

Campaign '84: it's finally over

One year, nine months and five days ago Campaign '84 officially started. Alan Cranston, a Democratic senator from California, announced his candidacy for the presidency of the United States. Cranston is long gone, having dropped from the running early in the primaries. The rubble has been cleared.

Today is Nov. 7, Campaign '84 now should be officially over.

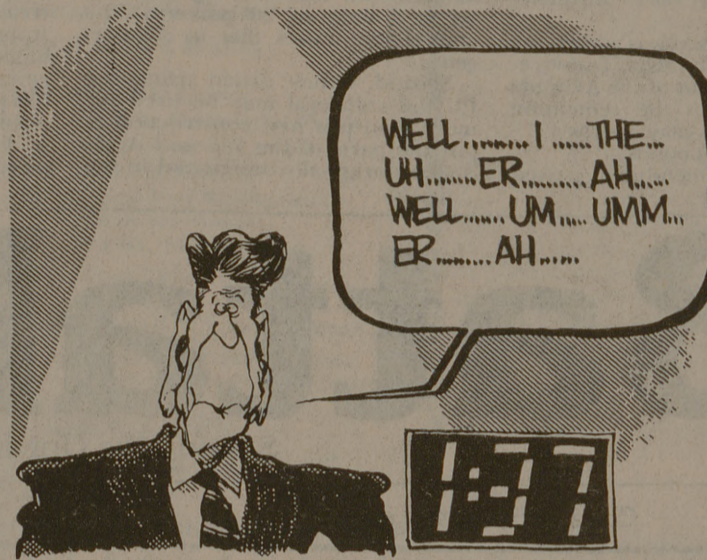
The media blitz from the Republicans and the Democrats is over. Newspapers will no longer be filled with political advertisements espousing the merits of this candidate and the demerits of that. Your favorite TV program will no longer be interrupted by a barrage of political rhetoric; nor will you be able to make a quick run to the refrigerator whenever the commercials begin.

The huge lakes of mud will be allowed to crust over, and the sore arms of the mud-slingers will have time to heal.

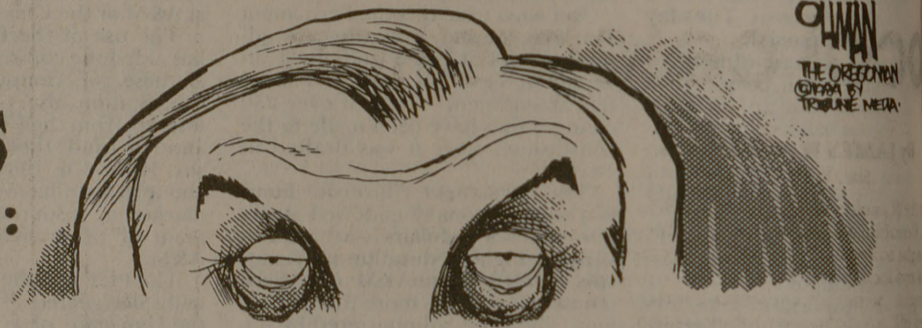
Reflecting on this long, long, long campaign brings two thoughts to mind: Thank God, Campaign '84 is finally over. And hopefully, the media blitz for Campaign '88 won't start tomorrow. Remember, there're only 41 shopping days left till Christmas.

— The Battalion Editorial Board

Critical Issues of Campaign '84:



How long the President Stammered in the debates...



Why Fritz Mondale's eye makeup disqualifies him from the Presidency...



What the Bushes say on the campaign trail...

First ascent: a climb to the top

Though Friday's the last day of the work week, last Friday was not a total waste, as my Fridays tend to be.

I went through the clippings of my work found the 15 stories that the New York Times requires for an interview and bravely began an ascent of Rudder Tower. I climbed onto the elevator and was quickly joined by a dress-for-success business type who seemed prepared to decline any job offer of less than \$22 grand.

I stood staring at the two rows of elevator buttons trying to decide my destination. As I raised my hand to push the button marking the altitude of my choice, it glowed on; the business type had already activated the elevator from the other side.

My stomach sat on the first floor as my body and story clips zipped upward. When the doors opened on the tenth floor I hesitated; a group of hostile career climbers swarmed like ants around a queen bee, trading places and bidding for interview slots.

I timidly joined the queue on the left where the sign said something about turning in packets. The shorter line on the right looked menacing; it was the line for signing in for interviews.

I waited bravely. In five minutes only two people cut in line in front of me — trading future assets for current positions, I assume. The line on the right cleared. I deserted my post in the left queue and charged the right flank.

"Where's Ann McDonald's office?" I asked as I had been as I had been instructed to do.

