

OPINION

Double standard exists in U.S. law

The Senate Judiciary Committee voted Tuesday — basically along party lines — to approve the nomination of Edwin Meese as Attorney General.

All 10 of the committee's Republicans, as well as two of the eight Democrats, voted to nominate the controversial Meese. The full Senate is expected to confirm the nomination after the Feb. 8-19 Congressional recess.

The nomination comes after a six-month inquiry by a court-appointed independent counsel into allegations of wrongdoing by Meese. The counsel investigated Meese's failure to report a \$15,000 interest-free loan to his wife on his financial disclosure forms, his acceptance of \$10,000 from a fund set up to assist Reagan's transition to office in 1981, his arrangement of federal jobs for friends who had helped him financially and his Army reserve promotion to colonel through favored treatment. No basis for criminal prosecution was found during the investigation.

Committee chairman Strom Thurmond, R-South Carolina, said that the investigation "firmly established, and indeed underscored, that not only is Mr. Meese qualified to be Attorney General, but that he is also a man of honesty, dedication and integrity."

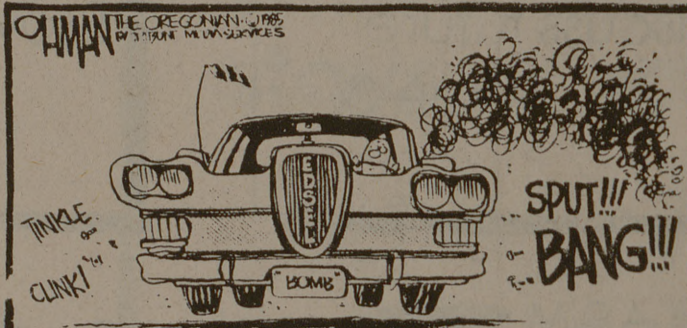
What actually was established — by the committee's nomination — was that the investigation just didn't come up with enough to convict Meese, so it's okay to appoint a man whose actions have been legally and ethically questionable as the nation's top law enforcement officer.

Criminals — who police know are guilty — go free every day simply because the police cannot find enough concrete evidence to hold up in court. It's a frustration that law enforcement officers must accept as part of the job. But not sending someone to prison because of lack of evidence and appointing him to a powerful position in the government are two different things.

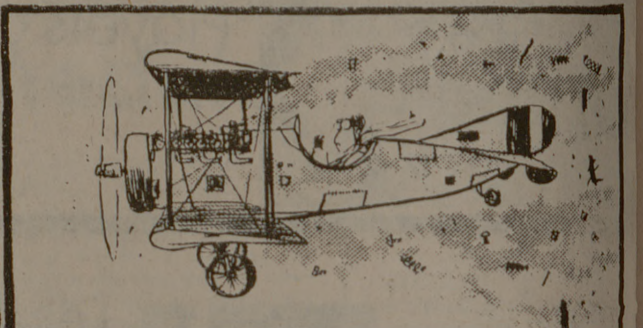
If the Senate does indeed nominate Meese, it will just be reiterating that there are two sets of legal and ethical standards in the United States — one for powerful, influential people, and one for everyone else.

Even worse, the American people accept that double standard as not only unavoidable, but acceptable.

The Battalion Editorial Board



"Not unfit" to drive...



"Not unfit" to fly...



"Not unfit" to eat...



"Not unfit" to serve...

Limitation policy should be praised

New Zealand taking first step

When I was growing up, GI Joes were all the rage in my neighborhood. Four or five of us would combine our paraphernalia and wage massive battles against the forces of evil — usually other dolls of the non-GI Joe genre. The Joe army, dubbed the Adventure Team by the manufacturer, was considered to be the ultimate force of good on the block, but sometimes those of us who controlled the Joes got a little pushy.



Loren Steffy

If other kids wanted to try something different, such as not use Robert's new Troubleshooter, or pretend to blow up my combat jeep with concussion cannon and real working searchlight, they were ousted from the Adventure Team. Dubbed traitors, the poor kids had to operate Johnny West and the other criminals the Joes fought. We felt if they weren't loyal enough to use the Troubleshooter, they weren't loyal enough to be in the Adventure Team. Differing opinions on Team activities would not be tolerated.

