

opinion

World happenings take toll on Reagan

by Helen Thomas

WASHINGTON — President Reagan is being forced to make good on his policy of peace through strength by sending combat troops to many of the world's trouble spots.

Reagan had a relatively peaceful first two years, but as with his predecessors in recent times, he is learning that international events inevitably preoccupy the presidency, and take their toll.

Since he has drawn a sharp line in the ideological struggle with the communists, the United States is forced to take a strong position against Soviet and Cuban influences wherever they may seek to prevail. As a result, the United States is militarily involved in the Middle East, the Caribbean and Central America.

A memo drawn up by the National Security Council more than a year ago called for a "full court press" against the Kremlin, and that is what the United States appears to be undertaking.

Reagan is a man of decision, and a man of action. He does not choose to retreat in the face of attempts to drive the Marines out of Beirut with snipers and a terrorist attacks. And he does not choose to ignore an appeal from a group of Caribbean island nations to help depose the leftist revolutionary government in Grenada.

The Marxist government in Nicaragua is viewed as another target of opportunity to rid the region of Soviet-Cuban influences.

Like Harry Truman, Reagan does not anguish over a decision once it is made particularly when convinced of the righteousness of his cause.

But Truman did not live in the full glare of television, and wars that come into the living room of nearly every home. Combat in Lebanon, an invasion of Grenada are vivid realities for every American. And the nation is wary of military involvements they may liken to the Vietnam debacle.

Nor does Reagan have a malleable Congress that can be easily persuaded to support foreign ventures that will entail loss of life, even when told they are for vital strategic interests.

Military solutions are becoming less palatable to the lawmakers and less acceptable to Americans who are more prone to ask why.

Reagan sees the struggle in Lebanon as more than a civil war. He believes the Middle East is a vital area to both Europe and the Western Hemisphere, which must not be lost to Soviet domination.

The same is true of the Caribbean where U.S. presidents have refused to do business with Fidel Castro and at the same time taken actions to block the spread of his sphere of influence among dissident factions in that region.

White House and Pentagon officials insist that the United States is not spreading its forces too thin in the world's trouble spots.

But the president is being branded as "trigger happy" by some of his opponents on Capitol Hill. Rep. Paul Simon said the "military solution seems to be the automatic reflex" under the president.

Sen. Carl Levin questioned the legitimacy of the Grenadan invasion and the "credibility" of Reagan's explanation for it.

Sen. Patrick Moynihan called it an "act of war."

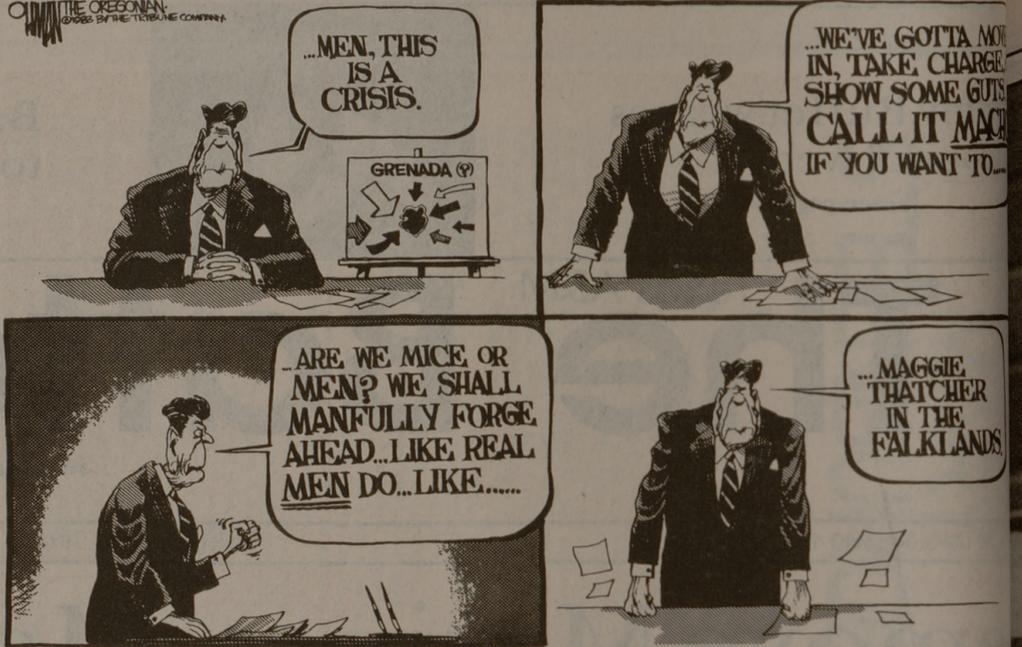
Reagan had powerful defenders, however, such as Speaker Thomas "Tip" O'Neill, Senate GOP leader Howard Baker, Senate Democratic leader Robert Byrd, and Sen. Charles Percy who were let in on the best kept secret of the invasion of Grenada several hours before it took place.

