

Opinion

Dime-store Aggie philosophy can't run the country

Texas A&M has an interesting method of dealing with problems. "Highway 6 runs both ways" is the answer to all our troubles. Of course, this attitude doesn't solve problems, it just ignores them.



Loren Steffy

Translated, "Highway 6 runs both ways" means "don't make us deal with our shortcomings, we don't want to change anything." This catch-all answer is usually directed at students who dare to speak out against tradition or fail to show blind respect for alumni bank accounts. Such malcontents are labeled "Bad Ags" and pointed in the direction of Austin (even though you can't there on Highway 6) — a fate which, in Aggieland, is feared more than exploding lepers.

President Reagan has been subscribing to this dime-store Aggie philosophy in hyping his proposal for increased aid to the Contra rebels in Nicaragua. The president and his silver-tongued buddy

Pat Buchanan claim that backing the Contras is the "American" thing to do. The counterrevolutionaries in Nicaragua have been dubbed "freedom fighters." It's unclear whether this means the Contras are fighting freedom or fighting for freedom, but nevertheless, those who oppose the Reagan policy are being branded "un-American."

The president is attempting to unite Congress by using the same scare tactics employed by die-hard traditionalists at A&M. Here if you don't think the way "good Ags" do you're a liberal. In Washington, if you don't agree with Reagan on Nicaragua, you're a commie.

Now a unified student body is an admirable goal, but it's unreasonable to expect 36,000 students to think the same way. It's absurd to imply that just because they don't agree with every tradition they have no loyalty to our school and should go somewhere else.

Reagan's claim that not supporting the Contras is anti-patriotic is equally absurd. The president doesn't have a monopoly on democratic ideals and values. Opposing the Contra aid proposal doesn't make members of Congress less patriotic. In all the mudslinging, Re-

gan has forgotten opposing views is why our system of government works the way it does.

Supporting the president's Contra policy because he says it's the "American" thing to do is itself an "un-American" activity. Democracy is more than being a puppet on strings to a president who allows his Marxist paranoia to override common political and economic sense. Reagan is trying to paint the Nicaragua picture in black and white, but he's working from a pallet of grays.

The Contra debate is critical. Those who oppose sending more money to the rebels aren't turning against our country, they are trying to decide on the best course of action for America. In short, they're putting our system of government into action.

Reagan's freedom-fighter rhetoric not only stifles this democratic process, it uses a bandwagon propaganda approach to foreign policy. The president seems a little old to be playing the if-you're-not-going-to-play-my-way-pack-up-your-marbles-and-go-home game.

