

Texas voters can take their pick

A misconception has evolved in the American political system. Voters are trained early in life that they are expected to affiliate themselves with one political party or another — to exclusively be either a Democrat or a Republican.

It's a great system for the parties. Voters think they must be one or the other if they're to have any say in the party primaries. And when it comes down to the national election, how many uninformed citizens are prompted by party loyalty to pull the lever or punch the card for the straight ticket?

But Texas voters don't have to affiliate with one of the two major parties to participate in the primaries. What's more, they can vote in either primary they wish. You have a choice.

For a democracy to function properly there must be free and open elections. If you as a voter are not satisfied with what one party is offering, it is your right to vote in another party's primary.

Under Texas law, registration as a member of a party occurs when you vote in that party's primary. You can change your party affiliation every time a primary election is held.

Don't get caught up in party titles when you go to the polls Saturday. Make your choice on the merits of the individual candidates and choose your party primary on the basis of that evaluation.

It's not only your right, it's your responsibility.

— The Battalion Editorial Board

A reminder

Monday, two groups of Texas A&M students took time to remember two events in history — events often buried in history books and forgotten by generations who didn't witness them.

For three hours in front of the Memorial Student Center, students from various religious groups read a list of names of French citizens who died in the Holocaust, in commemoration of that tragic event.

On that same day, members from the Vietnamese Student Association commemorated the fall of South Vietnam nine years ago. They quietly waved their flag and sang songs in their native language while passing out flyers and talking to the passers-by.

Two groups reminding us, in a peaceful way, of two tragedies. During this time of the semester, most students are wrapped up in themselves and their studies. It's good to see these students making the effort to remind us of things we shouldn't forget.

— The Battalion Editorial Board

The Battalion

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Our address: The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald Building, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843.

Editorial Policy

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Letters:

Corps record is exactly two percent

Editor:

I would like to take the time to express thanks to "The Backbone of Texas A&M and The Spirit of Aggieland," the Fightin' Texas Aggie Cadet Corps for their wonderful support of the 1984 Texas A&M Baseball Team.

I was wondering who left the map for you to find Olsen Field on your Corps trip to the Rice game Friday night. If you were going to leave after the fifth inning, why did you even bother to show up?

But at least you made part of one game, and one game out of 50 makes you exactly 2 percent. Congratulations, guys!

Brian Turner
Class of '81

1984 in Aggieland

Editor:

Big Brother Aggie. From the moment an innocent freshman arrives in Aggieland, Big Brother Aggie is hard at work shaping his mind. Beginning with the Aggie propaganda at Fish Camp, Big Brother Aggie directs every Aggie to accept what he feeds to him without question.

One cannot express ideas differently from Big Brother Aggies because he has molded the student body in his image and draws support from those whose mind he controls.

Big Brother Aggie is a tradition at Texas A&M that dictates this commandment: "Do not think differently, for Highway 6 runs both ways."

Glenn S. Murtha
Class of '86

Vote for equal rights

Editor:

Like all good Democrats, I know that the United States was founded with a commitment to equal rights for all. It is tragic that in 1984 a candidate for the U.S. Senate, Kent Hance, has made the basis of his campaign the denial of equal rights to some citizens. If he had his way, gay Americans would not enjoy the basic privileges of citizenship guaranteed by the Constitution.

Haven't we come far enough to recognize that all citizens deserve the same basic rights? In the May 5 primary, let us remember our American commitment to equal rights for all and vote accordingly.

Gardner Selby

Easy (plastic) money tempts student

College students have few joys in life, but one of them is a full mailbox. Anything, even junk mail, makes that long trip to the box worthwhile.

Recently, my box has been filled with those fantastic promises made to upperclassmen.

"Dear College Senior," they begin, and then go on to say something about the joys and privileges of being a college student, and how life is going to be even nicer when I sign up for their cards.

My first enticing letter was great. It was from Sears. It told me how a responsible college student like myself could have one of the store's cards.

bonnie langford

I seriously question Sears' sources. Where did the store get the misinformation that I was a responsible college student — me, the person who forgets to pay the cable bill every month?

Granted, credit cards are nice. My first one was a Shell card from Dad, so that I never ran out of gas no matter how little money I had.

But Dad's no fool. He never let me even see his Visa card. He knows I can only spend so much on a full tank of gas. I just don't get as excited about 40-weight oil as I do about the new spring fashions.