"Do you have an appointment?" the wrinkled woman woofed back.

Fearing that I'd be turned away if I didn't answer affirmatively, I said in an E.F. Hutton voice, "Yes."



Donn Friedman

"A Donn Friedman to see you," she mouthed into the telephone. "I send him right back."

I walked past a pin-striped engineering major quibbling with a khaki clad cadet over whether \$28 grand was a living wage and remembered my cohorts — starting journalists trying to live \$230/week lives. Let see \$28,000 divided by 54 weeks, \$518/week.

Rows and rows and rows of clipboards announced interview schedules. With each step I took, the hallway seemed to grow tighter, the side walls moved in closer. My shoulders squeaked through a door and into an office.

Ann McDonald was there, sitting, working. "I'm here about the New York Times interview," I said. "What do I have to do?"

"Do I have to fill out those blue forms? And leave 1000 copies of my resume, and a picture, and my birth certificate, and my transcripts?" I asked with my eyes while my mouth hung frozen like it does when given a dose of novocaine in the dentist's chair.

I handed her the manila folder containing my clips — the best of my life for the last three years.

"No, that's it," she said. "Pick a time and sign up." I looked down at the piece of paper. N.Y. Times interview sign-up sheet. I scanned the page.

Among the many blank spaces were blots of ink. I moved in closer and focused. Fellow staffers Robin and Steve had trod the same path that I had. I felt like a British mountain climber who had just reached the 28,250 foot peak of K2 — thinking himself the first — only to find a Swiss flag fluttering there.

I placed my American flag back into my pack and began the descent to base camp — back to the newsroom. It was a feeling of triumph. I had made it. It was a feeling of sorrow. I had not been the first journalist to brave the horrors of the university job placement center. And I knew, in a few weeks, I would have to return.

Donn Friedman is a weekly columnist for The Battalion. His column appears on Wednesdays.

The Battalion

USPS 045 360

Member of Texas Press Association

Southwest Journalism Conference

In memoriam Bill Robinson, 1962-1984, Editor

The Battalion Editorial Board

Stephanie Ross, Editor

Patrice Koranek, Managing Editor

Shelley Hoekstra, City Editor

Brigid Brockman, News Editor

Donn Friedman, Editorial Page Editor

Bonnie Langford, News Editor

Ed Cassavoy, Sports Editor

Editorial Policy

The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting newspaper operated as a community service to Texas A&M and Bryan-College Station. Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the Editorial Board or the author, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Texas A&M administrators, faculty or the Board of Regents.

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.

The Battalion is published Monday through Friday during Texas A&M regular semesters, except for holiday and examination periods. Mail subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester, \$33.25 per school year and \$35 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request. Our address: The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald Building, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843. Editorial staff phone number: (409) 845-2630. Advertising: (409) 845-2611. Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Battalion, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas 77843

Racial awareness promoted at MSC

Festive balloons decorate the stairwells and walkways, the strains of a black gospel choir weave through the hallways, murmurs in the back row of a lecture discuss a small point made by the speaker, a display along the concourse tells the stories of the races of man.

There is something going on this week in the Memorial Student Center: it is Racial Awareness Week. Three MSC committees — Black Awareness, Awareness of Mexican American Culture and International Programs — as well as the Puerto Rican Student Association are joining efforts to broach a topic that, in my years here, has seldom come up except in the context of University compliance with legal guidelines. These four groups are taking it in their own hands to show us a glimpse of the world outside Aggieland.

That world is teeming with diversity: a generous mixture of the three major races and a multitude of various ethnic groups within those races. That is the same world where you and I are going to be working, living, and raising families. That is a word in need of something often found lacking: understanding.

Aggies, this week is a good opportunity for us to spend a few minutes in thought about some fundamental questions: How do I treat someone who looks different from me? What do I know about the backgrounds of other students here at Texas A&M? Am I fully preparing myself for my own future?

Racial Awareness Week won't answer those questions; only you can. But the various speakers, particularly Alex Haley tonight at 8 p.m. and the exhibits can at least give you the nudge to think. Don't let the chance or the spirit of the moment pass you by.

Being "racially aware" doesn't mean you have to be leading rallies, staging sit-ins or passing legislation. That, certainly, is one way to spread the message. But, I rather like the way it is being done this week: a thoughtful student to student discussion. Isn't that the way it's really supposed to be at a university anyway?