Usually the leaders are "consulted" after the fact accomplish. But the president realizes as the days go on and the United States becomes more involved abroad, he needs all the help and support he can get from allies in Congress.

Throughout the 1980 campaign, Reagan criticized President Jimmy Carter for not taking a stronger stand against the Soviet Union, Iran and other hostile forces. Carter's opponents criticized him as being "wishy washy" and indecisive in critical times. The hostage crisis in Iran particularly evoked harsh judgments against Carter.

Now Reagan is having his day, and showing the flag. It remains to be seen whether the people will decide that this is the right way to go.

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Letters: Get the facts straight before writing to the editor

Editor:

This is in response to the irrational and uninformed Mr. Stephen Weiss who doubted the truthfulness of my statements concerning the right-of-way regulations between motorists and pedestrians as told to me by a campus police officer.

Mr. Weiss stated that it was "absolute nonsense" for motor vehicles to have the right-of-way, no matter where they are.

Well, guess what, Mr. Weiss. YOU'RE WROOOOOONG!!! If Mr. Weiss had taken the time to at least check out some facts before tossing out his uninformed opinions on the matter, he would have found out that pedestrians DO NOT HAVE THE RIGHT-OF-WAY UNLESS they are crossing at "controlled intersections or crosswalks."

Quoting from the Texas Motor Vehicle Laws, in Section 78 (A) it states: every pedestrian crossing a roadway at any point other than within a marked crosswalk or within an unmarked crosswalk at an intersection, shall yield the right of way to all vehicles upon the highway."

Sgt. R. Flores of the campus police department explained the word "highway" to mean all roads.

Sgt. Flores also said that although jaywalking is not considered an unlawful offense in Texas, it is still a safety hazard and a pedestrian can be cited for crossing a street at any point along the street except when crossing at a corner, intersection or marked crosswalk.

Of course, pedestrians have rights too. In Section 77 of the TMV laws, Sgt. Flores paraphrased the lengthy passage for me and said: "If there's no traffic signal and someone is in a crosswalk on your side of the street or if someone is so close to your side of the street that you would endanger him by proceeding through the street, you must yield to him."

Sgt. Flores added that a pedestrian should at least give a driver time to react to a situation and "not just jump out into the road at any time, expecting you to stop. That's just common courtesy." Not to mention pretty intelligent too.

In his ludicrous example, Mr. Weiss used the corps runs as an illustration for his views. However, according to Section 78, if an accident were to occur between a motor vehicle and pedestrians running

through the streets, technically the fault would belong to the runners, not the driver (sorry, Aggies).

BUT, because it is common knowledge that the corps has these runs, drivers (and pedestrians) allow these cadets to run along uninterrupted.

Furthermore, Mr. Weiss' ridiculous suggestions to close off the heart of campus to all but pedestrians OR to set strictly enforced 5 mph speed limits would only defeat the purposes of those who purchased bicycles, mopeds or cars in hopes of utilizing these vehicles to arrive to class on time.

Although not all pedestrians are to be blamed for the thoughtless behavior of a few, it would be nice if more Aggies would look before darting into a street. Perhaps some of you could take the time to walk the extra 15 feet to the designated crosswalks. They are there for your protection.

Mr. Weiss, in his weird version of traffic solutions is simply trying to regulate the issue to accommodate his own comforts and oversights. It seems he would rather have motorists forget the laws and just look out for him and his type--ill-mannered lunkheads who insist on infesting the "highways" rather than the sidewalks where they belong.

By the way, Mr. Weiss, with all your ESP abilities (only you seem to believe it was my fault for the accident between my moped and the two pedestrians some time ago) could you possibly work on finding out the identity of the bashful young woman who scooted off without leaving her name with the police for causing an accident? Your clairvoyant help would be extremely useful, Swami Weiss. Catherine Campbell

Greeks cut for bonfire

Editor:

Last Sunday, our fraternity went to cut on the Aggie Bonfire. We got up at 5:30 a.m. just like all other "good Ags" and got to the cutting site at 7:00 a.m. There were ten of us that went and we all wore our

Greek letters so people wouldn't think we were Greeks to cut Bonfire, just like the rest of us. We had to put up with more than it was worth. Most of the time there were considerate and we cut wood, not antagonize a group of people who are doing their duty. However, this letter is directed at a degrading group known as the "Aggie" (not vells) you people made a name for yourselves by being a "Bitch" saved for someplace besides Bonfire. Sbisba where you keep your "trash" making more noise than any other group and interfering with people trying to eat. Evidently your soccer team is spreading, because about 100 Northgate has your same attitude. You are ya'll going to grow up and be a "bitch'n." You give yourselves a name. Mike Warner '84