For years I thought these actions

were reserved for the masses of GI Joe-supporting children. But now New Zealand is refusing to allow nuclear-powered vessels to enter its ports. The U.S. government is reacting to the anti-nuclear policy just as we reacted to the subversives who didn't want to use the Troubleshooter. Since New Zealand doesn't like our battleships, they can't play in our war games.

The administration said it hopes the cancellation of the war games will demonstrate to New Zealand and other Western nations the perils of anti-nuclear policies. But New Zealand Defense Minister Frank O'Flynn said he expects the withdrawal of U.S. military cooperation and aid in retaliation.

Obviously, New Zealand is going to stand up for its beliefs, even if it means being shunned by the United States. Instead of being so fast to condemn New Zealand for holding its ground, the U.S. should offer praise. After all, for more years than most Americans care to remember, the U.S. and the Soviet Union have been trying to find a way to limit the nuclear arms race before it limits life on this planet.

New Zealand is merely adopting their own arms control policy before they, too, get into the arms race over their heads. They apparently have learned

from our mistakes and are trying to avoid the situation in which we are currently embroiled with the Soviet Union.

While Reagan sits in the Oval Office proposing billions more dollars be spent on the development and deployment of nuclear weapons, this tiny nation in the Pacific has made the process of limitation seem easy. I hope our delegates at those long tables in Geneva are watching New Zealand.

If other countries adopt similar policies of nuclear abstinence, the United States and the Soviet Union will soon run out of room to flex their radioactive muscles. Planet Earth belongs to every country, each one of which should have a say in nuclear limitations. Instead of demanding their submission into our nuclear network, the United States should respect the policies of countries wanting no part of the U.S./U.S.S.R. nuclear cat and mouse game.

New Zealand was the first country to speak out, but perhaps others will follow. If the United States and the Soviet Union cannot curb their limitless desires for a dominant nuclear arsenal, then the restriction will have to be imposed by other concerned countries.

Loren Steffy is a sophomore journalism major and a weekly columnist for *The Battalion*.

LETTERS:

Non-Christians also participated in vigil

EDITOR:

As one of the participants of the pro-Sanctuary Movement candlelight vigil reported in the Batt Feb. 4, I'd like to clarify a misleading statement in the otherwise fine article.

The article starts off with "Concerned local Christians...", leaving the impression that only Christians participate in and support the Sanctuary Movement. Jewish congregations have also sheltered Central American refugees. And there were several non-Christians, including me, at the vigil Sunday night.

The local Sanctuary Advocates support group welcomes members of every religion, or no religion. The only requirement for membership is a deep compassion for those people fleeing war and repression who seek the liberty we in this country often take for granted.

Kristin Parsons

Peoples' opinions part of individuality

EDITOR:

Lately there have been several letters of criticism directed at the Battalion editorial staff concerning the stances they take in their editorials. Disagreeing with an editorial is a very normal reaction. However, suggesting that the editorial staff alter their opinion on an issue to match the opinion of the masses is a dangerous proposition.

The suggestions made are that since the majority of students are conservative, the editorial staff should assume the conservative viewpoint. The people working for the editorial staff all earned their positions on *The Battalion* with their journalistic skills, not because of their political or moral beliefs. As an editorialist they should print their own unique and independent thoughts. They are not absolute liberals or conservatives, they are people who are interested in expressing their personal beliefs for you to explore and question with your own unique mind.

The most wonderful thing about the editorial page is the variety of opinions expressed. Just as I am doing, if someone feels different about an issue discussed on the editorial page, *The Battalion* will print viewpoints from that reader so we can ponder differing opinions also.

Many letters printed on the editorial page seem to depict people as either liberal or conservative, or good or bad. By labeling people as such, we deny our own individuality.

We are not simply black or white, we are an entire spectra of individuals. By shying away from stereotypes and concentrating on issues individually we can be sure that each person's opinion carries with him his carefully conceived set of ideas and not those given to him by the label of liberal or conservative.

