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Professor: Bush faces fight with Democratic congress

Weak party saps presidential strength

By Kelly S. Brown
 STAFF WRITER

The "honeymoon" period of the presidency is said to be more of a ritual than a love affair. It presents the best chance for a president to establish himself as a leader of Congress and to obtain congressional support for his major policy proposals, an A&M political science professor said.

At this point in the Bush administration, however, these remain aspirations rather than accomplishments, Dr. George C. Edwards said.

"When Bush took the oath of office on Jan. 20 he was already fighting an uphill battle in his relations with Congress," Edwards said. "He began his tenure with one of the worst strategic positions of any newly-elected president in our history."

Edwards said to further understand Bush's situation two dimensions of his strategic position must be examined — his leadership resources and his leeway in taking policy initiatives.

Leadership resources include public support and the strength of his party in Congress.

"New presidents traditionally claim a mandate from the people, because the most effective means of setting the terms of debate and overcoming opposition is the perception of an electoral mandate," Edwards said.

He said while mandates can be powerful symbols in American politics, concerns for representation and political survival encourage members of Congress to support the president if they feel the people have spoken.

The people spoke and Bush's victory margin was what Edwards called a "respectable, but unimpressive" 53 percent.

"His party lost seats in both houses of Congress, and he ran behind all but a few representatives and senators in their constituencies," he said. "There was little basis for members of Congress inferring presidential coattails."

Edwards said another factor that encouraged the perception of a mandate was that in Bush's campaign, he emphasized continuity, not change, while never offering bold new initiatives.

"Instead the campaign was marked by a notable lack of focus on issues, as well as a dearth of civility," he said.

Bush didn't claim a mandate as a result of these conditions, Edwards said.

So in his strategic position, Bush couldn't structure the choices of Congress as being for or against a president who had the support of the people, Edwards said.

Bush's strategic position was further damaged when the strength of the Republican party was weakened in Congress.

"President Bush found himself facing Democratic advantages of 10 seats in the Senate and 85 seats in the House, majorities slightly larger than they were in the previous Congress," Edwards said. "Moreover, he had engaged in an especially ran-

money toward defense. At the same time, there was no real growth in defense spending during Reagan's second term, thus making the Pentagon's budget difficult to reduce.

"Bush could do little but leave the same," Edwards said. "The president cannot go forward or backward. In effect, he is a third term president whose role is to consolidate the policy shifts of his predecessor."

Edwards said Michael Dukakis would have faced a similar predicament if he had been elected.

Edwards said Bush needed to create a legislative strategy with the most important element being setting the Congress' agenda.

"An important component of agenda setting is establishing priorities among legislative proposals," he said. "If the president is not able to focus Congress' attention on his priority programs, they may become lost in the complex and overloaded legislative process."

Edwards said Bush has only a modest legislative agenda.

"The White House was quick to announce that there would be no 'One Hundred Days' in the Bush administration and part of the explanation lies in the budgetary constraints," Edwards said. "As a result, the president has been largely reduced to pronouncing platitudes about a 'kinder and gentler nation' and being the 'education president.'"

Edwards said problems from the previous administration are putting a strain on the White House's ability to set Congress' agenda.

Bush is being forced to work with necessities such as balancing the budget, bailing out savings and loan institutions, cleaning up nuclear power plants, interdicting illicit drugs and caring for the homeless, Edwards said.

"These are all part of the agenda already in place when Bush assumed office," he said. "These issues compete for space with any initiatives the president wishes to take on."

Bush has projected little vision of where he wants the country to go and how he will help it get there, he said.

While Bush is setting priorities, Edwards said, he should be ready to move quickly to exploit the "honeymoon" atmosphere that typically characterizes this period.

Edwards is an authority on the presidency and public policy, as well as the author of 12 books. His latest book, "At The Margins: Presidential Leadership of Congress" was released last week.

— Dr. George C. Edwards

HOW SAFE ARE YOU? Campus Safety Survey

This survey is designed to provide information regarding your safety and security on campus. Please take a few minutes to answer this survey so that we can improve the services and programs offered to you.