We chopped several trees that day, one too big for us to get. Thanks go to the men of Crocker (percent) who helped us get our way on the road and to everyone who helped us get our way on something constructive to the Greeks and Bonfire. Gig 'Em. Mike Warner '84

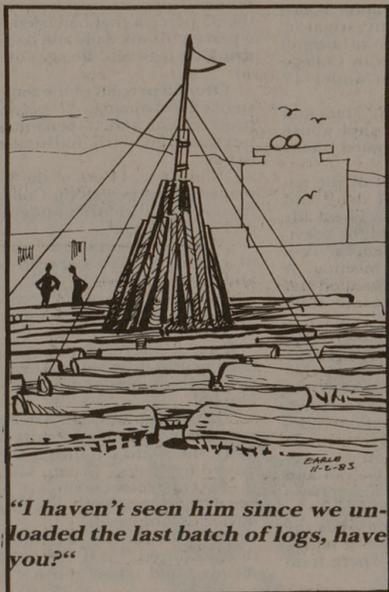
Students need to

Editor:

\$1.5 million down the drain! Students don't realize \$51.50 of the (about 5 to 10 percent) goes through Government — and if they realize this, it doesn't show in the student elections. Last spring, 10 percent of the student body turned out in the general election and 10 percent voted in the runoff. It's too late to cry about or undo that. I encourage all freshmen to vote in the upcoming election and I challenge the entire student body to help that starving statistic.

How can elected officials represent effectively and properly when the majority of students can't find the interest to vote. Get involved, know where your money goes, and elect the person who represents the most of all--vote! Vote!! VOTE!!

Mark D. ... P.S. Freshmen runoffs are today



Airline crisis makes big lines think free air competition is for the birds

by Art Buchwald

I have this hot line to a "crisis center." Every Monday morning I call up a guy and ask him, "What's the crisis of the week?" and for \$25 he tells me.

This week I called him and he said, "The 'big C' is the airline crisis. It could be a Mt. St. Helens."

"What happened?" I asked him.

"The thing that started it all was the big boys in aviation wanted the airlines deregulated because they claimed they weren't making enough money. So the administration deregulated the friendly skies of America and opened them to the marketplace."

"Free competition is what this country thrives on," I said.

"The only problem was that after they got deregulated, all the big boys wanted to fly the same routes. A company that used to fly to Charlotte, North Carolina, decided to fly to London, England, instead. Every major company put on flights to Hawaii and cancelled flights to middle America. Instead of going to Mis-

soula, Montana, one airline started a daily service to Tokyo. Pretty soon you could fly to Miami every 15 minutes, but you could only go to Buffalo once a week.

"With all the competition for the major cities, the airlines got into a price war. First they cut their fares--then they offered you a free seat for your wife. Then they advertised you could take all your children with you. And finally, during the recession, they let you take all the people that you had met in a bar. There wasn't an empty seat on the plane, but there was only one paying passenger."

"To make things worse, the little guys started taking on the big boys and priced them out of them. The little guys were nonunion, no-frill companies who offered you nothing but a seat. But for \$39 you could fly from New York to Los Angeles with a layover in Newfoundland."

"I guess the free market was really working."

"It was for the little guys, but the big boys were going nuts. They came up with new sales gimmicks. If you flew a certain

number of miles on their airline, they would upgrade you from tourist to first class. If you flew 15,000 miles they let you sit in the co-pilot's seat. If you flew 100,000 miles they made you president of the company. Most of the people now running a losing airline came up through the ranks from the frequent flyer plan."

"To make things worse, the big boys guessed wrong on what planes they would need for their companies. Some ordered planes that were too big--others ordered planes that were too small. When they had too many planes in mothballs, they had to sell a lot of them to the little guys who were putting them out of business. Of course it wasn't their fault. One of the major airline executives was walking through his terminal at Kennedy Airport and it was jammed with people. He immediately ordered six new 747s. What he didn't realize, until later, was that all the people there were from Central America, waiting for their grandmothers to get off the plane."

"That was an honest mistake," I said. "To make things worse, the big boys, to

protect themselves from their shareholders, invested their cash flow in businesses, such as hotels, fast-food chains and natural gas. Since they were making money in the business, stockholders started demanding a payoff the airline part of their business.

"Everyone make mistakes. Airlines thought it could get better having Frank Borman do their commercials. He was very credible. He didn't sell any tickets."

"Why didn't they scrub the advertising campaign?"

"What advertising executive told the chairman of the board of Airlines he can no longer do the company's commercials?"

"What a mess," I said. "I guess the boys are sorry they ever asked for regulation for the airlines. Are they going back and lobby for airline regulation again?"

"That's their only chance. If they had decided free air competition for the birds."

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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.

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 telephone number of the writer.

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