Armed with a Visa, I could put him so deep in debt that it would



WELL, IF WE CAN'T ABOLISH SLAVERY RIGHT NOW, LET'S AT LEAST ESTABLISH SECRETARIES WEEK

Former White House aide blasts the Washington press corps

By JIM ANDERSON

Columnist for United Press International

Somewhere in the publishing industry, there must be a directive instructing editors to tell authors to leave out the good stuff — "Who needs another 'War and Peace?' We want another 'Mommy Dearest.'"

That's one possible explanation for the poisoned view that comes from former White House spokesman Jody Powell in his new book, "The Other Side of the Story."

As Powell tells it, the other side is pretty nasty. He dumps his heaviest load of bile on those he dealt with every day: reporters who covered the president.

"Power and Prestige seem to have roughly the same effect on journalists as on South American colonels. They immediately begin casting about for someone's fingernails to pull out. Then they expect to be treated as gentlemen and accepted in polite company as soon as they have cleaned the bloodstains out of their dinner jackets."

It should be stated that White House reporters are not a particularly lovable bunch. The "stars" tend to be pompous. None are particularly good at admitting their errors. Some secretly dream of hav-

ing Robert Redford play them when a movie is made of their next story.

Powell quite accurately mentions these traits. But he neglects their good qualities. White House reporters are generally hard-working. They are right most of the time when dealing with a bewildering array of topics — everything from Amy Carter's treehouse to the Panama Canal treaties. You will not read that in Powell's book.

As Powell occasionally admits, some information coming from the White House press secretary has a political spin to it. Reporters must try to read that spin, take it into account and transmit the information rapidly and accurately.

White House reporters — especially wire service and television reporters — spend enormous amounts of time in what amounts to sentry duty: standing around waiting for something to happen. They are, understandably, not amused when their pipeline to the president, the press secretary, treats them as the enemy.

Powell does not mention this. He focuses on those events when the reporters failed, or he thinks they failed, which is not necessarily

the same since some of his accounts are disputed by the reporters involved.

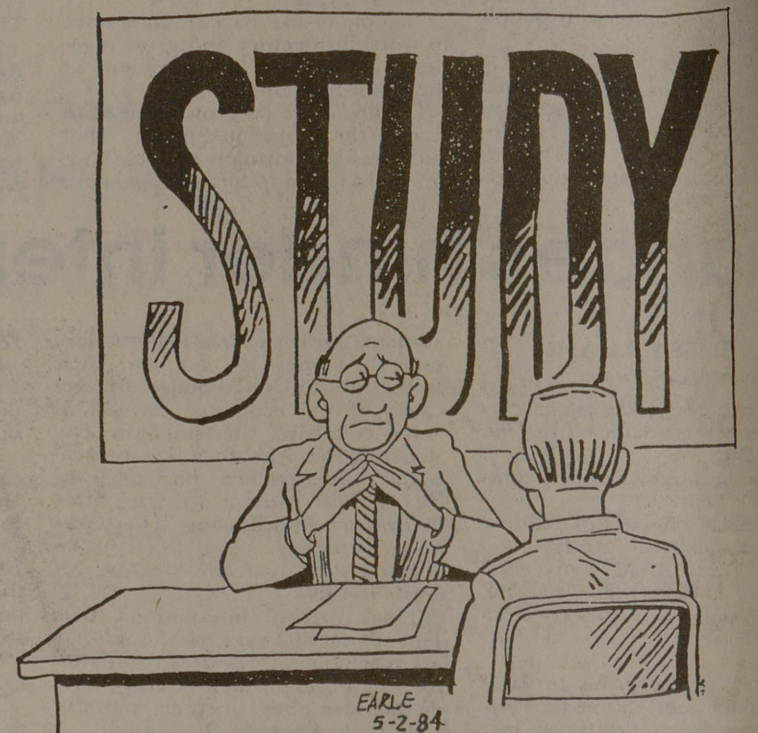
I was involved in one incident mentioned. It was during the September 1978 Camp David summit when the summiters — Carter, Begin, Sadat and a few of the aides — were sequestered for a couple of outings where they had fleeting encounters with hundreds of reporters trying to cover the story by reading the tea leaves from Powell's unenlightened briefings.

As Powell tells it, some reporters tried to question the participants in a Marine parade, and when they failed were so piqued that they refused to stand for the national anthem. Powell was furious. His criticism over this display of un-patriotic behavior.

Well, I was there and I, like most of the reporters, was standing through the ceremony in a roped-off corral, because that's the arrangement that Powell made. I guess that Powell — with his family in the grandstand seats — was annoyed that we didn't stand on our toes at the sound of the national anthem.

Slouch

by Jim Earle



"I just dropped by to see if you had any suggestions as to how I could improve my grade in your course."

By T.A.
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