The debate will continue, and well it should. But what was supposed to be an

QUINCY CORRECTION

Contra Diction

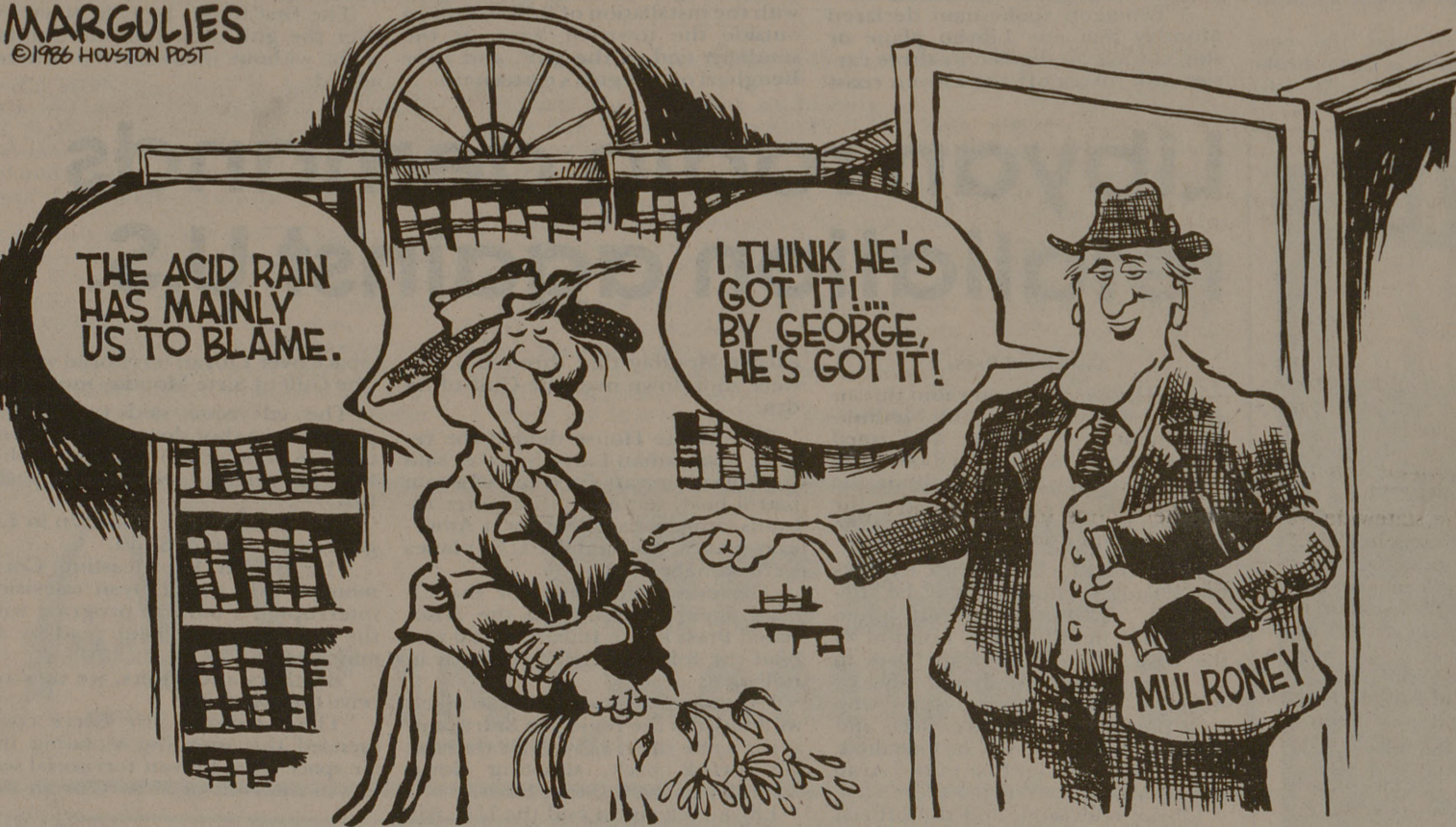


educated debate by intelligent elected officials has degenerated into a childish argument of name-calling, which will resolve nothing. The debate should focus on the issue at hand, not how high

certain congressmen register Reagan Patriotism Meter.

Loren Steffy is a junior journalist and the Opinion Page editor of The Battalion.

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KGB has the best of both worlds

The American order directing the Soviets to reduce their U.N. mission from 250 to 170 citizens has caused a furor in Moscow. The Kremlin has accused the United States of directly damaging Soviet-U.S. relations.



Art Buchwald

What the Russians don't know is that the State Department could not go back on its directive even if it wanted to.

This is why. It is no secret that Soviet U.N. diplomats spend a minimal amount of time on the U.N. business and the majority of their time spying for the KGB. It is also no secret that the FBI keeps tabs on the Soviet diplomats 24 hours a day.

Everyone was happy with the arrangement until the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings bill was passed dictating severe cuts in the government budget. Even the FBI was hit hard and told to cut down on its services.

Bill Webster, the chief of the Bureau, went over to the Office of Management and Budget and protested he would not be responsible for the security of the nation if he lost his funds. He cited FBI surveillance of Soviet U.N. personnel as a typical example of the type of work that could not be performed if the cuts went into effect.

The OMB chief suggested that in order to balance the budget the FBI follow the Russians only 60 percent of the time. But Webster said it wouldn't work. Once they were aware of the cutbacks the KGB would use 40 percent of the time they weren't followed to do their dirty work and 60 percent to lead the FBI on a wild goose chase.

The OMB then suggested that since they were Soviet U.N. spies, the surveillance money might come out of the State Department budget. George Shultz had apoplexy when Webster called, and said he didn't have enough money to make a call to the Soviet mission much less tap a Russian telephone line. Shultz told Webster that because of Gramm-Rudman the State Department is so broke it is seriously considering closing the United States Embassy in London and having whatever U.S. busi-

ness we do with Great Britain conducted by our American ambassador in London.

