

## Candidates or clones?

A battle between liberals and conservatives looms in November no matter what happens in the Texas Democratic caucuses Saturday.

All three Democratic candidates have chosen to take a left-of-center approach and have eliminated any substantive differences between themselves. It has been a contest with each candidate trying to prove himself as the one true liberal in the race.

But the Democratic candidates have one difference between them. They have embarked on a dangerous course in their statements on the Middle East, a course that could divide the American people.

In an effort to win the Jewish vote, Mondale and Hart have promised to move the American Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem — a move that the Arab world has said it will not stand for.

On the other extreme, Jesse Jackson has chosen to embrace Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasser Arafat, using the term "hymies" to refer to Jews.

Saturday, Texas Democrats will have the opportunity to choose. While some may feel the choices are drastically limited, staying away from the polls is not the answer.

— The Battalion Editorial Board

## Realignment crystallizing

A statewide poll released earlier this week predicted 33 percent of the vote in Saturday's primary elections will be in the Republican primary.

This figure represents a huge increase in Republican Party primary votes and could mark the beginning of a major party realignment along liberal-conservative lines.

If that happens, it can be attributed almost entirely to Cong. Phil Gramm, a former Democrat who crossed the party lines and regained his seat as a Republican in a 1983 special election.

Gramm is seeking the United States Senate seat being vacated by John Tower. In 1961 Tower became the first Republican elected to statewide office in Texas this century when he won the seat in a special election.

In a state where a majority of voters call themselves Democrats, it is imperative a Republican gather support from Democrats to be elected.

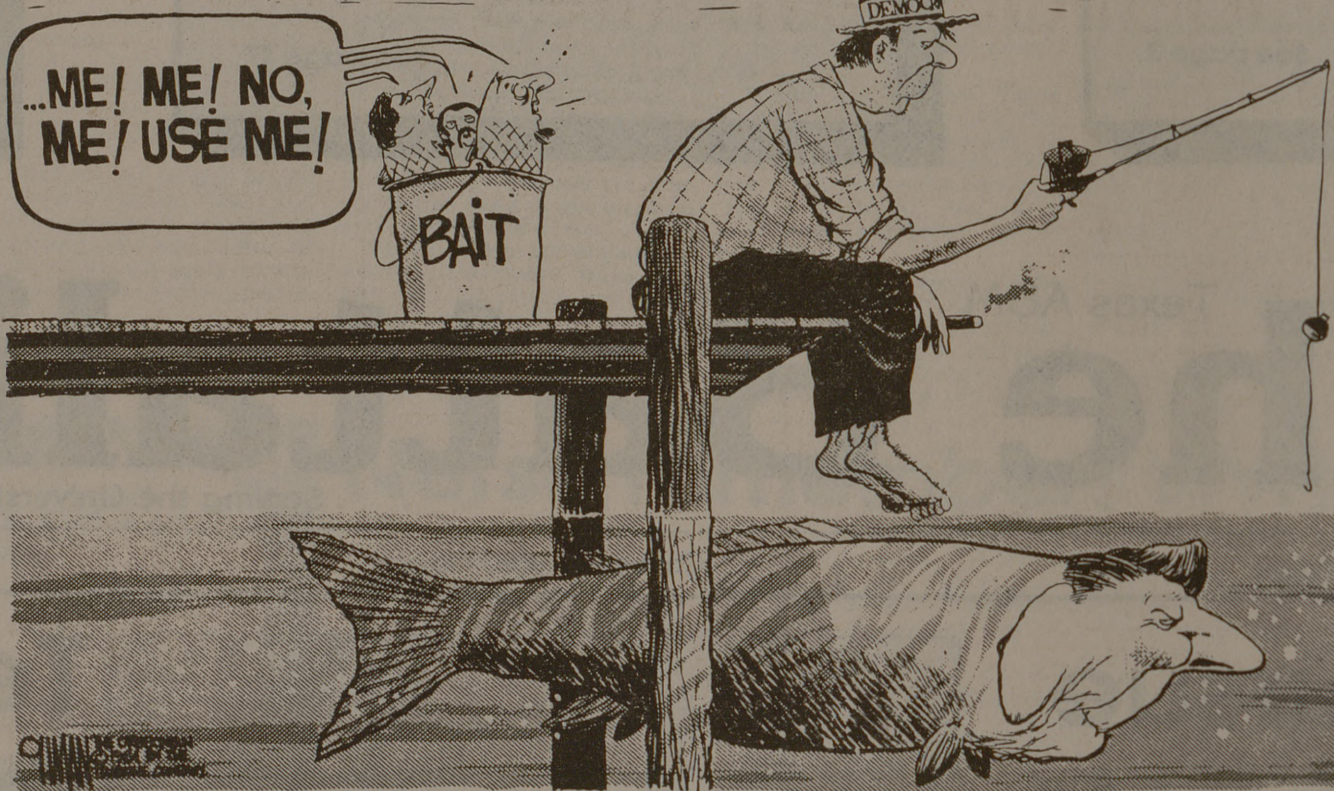
But that could be changing.