Pat Wood, III
President, Memorial Student Center

Reader's Forum

Reader's Forum

Reader's Forum

Cheers for Sparks; Ags lack initiative

EDITOR:

Three cheers for Bill Sparks' October 30 "Reader's Forum" for putting into words what I have been feeling all semester. But, why stop where you did, Bill? You mentioned people in Brazos County going cold all winter, while the Aggies build the world's largest bonfire, but what about all those woods that are slaughtered for that same ritual? Why isn't there just as big a tradition for going out and replanting all those trees?

The lack of initiative on behalf of the students is found in the classroom, too. Too many times this semester, I have heard my classmates complain about everything from classroom lectures, to tests, to professors; yet when it is suggested that they join me in DOING something about it, virtually every voice is quiet.

I would like to see more Aggies, like myself, not just taking a stand on what they believe, but DOING something about it as well.

Deborah Platt
Class of '85

Sparks hot for the wrong reasons

EDITOR:

I would like to address this letter as a reply to Bill Sparks' article of Oct. 30.

Sparks obviously hasn't been an Aggie for very long or else he would understand why the students don't talk much about the death of Bruce Goodrich. You see, Sparks, being an Aggie is like being part of a large family and when there is a death in a family everyone feels the pain. (Where else in the world would people go to a memorial service for someone who may have been a total stranger.)

No, Sparks, the relative lack of debate over the death of Bruce Goodrich has not been due to apathy but due to a feeling of loss and sorrow. A feeling of loss in the death of Goodrich and a feeling of sorrow for Goodrich's family, those involved in the accident and the entire Aggie family.

Ricky Dobbs

Let's abolish A&M Student Senate

EDITOR:

There is at this time a very popular movement among the students to have a decision of the school Senate overturned. The issue in question is the recognition by the Senate of the Gay Student Services. I have personally been approached on five separate occasions to sign this petition and always, might I add, by rather large burly males (large burliness must be a pre-requisite for the job) who seemed to question my sexual preference when I declined to give my signature.

Sexual preference falls into the background here — there seems to be a widely held opinion that the whims of the majority should override the decisions of the elected representatives. I find this attitude to be potentially dangerous, and historically I can support this opinion. Few could argue that fifteen to twenty years ago there would have been few dissenters among the students if a petition were passed around declaring it against the wishes of the students to allow minorities, specifically blacks, to this school. Nor would there have been much resistance among the student body to barring females from admittance.

With the wisdom of hindsight we can see the ridiculousness of these once widely held biases and institutional bigotries. Yet few among us seem to be able to find the courage not only to refuse our signatures, but to openly oppose this narrow-minded view. If this resolution is passed, and there is every reason to believe that it will pass, we will indeed be sending out the message that the students of this school are opposed to the recognition of homosexuals.

I think that it is a bad enough statement that our own Board of Regents are so backward as to attempt to take this issue to court. But we will also be sending out the message that we consider our student government and the decisions of our representatives as little more than a farce. So I would like to propose that we just go ahead and abolish the Senate so as to obliterate any obstacles to our will. It would be so much more honest.

Bill Sparks

Aggies do care

EDITOR:

I write in response to Bill Sparks' letter of Oct. 30 in which he tried to inform us all how and why A&M has managed to "maintain a mighty hickish air." Sparks, you stated that there is an apathy problem. I've heard enough about A&M students' apathy. It's obvious from discussions heard every day around campus that Aggies do care about issues concerning them and in fact have very strong opinions on those issues.

I read with amazement as you claimed that important issues (i.e. Cadet Goodrich) "aren't being published or even discussed." Wait a minute. I can remember week after week when most of the letters to the editor and a good number of the Batt's other articles concerned Goodrich's death, the University's investigations, and the reactions of students. Where have you been this semester, Sparks?

You wonder about the lack of freedom of speech and "the threat of swift retaliation by the campus police and . . . Corps against breakers of tradition or school rules." Yes, it's true that liberal Aggies including myself encounter a good amount of resistance from the conservative majority, but I've yet to see headlines declaring "Student arrested for not attending yell practice" or "c.t. strangles date for not kissing after a touchdown." Retaliation? Come on, Bill.

Maybe the students don't decide among themselves who is best fit to run the newspaper because most of us don't have the qualifications to make that judgement. I would assume that those students chosen are the ones capable of doing the best job. Nothing is stopping you from taking a few journalism courses and then asking to be considered for a position on the Battalion staff.

Why do we have Bonfire when there are so many people all over Brazos County who go cold in the winter? Sparks, I guess you haven't heard about (1) The Big Event, (2) A&M's enormous contributions to the county-wide United Way Drive, (3) United Campus Ministry's canned food drive and (4) the numerous other community service projects here at A&M? Please, keep your bleeding heart for something worthwhile.

David Rowell
Class of '87