell us of only three occasions when a scattered people managed to re-group and re-establish themselves in their native land. On all three occasions, the event took place in Israel. There is no single parallel case in the history of any other nation.

The reasons for Israel's spite of its harsh and cruel history be traced to its special cultural heritage. All during their long years in exile under the most severe oppression wherever Jews lived they held their faith in God. That faith gave them the strength to endure and the hope. It was the hope for better days, the vision of the return to Jerusalem. This then is the redeeming and inspiring lesson taught by Jewish history. This history — so replete with horrors, defeats and sadness — provides with an outstanding example of a victory that really counts. It is the victory of the human spirit.

Yecheil Weitsman is a civil engineering professor at Texas A&M. Friday's article is the first in a series on the emergence of modern Israel.

I'VE BEEN KEEPING TRACK SINCE REAGAN MADE HIS SPEECH PROPOSING A SPACE AGE DEFENSE SYSTEM...



THIS VERBAL WAR BETWEEN US AND THE SOVIETS HAS ESCALATED SOMETHING AWFUL...



...AND I CAN TELL YOU THE SITUATION DOESN'T LOOK GOOD FOR US...



I SUSPECT THE SOVIETS ARE AHEAD OF US IN THE DEPLOYMENT OF DISINFORMATION...



Letters: Memorial sets proper tone

Editor:

I would like to set the record straight concerning the memorial to General James Earl Rudder at Pointe du Hoc, France. A quote in The Battalion described the monument as "terribly understated" and "in the middle of nowhere." These statements are simply not true.

Like Mr. Martin, I also visited General Rudder's monument while studying in France. However, I was greatly moved by the simple stone monument which rises from the cliff which Rudder's Ranger scaled. Simplicity is not necessarily understatement.

Pointe du Hoc remains exactly as the Rangers left it on the afternoon of June 8, 1944. The only addition is the monument erected in tribute to the men who fought and died there. This monument was a project of a grateful and dedicated group of Frenchmen. It was through their efforts and the generosity of the Government of France that this corner of French soil was placed in perpetuity under the care of the American Battle Monuments Commission, which maintains American military cemeteries and memorials on foreign soil.

This monument, which is located between Omaha and Utah beaches, is one of which all Americans, and Aggies in particular, can be proud. It was, indeed, a memorable experience to stand on the precipice of that cliff and imagine that day in June 1944. I hope that the Aggies who go to France this year will remember the Pointe du Hoc as a place where Americans fought and died, and not as "nowhere."

Jean M. Waskom '82

Lecture series thanks

Editor:

I would like to thank Texas A&M University and the people who worked on the Endowed Lecture Series for allowing me to attend such a fine program.

I think the series is an outstanding program, especially since it is run for the most part by students. Texas A&M can be very proud of the terrific job these students did in running the inaugural program.

There are some special people that I would like to thank for helping our crew

in our coverage of this event: Jeff Alford, Matthew Kirst, Nancy Cramer, Holly Musick, John Wright, and Robert Robison. These people were a great help to us; in spite of the fact that we were from the university in Austin that Aggies call "t.u."

Again, I compliment your university for the successful inauguration of a great program and thank all the Aggies who were so kind to us.

Suzanne Standerfer Reporter, U.T. Newswatch

Campaign mess

Editor:

After having watched the campaign for offices in student government, I thought of the following:

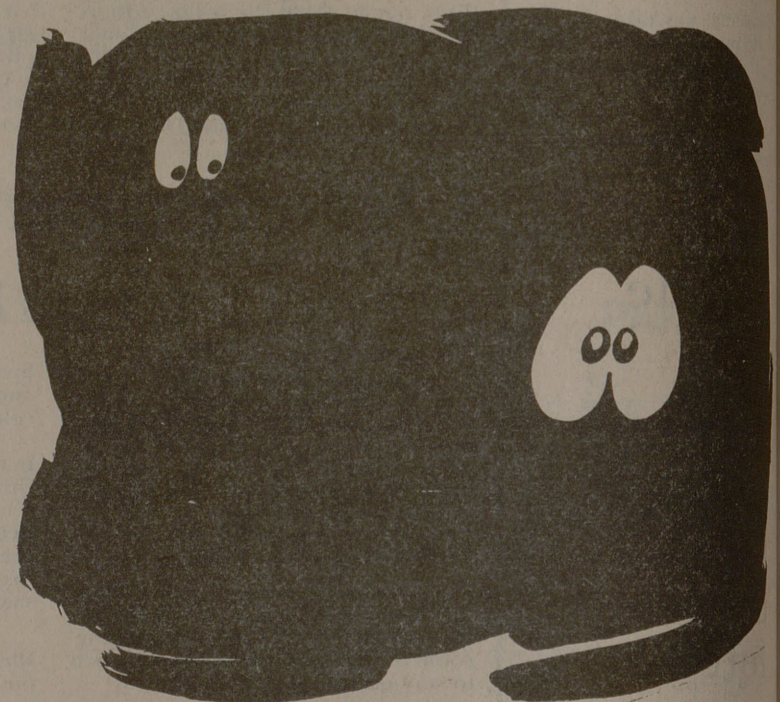
The voting is done. The offices won; The winners no longer need. Yet hither and yon It still lingers on — This filthy campaigning mess!

I hope that the candidates that are as their first official act, see to it that campaign materials (especially thousands of fliers) are cleaned up — those who did not win, I hope they will follow the same course of action.

It would be nice to see what the walls are and to see out of glass windows again, and maybe other could use the bulletin boards again — out having their material covered. Come on now, be responsible for your stuff — there's enough litter around here.

Roy Co

Slouch By Jim Ear



"Don't bother getting up. I'm just looking for my pet snake that got loose. He's probably around here somewhere."

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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.

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.

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