When you look beyond party labels, most Texans identify themselves as conservatives. Texans supported Ronald Reagan for president in 1980, and the 6th Congressional District supported Gramm in last year's special election.

And who better to lead a realignment than a conservative Democrat turned Republican?

If Gramm wins the Senate seat it could prove to be the catalyst in a long overdue examination of political beliefs by Democrats and Republicans alike.

— The Battalion Editorial Board



## Who's talking trash?

by Donn Friedman

In Alaska, the president preached that the simple prayers of common men can do more than statesmen or armies to bring peace, while the pope spoke of the need to



accept differences among people.

Reagan was returning from a visit to communist China, a country he refused to admit existed a few days ago. The pope was on a pilgrimage to South Korea.

Fairbanks, Alaska, is a small town that has become a refueling stop for flights to and from the Orient.

So, in what was either a coincidence or a crossing of the air paths of two fully orchestrated collisions of religious and secular leadership, two men met for a short time.

One an avowed figurehead of a pseudo-leader of the art — both masters of the art of rhetoric. Actors, playing a part in a huge spectacle of world affairs.

Reagan recounted his Sunday message, in which he said that the simple prayers of people can do more than the action of statesmen and armies in the world.

While our country's No. 1 leader in Alaska, another "got slapped, growled at, and tired" over 3200 miles south of Texas personified the President's message — through action rather than prayer.

San Antonio Mayor Henry Cisneros didn't spend the day in flower-encased dias.

Cisneros, who will be speaking at graduation ceremonies this weekend, toured the city as a worker on a garbage truck. Rather than isolating himself on a white island behind gates, the mayor spent four days in the gutters and filth of his city.

The mayor realizes that to prove the living conditions of his people of his city, the city's mayor must see the city.

Mayor Cisneros did some of the few politicians manage to take a close look at his town's rubbish.

The stories of the president, the pope and the mayor were reported in a small news module the bottom of the Bryan Eagle on Wednesday. The Eagle's headline for the Cisneros story read, "Cisneros talks trash," while the other story's headline was "Reagan preaches, discuss world peace."

Maybe Cisneros wasn't picking up garbage for world peace, but he did take the San Antonio mayor's trash headline and it has worked well on the street.

Who was really talking trash? Donn Friedman is a senior journalism major and columnist for The Battalion.

## A&M wasting vital resources

by Melissa Adair

One of Texas A&M's great resources is wasting away.

Every year hundreds of international students come here from countries all over the world.

Until a few months ago I would have said, "So what?"

But after getting to know some international students, my attitude has changed.

Almost every international student I've met seems to genuinely want American friends. Most internationals aren't here just to get an education and then leave. They want desperately to learn about American culture and make American friends.

But for the most part, internationals just sort of exist in the minds of most Texas A&M students.

People here don't hate them, people here don't love them, people here are just indifferent to them. But it's so easy for Americans to make internationals feel important in a land where they know almost no one.

For example, the other day I saw an international I know walking across campus. I didn't have time to stop and talk so I just said, "Hi Ivo."

He was amazed. He couldn't believe I remembered his name. He felt important. I felt good.

But many internationals live in the United States for years and no one ever remembers their names. And many American students will say that's sad, but it won't really affect us.

I think it will. You see, the internationals who come here aren't the dummies from their countries. The ones sent here by their governments are the tops in their country. Even those sent by their families are usually the smartest, since most families can't afford to send more than one child.

When these internationals go back to their countries, they will be leaders in government, industry

and business. They may well have a strong voice in shaping relations with the United States. And one thing is certain — they will certainly influence what others in their country think about the United States.

We seem to be missing one of the greatest opportunities in international relations — human to human contact.

Many of the internationals here will never come to Texas or the United States again after they get their degrees. For them, this is it. What they see now will shape their opinion about Texas and the United States forever.

When internationals get a bad impression of the United States, they take all their bitterness home with them. Many leave impressed by the technology and skyscrapers and disgusted with the American people and their indifference.

But there's an even better argument for making international friends.

Internationals are some of the kindest and most interesting people I know. If you think you found out what Mexico or Germany or India is like in history class, talk to a Mexican or a German or an Indian and think again.

They can give you more insight than you could ever get in a history class.

