

Discussion crucial on Lebanon issue

A rather disturbing battle has developed between the executive and legislative branches of government.

Reagan has charged Congress with trying to second guess his foreign policy, leading to prolonged violence in Lebanon and threatening his policy in Central America. Some members of Congress reacted angrily to the charge, saying the idea is outrageous.

More likely, the charge is the beginning of a "Who lost Lebanon" campaign issue.

What makes the battle disturbing is Reagan's attitude toward free and robust debate in Congress. The President says public debate on the Marines in Lebanon should have ended after the administration and Congress reached an agreement in September.

Public debate. That's the key point. One of the basic principles of democracy is freedom of speech — a right granted to Congressmen as well as ordinary citizens.

Questions and debate over major governmental decisions acts as one of the checks and balances that are basic to the American form of democracy.

Without the ability to debate and criticize, democracy isn't much different from totalitarianism, in which one political party or group exercises complete control.

People who call for a halt to debate — especially in a time of peace — are calling for a halt to a necessary, and guaranteed, freedom. The loyal opposition's viewpoint — before, during and after the fact — is a key element in the democratic process.

Politicians are notorious for ducking blame in election years. But the President of the United States, the keeper of democracy, should be above such politicking.

— The Battalion Editorial Board



Slouch

by Jim Earle

Hopeful mole digs for unethical job

By ART BUCHWALD

Columnist for The Los Angeles Times Syndicate

"I'd like to work in the presidential campaign, sir."

"We're sorry, son, we have all the paid workers we need."

"I think I would be of tremendous value to the candidate."

"Why do you think that?"

"I'm working in the Mondale camp now, and I want to be a political mole for you people."

"Why do you want to be a mole?"

"It's a lot more fun than working for Mondale. I could steal his debate briefing book for you, I could give you the names of people who have donated to his campaign, I could steal advance texts of his speeches, and, if you want me to, I can even plant a bug in his telephone."

"You realize what you're suggesting is not only unethical, but illegal."

"Yes, sir. That is why I thought you might hire me."

"We are not interested in doing anything illegal or unethical."

"You did in 1980. Someone gave you Jimmy Carter's debate briefing book. I'll bet you that guy is really high in the government today."

"Let's get this straight. No one in the Reagan administration ever saw Jimmy Carter's briefing book."

"Don't worry, your secret's safe with me."

"I have no intention of discussing the briefing book with you. We intend to run a clean campaign this time."

"Right, sir. I always say everything should look on the up and up when it comes to an election. That's why you need me. I'm not even a registered Republican. If I'm caught passing confidential information, the trail will never lead back to the party. Don't even put me on the payroll. Just have one of your people leave the money for me in a phone booth."

"I should throw you right out of office."

"Yes, sir."

"What makes you think you can use information on Mondale's strategy that we don't already have?"

"Well, Mondale hasn't really said anything about Reagan yet. All he does keep attacking Gary Hart. He has a lot of information on Reagan he's saving."

"The Sleaze Factor — Don't Use It September."

"What was in the book?"

"I didn't get a chance to read it. But you give me some Cubans to break his office I'll get it for you."

"We don't break into Democratic offices anymore."

"Oh yeah. I forgot. Well, maybe I get into the safe by myself and photograph the stuff for you. Could you make up one of those infrared cameras from the CIA?"

"You're just an eager little beaver, aren't you?"

"I just want to serve my country. I believe a political mole is the most important job in a presidential campaign since I read about Watergate I dream of being one."