Rejected by State, the CIA was forced to find a place for Webster to go next for funds to cover the Soviet scoundrels. But Bill Casey was in. He told Webster, "Any money you can get your hands on goes to lobby for covert funds for Nicaragua."

Webster went back to his office and wrestled with his problem. The solution occurred to him that as an emergency measure he might assign one FBI agent to follow two Russians. But Webster pointed out to him that the plan would fall apart if one KGB man took the ferry for Staten Island.

The FBI director was doodling just when the big idea came. What would happen if the United States tossed out 100 U.N. Soviet spies? Then his agents would only have a low half as many spies.

Webster called up Shultz and told him it was legal. The Secretary of State could throw out as many spies as he needed to meet his Gramm-Rudman budget quota. When Webster laid off the same number of FBI agents as Russian employees were out of the United States.

Thus legally cleared, the announcement was made last week and the U.N. personnel were told bluntly to get home.

Well, the Soviets screamed murder — but there was joy in their headquarters in Moscow when the mission cut was announced.

It appears that the Soviet Union has the equivalent of a Gramm-Rudman of its own, and the KGB had been ordered, for budget reasons, to cut on its spies in the United States. We were just about to do it when the States moved first and ordered the Russian agents to leave New York. Now the KGB has the best of both worlds. It can blame the United States for the forced removal of their spies and get cuts at the same time.

Art Buchwald is a columnist for the Los Angeles Times Syndicate.

Mail Call

Disgust and dismay

EDITOR:

I read with disgust and dismay the opinions of Carl Krieger published in the mail call section of Monday's Battalion.

Krieger has a shallow knowledge of the issue of apartheid and the freedom of South African blacks. If those young people dying and being arrested each day were akin to him, I'm sure he'd cry out for justice.

U.S. citizens are not the only ones with rights. Every being has rights, but some beings violate the rights of other beings with impunity. The United States should not assume the role of the black sheep among a white flock. South African blacks want their freedom and they will get it, U.S. intervention or not.

Besides, since when has the U.S. been known to make the best decisions in world politics? It sided with the rebels in many wars in the African continent. Do you remember Vietnam? Isn't Reagan begging Congress to pass a bill for \$100 million of aid to the Contras, a rebel group trying to overthrow the government?

And what in the name of good will is that flaky quotation from some anthropologist? That statement is openly racist. If you know anything about the history of black America, you will realize that many blacks did invent things that advanced the culture of this country. But as we all know, blacks should never be given credit for such outstanding achievement.

Open up your mind . . . man reaps what he sows.

Gabriel Elliott

A universal message

EDITOR:

I would like to thank Karl Pallmeyer for encouraging people to read the Bible, whatever "translation" it may be, and to ask themselves some serious questions. I did and it completely changed my life. A wise man does indeed ask many questions, and he will find the answers to a large number of them in the Bible. He has to take the first step though and read it for himself.

Speaking of questions Karl, how many textbook editions do you know of that are exactly alike, word for word? An arithmetic book, for instance, may be translated into thousands of languages and versions, but no matter how or why you read it, one plus one still equals two.

Similarly, while it is true that the Bible has been translated into many different versions its messages are still the same. A big one is that God loves all of us and has provided a way for us to be whole in our hearts, minds and bodies. You can translate that message into as many versions as you wish, but any way you look at it, it's still a positive message, one of hope, fulfillment and answers.

Dawn Wright
Grad Student

Words of truth

EDITOR:

In reference to the "My book is better than yours" opinion article March 13:

Karl Pallmeyer speaketh the TRUTH. Amen!
Janet Morkin

Reclaiming the spotlight?

EDITOR:

Edwin Meese III, our venerable attorney general, is on the loose again. Late last year, you may recall, he attacked the Supreme Court by saying that it had misinterpreted the purpose of those who penned the Constitution: T. Jefferson et al. Meese tried to conjure his own interpretation upon that noble court, but was quickly silenced.

Now, after a few months of relative obscurity to clear the air, he is on the rampage again. His present target is ostensibly the EPA, though the net objective of his attacks, according to the New York Times, is senior administration officials. Meese claims that they kept members of the House from seeing EPA files on the toxic waste program because money was being withheld for political purposes.

My guess is that they wouldn't turn over the files to the attorney general's investigators because Meese's dossier was among the files. Or maybe the poor man is just reaching for straws to have a chance to get back into the news again.

William H. Clark II

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