

# The Battalion

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## Election '84 Presidency becoming impossible, prof says

United Press International

SAN ANTONIO — The winner of the 1984 election — whether it be incumbent Ronald Reagan or challenger Walter Mondale — will lead an extremely unpopular administration and will not be able to solve the nation's economic and foreign policy problems, a political science professor says.

"Whoever wins in November will have all hell fall in on them," said Trinity University Professor Harold Barger, a former newsman and political writer. "The roof will just cave in."

In his book, "The Impossible Presidency" (Scott Foresman & Co., \$10.50), Barger argues that no one can live up to the expectations of America's highest office, which he described as illusionary and entwined with myths, symbols and rituals.

For Barger, the president best suited for such an impossible office is Reagan, "the perfect, quintessential media president. He makes (John F.) Kennedy a piker."

Barger calls Reagan a superb actor and refers to him as "President Feelgood." He gives the president low marks on the environment and foreign policy — citing the Beirut massacre, Central American policy, attitudes toward the Soviets and the invasion of Grenada, which he described as "more symbol than substance."

"Our foreign policy has had no focus at all, but Reagan has made us feel like we're standing tall again," Barger said. "American foreign policy has suffered great setbacks."

Reagan is a very nice guy, an incredibly charming, warm personality," Barger said. "But his life has been spent recreating images. He has a Pollyanna view of the world — black and white, good and evil. He's not well read and he's not a thinker."

He's very powerful in getting through to Joe Sixpack."

Barger, a reporter for the Cleveland Plain Dealer and the Chicago Tribune in the late 1950s and early 1960s, does not blame the media for Reagan's success at illusion. Instead, he blames the public's perception of the office.

"Americans like politics like a spectator sport," he said. "The presidency creates unrealistic expectations. People expect a charming, witty, god-like person."

"It's never been the office we imagined it to be. The public doesn't understand how weak the office is."

In fact, "The Impossible Presidency" concludes that presidential power is more tenuous than ever; that the office is not as powerful as the public believes.

And Barger said the next president — be it Reagan or Mondale — will not be able to conjure "webs of illusion" because the nation's problems are becoming so apparent.

"He (Reagan) will have a very hard time in a second term. A second term will be hell," Barger said. "He may be in for a real race."

And he said Mondale, who does not have Reagan's power of illusion, will be unpopular, a one-term president.

"I'm a real pessimist," admits Barger, who claims no American president can be effective without a revision of the U.S. constitution.

"Richard Nixon was the last really good, qualified president," Barger asserts. "His demise was that he tried to make the power work. He had to subvert the Constitution to use the power."

Barger claims that some of the greatest presidents — Abraham Lincoln, Harry Truman, Franklin Roosevelt — had to step outside Constitutional bounds to be effective.

"The president has to be a bastard," he said.

## Platforms differ in words, substance

United Press International

DALLAS — The platforms written by Democrats and Republicans illustrate the sharp contrast between the two parties on almost every issue from taxes to abortion.

Here is a comparison of the major planks in the platforms adopted by the Democratic National Convention in July and the document completed Friday by the Republican platform committee, to be presented to the Republican National Convention on Tuesday.

**Taxes**  
Republicans make an ironclad promise to oppose "any attempts to increase taxes." They would preserve the indexing of taxes to take account of inflation, and add numerous new tax breaks and cuts, including a doubling of their personal exemption to \$2,000, elimination of the windfall profits tax on oil, expansion of individual retirement accounts to spouses. They would work toward lowering taxes on interest income, and oppose tax withholding on interest and dividends.

Democrats say they can raise revenues by broadening the tax base, closing loopholes and simplifying the tax code while lowering tax rates.

**Deficit Reduction**  
Republicans would work toward a balanced budget by cutting spending — although they mention no specific cuts — and by promoting economic growth. They specifically reject any tax increases.

Democrats propose to "reassess" defense spending, create an "adequate and fair" tax system, control health costs and "eliminate other unnecessary expenditures."

**Federal Budget Amendment**

Republicans support a balanced budget constitutional amendment and call for a constitutional convention for that purpose if Congress does not act.

Democrats say they oppose "the artificial and rigid constitutional restriction of a balanced budget amendment."