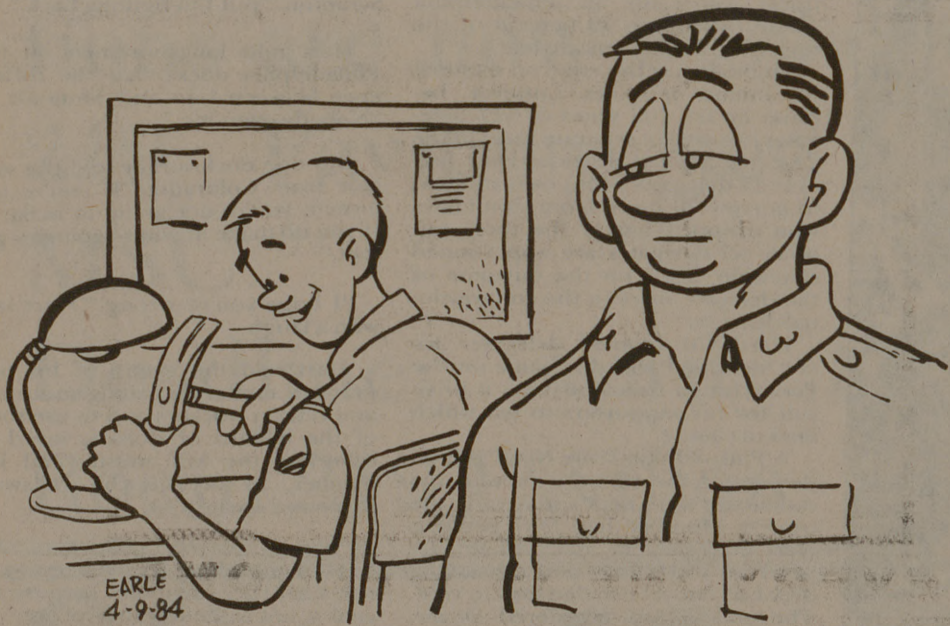
"What makes you so sure that Mondale is going to win the nomination?"

"I'm not sure. But if he doesn't, I become your political mole from Hart camp. Hart would never suspect someone who came over from the Mondale campaign of being a mole for his side."

"Now get this straight. We have no intention of resorting to any dirty tricks in the '84 campaign. Everything we do is going to be above reproach. The president insists upon it."

"Yes, sir."

"All right. Leave your resume and my secretary and if you check out, a named Joe will call you at home Monday night."



"I'm working on a three-sided coin that says Mondale, Hart and Jackson."

Letters

Memorials disgraced

Editor: Ground breaking ceremonies for the new bell tower were conducted Monday on the former location of the World War I War Memorial.

This is a disgrace to the 55 Aggies commemorated by the memorial and the classes who thought enough of that sacrifice to dedicate the monument.

In addition, one of the trees that will be bulldozed to make room for the tower is one of the 55 which surround the Main Drill Field, another war memorial to fallen Aggies.

I feel that the Board of Regents is changing the meaning of being an Aggie. There is no reason, other than lack of planning and thought, that one person's gift should disgrace two gifts of several classes of Aggies.

It may be true that many Eastern schools have bell towers, but only one school has two memorials to 55 Aggies

who died in World War I. If this school no longer honors its own memorials, no one else will either.

**Robert Muckleroy
Class of '85**

Where's the fruit?

Editor: I would like to bring to your attention a deficiency of fresh foods available to the students on our campus.

Many students are not on meal plan but do stay on campus throughout the day. The available snack foods are not wholesome or fresh; they are only chips, candies, cookies, etc.

A nutritious, low calorie, popular snack is fresh fruit. Many people eat it at home, but do not bring it to school because it is so difficult to carry to campus.

I realize the impossibility of vending machines holding fresh fruit, but the Memorial Student Center could easily store fruit to sell. Something should be

done so as not to deprive Aggies of nutrition.

D. Lambert

Editor's Note: Several kinds of fresh fruit, including apples, oranges and bananas, are sold at the campus snack bars. Fresh fruit is served daily in the breakfast line at the MSC, and two kinds of fruit salad are available in the MSC buffet line.

Make a difference

Editor: Lately The Battalion has been used for political endorsements and as a sounding board for campus problems. I would like to utilize it for a bit of reflection.

I am finishing my undergraduate career with a mixture of apprehension and expectation. I have seen my fair share of controversies here: the somewhat rocky transitions in the positions of

both president and football coach; the infamous SMU football game in the fall of 1981; and many changes in the Corps of Cadets. However, I have never witnessed a crippling blow to the spirit that surrounds this outstanding institution.

Texas A&M is the best university anywhere, but we do have problems. The crucial advantages it possesses are the open avenues to advocate change.

David Alders summed it up very well when he said, "If those who can make a difference don't make a difference, what difference does it make?"

Aggies, don't slip into the deceptively easy road of apathy. We need to set an example for Texas, the nation, and the world. Maybe I have beaten the idea of action to death, but we need to realize its importance. With God's help we can be successful beyond expectations.

**James Whitman
Class of '84**

The Battalion

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