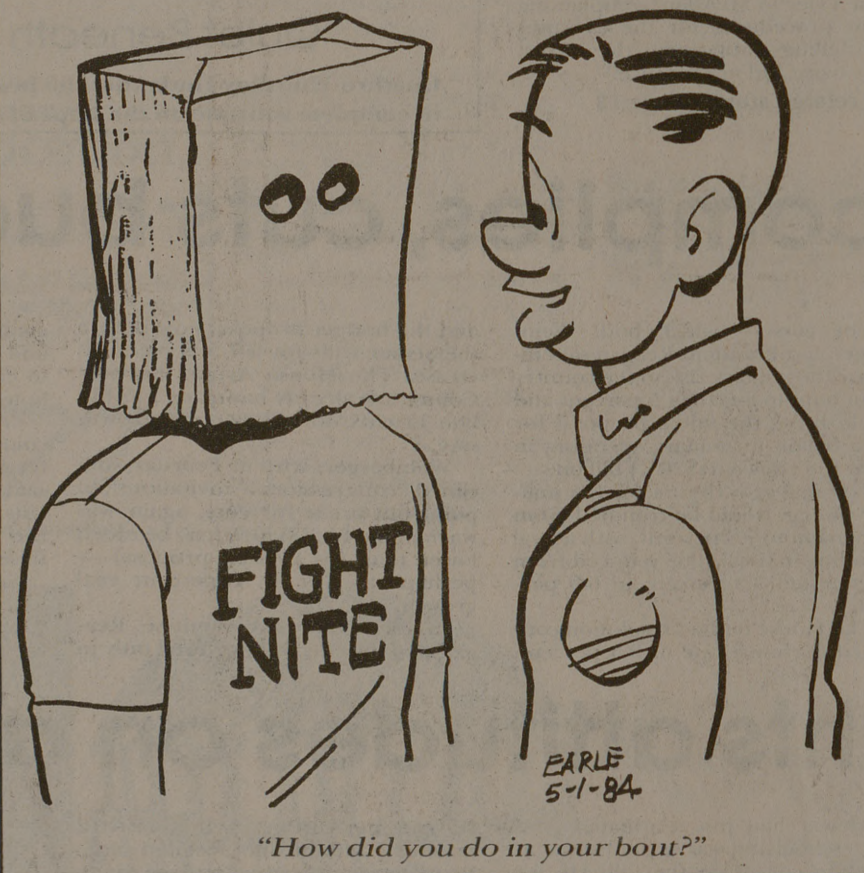
Unfortunately, Aggies haven't realized this. They continue to ignore internationals — not loving them, not hating them, just being indifferent to them.

One of the great resources at Texas A&M is wasting away.

Melissa Adair is a senior journalism major and assistant city editor for The Battalion.



## Slouch by Jim Earle



"How did you do in your bout?"

## Caucus to discourage Texas voters

by Bill Robinson

Over the years, candidates for the presidency have come to view Texas as the key to a successful campaign.

Texans wield tremendous power at the polls. In fact, since 1928 only one presidential candidate has been elected without carrying Texas. That's 13 of 14 elections in which Texans have supported the victor.

In 1984 that power will be greater than at any point in the



past half century, at least on the Democratic side. With the Texas primary coming just weeks before the end of the primary season, the results in Texas could likely sway the vote in remaining states along the same line for the Democratic nomination.

Along with that power comes an awesome responsibility.

Saturday, Texans could choose the eventual Democratic nominee for president — if they are willing to make the effort.

They must first take the time to sort through the seemingly endless rhetoric, promises, endorsements and "new ideas" of the three Democratic candidates.

Even then, it will take a keen interest to entice Texas voters to go to the polls twice. Yes, the party that derives its name from the word democracy has the least dem-

ocratic (and most inconvenient) method of selecting its nominee: the outdated and discriminatory caucus.

The caucus strips away the voter's right to anonymity. It requires voters to publicly declare support for a candidate and then attempt to sway others' choices.

In a society where few people feel an obligation to vote anyway, taking away what is supposed to be a secret ballot destroys a great deal of a voter's incentive. How many people support a candidate strongly enough to stand up and speak on his behalf in front of a group of people?

But the worst part is that the process requires a great deal of voters' time — at least two hours, on the average.

Voters must first cast their ballots in the party primary — with no

presidential candidates on the lot — and then argue the merits of the candidates' merits in caucus.

What it all boils down to is the party bosses think making it difficult to vote will keep most voters at home. That spells victory for the candidate of the party leadership.

But the fact that Texas Democratic officials are united in support for one candidate does not absolve them of their responsibility to provide a fair election — where the people of Texas will be heard.

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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 to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length. 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 be signed and must include the address and telephone number of the writer.

Reader's Forum columns and guest editorials also are welcome.

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