**Equal Rights**

Republicans, like Democrats, pledge to work for equal rights for women, including equal pay for equal work.

Democrats support equal pay for work of comparable worth; Republicans oppose this concept.

**Abortion**

Republicans say the unborn child has "a fundamental individual right to life," and reaffirm support for a human life constitutional amendment and legislation to say that the 14th Amendment's protections apply to the unborn.

Democrats call reproductive freedom "a fundamental human right" and oppose any constitutional amendment overturning the 1973 Supreme Court decision allowing abortion.

**Minimum Wage**

The Republicans call for a "youth opportunity" minimum wage lower than the current minimum wage. Democrats reject "the so-called sub-minimum wage."

**Energy**

Republicans support nuclear power and a "responsible" reform of regulations regarding nuclear, coal and natural gas power. They would terminate the Department of Energy.

Democrats question the safety and economy of nuclear power and call for expansion

of alternative forms of energy such as solar energy.

**Agriculture**

Both parties give roughly equivalent weight to family farms.

Republicans promise to work to break barriers to farm exports. Democrats promise to change farm policies, which they blame for the drop in exports and the plight of family farms.

**Foreign Policy**

Republicans praise all of Reagan's foreign policy initiatives, including the MDC and the Strategic Defense Initiative. They have harsh words for Fidel Castro and the Soviet Union. Republicans pledge continued U.S. military presence in Europe. They say Jerusalem should remain an undivided city.

Democrats also recognize a Soviet threat, but say the United States must establish a Soviet "policy that is both firm and wise," and must negotiate matters of mutual interest. Democrats oppose Reagan's Central American policy, and call for cooperation with neighboring neighbors.

**Arms**

Republicans oppose a nuclear freeze and blame the Soviets for walking out of arms control talks. They praise Reagan's commitment to arms control. They reject the SALT II treaty. They support Reagan's plans for anti-missile space research. Republicans call for U.S. superiority in arms technology, but stop short of calling for overall U.S. supremacy over the Soviet Union.

Democrats call for a "verifiable and mutual" moratorium on testing and deployment of nuclear weapons.

## Vendors to 'snag' conventioners

United Press International

DALLAS — Jim Johnston is uniquely wired for the Republican National Convention.

Johnston creates novelties and jewelry from barbed wire. His company — "Texas Parties" — was the first in the nation to market gold-plated wire swizzle sticks, still a hot seller in gift shops nine years later.

His firm also makes napkin rings, bracelets, lapel pins and boot tacks from the same plentiful wire, cre-

ating paraphernalia with which Johnston hopes to snag Republican buyers.

"Our first and best items are still the swizzle sticks," he said. "Fifty percent of our business comes from tourists or people outside of Texas. They want to take a bit of Texas home."

Johnston, 45, has a degree in art advertising but quickly found he was not the technician he needed to be.

"So one day, I was fooling around with some antique barbed wire from

my brother's ranch, trying to figure out what to do with it, when the idea came to gold plate it.

"My wife later suggested we chop the wire into small segments and sell the pieces as swizzle sticks."

The business has grown larger through the years. He now makes a specialty line of belt buckles for contract customers across the nation.

The buckles retail for an average of \$50 to \$75 with the most expensive 14-karat versions going for thousands of dollars.

A lot of big spenders will arrive with the Republican deluge, he figures.

"But our primary market will not be for the big-time spenders. We're concentrating our efforts in the \$20 range, Texas-oriented impulse items."

One popular impulse item, he hopes, will be buckles carved with profiles of President Reagan and Vice President Bush.

The item will be featured in the GOP's fund-raising catalog.

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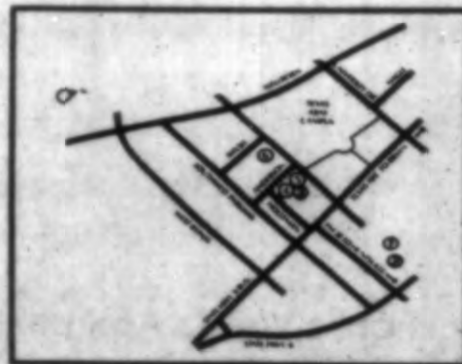
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