Griff Bludworth

'All' cadets aren't perfect gentlemen

EDITOR:

A Monday Jan. 28 article stated that "all" corps members are "perfect" gentlemen. Isn't that carrying it a little too far? Granted, many of them are gentlemen and represent TAMU well, but many don't fit the image.

To burst your bubble further, here's an unexaggerated example of one of these, so called, "perfect gentlemen." I attended boot dance with a CT who's now a senior red pot. He said when to be ready and called that afternoon to postpone an hour. That's fine, but on that hour (completely dressed and waiting) I received another call to postpone another hour. Then 15-20 minutes later, he and another couple finally came. He offered no explanation. We arrived at the restaurant late. After dinner, the CT who rode with us proceeded to yell at the waiter, "You're the worst waiter I've ever had," among other things. It was very embarrassing!

We left the restaurant and my date had to stop at a U-TOTEM for a can of snuff. And yes, he dipped! But don't worry, he spit it out when we got to the parking lot. We waited an hour or more for pictures (which I've not seen as of a year later). After pictures, we got a glass of punch, one dance, and left. At the car, he took off his shirt, the belt that goes with it, took another dip, and took me home in boots, pants and undershirt (keep in mind this was a formal dance and first date). I almost forgot, he did open my door — isn't that what makes a gentleman according to Monday's article?

By the way, I know a non-reg that is more of a gentleman than any corps person I've met so far.

Sherry Smith

Watching television weather can be fun

By ART BUCHWALD
Columnist for The Los Angeles Times Syndicate

Talk about messengers of bad news — nothing beats the TV weather people. They chuckle in front of their maps of the United States, while all of us gaze at them with fear and loathing.

The trouble with the TV weather report is that it brings out the worst in all of us.

The other evening I was watching my weatherman on the late-night news and he said, "A cold arctic blast is coming down from Canada and will sweep across the Great Plains carrying freezing temperatures, snow, ice and wind."

"What are you smiling at?" my wife wanted to know.

"Better than us," I said.

"But the people in the Great Plains are Americans, too."

"They're used to it," I replied. "Great Plains residents all come from hardy Scandinavian stock, and a minus-42-degree wind chill factor to them is a grand soft day."

The weatherman was waving his hands all over the map.

"A storm now over the Pacific will produce six inches of rain in Southern California and Arizona."

"Serves them right," I said. "They're always bragging how great their weather is, and it's time they got a taste of the elements. If they can't play tennis in Southern California they close the schools."

"You're being awfully cruel," my wife said.

"When it comes to weather, it's every man for himself."

The weatherman continued. "A Yukon express jet stream will bring record low temperatures to the state of Texas."

"It's about time," I said.

"What have you got against Texas?"

"Remember during the petroleum

crisis when they put bumper stickers on their cars telling the Northeast to freeze to death?"

"They didn't mean it," my wife said. "That's just the way Texans talk. I feel for anyone who is cold."

"Don't cry for Texas," I told her. "All they have to do if they start shivering is go out in the back yard and fill up a pail with oil and throw it in their burners."

The weatherman was now pointing at New York state.

"The hardest hit part of the country was Buffalo, which had 30 inches of snow this morning, and is still digging out tonight."

"How do you feel about Buffalo?" my wife wanted to know.

"Anyone who stays in Buffalo during the winter knows what they're in for. Besides, I can't remember one weather report in the last six months that didn't show people digging out in Buffalo. You have to be pretty dumb to live next to Lake Erie."

"Kentucky, Tennessee and Georgia can expect freezing rain because of this high-pressure system coming up from Mexico," the weatherman continued.

"So what," I spoke back to the TV screen. "We never promised them a rose garden."

My wife was becoming annoyed. "You're no fun to watch the weather with."

"Look, the only reason they tell you what the weather is like in other parts of the country is so people who aren't affected by it can enjoy it. Bad news is good news if it doesn't happen to you."

The weatherman continued. "This freezing rain will be pushed north by the high, and we can expect two inches of snow in the Washington area by tomorrow's rush hour."

I couldn't believe what I had just heard, and looked up to heaven. "Why us?"

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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.

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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.
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