Please check the following items.

- Are you: on campus student off campus student
 staff member faculty other
- How often do you attend programs, meetings, of classes on campus after dark?
 more than 3 times a week 1-2 times a week
 other _____
- How safe do you feel when walking on campus after dark?
 very safe safe unsafe very unsafe
- Have you ever been a victim of crime on campus? yes no
 If so, please indicate type of crime: _____
- Do you have concerns about specific areas on campus that are poorly lighted? yes no
 If so, please indicate location(s): _____
- Other than poor lighting, are you aware of any other safety or security concerns on campus? yes no
 If so, please specify: _____
- What security issues most concern or interest you?
 acquaintance rape sexual assault
 sexual harassment self-defense
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 other _____
- Are you aware of the various escort services on campus?
 University Police Department yes no
 Aston Hall yes no
 Corps Guard Room yes no
- Are you aware that four emergency telephones have been installed at various locations on campus? yes no
 (Fish lot at Intercampus Shuttle Bus stop, Research Park, Behind Commons, Intramural Jogging track adjacent to Mount Aggie)
- If you use the off-campus shuttle bus after dark, is the lighting adequate at the bus stops? yes no
 If no, which ones should be improved? _____
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 If no, which ones should be improved? _____
- Other comments: _____

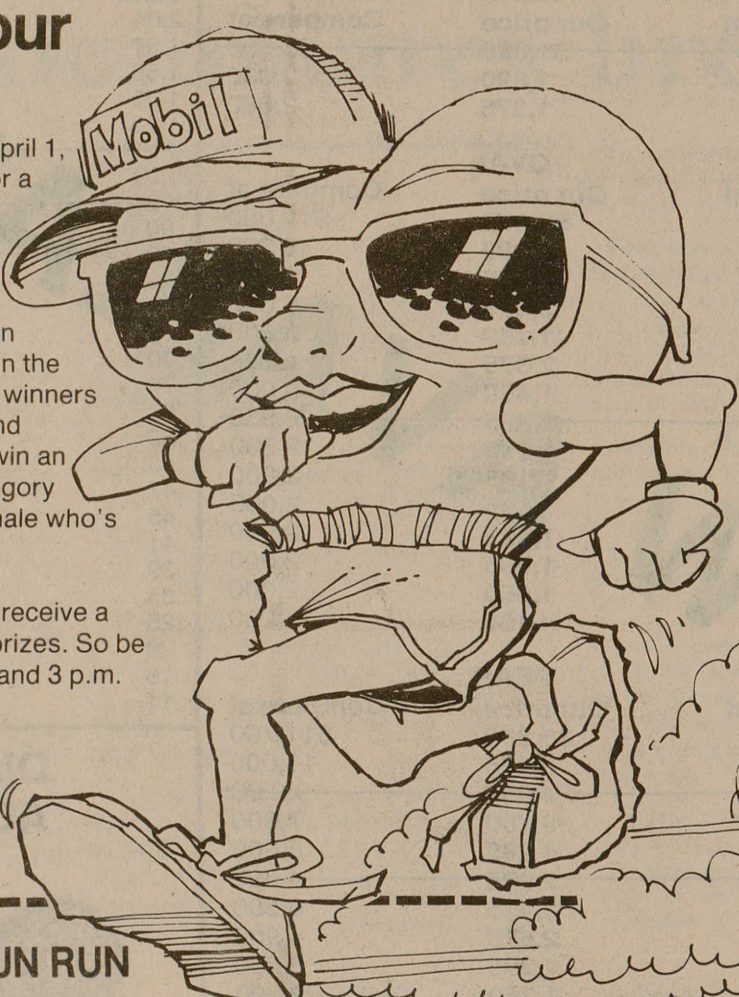
Thank you for completing this survey

Please drop your completed survey in any campus mail drop for Student Affairs Mail Stop 1257, or return to the Commons front desk, the Off Campus Center (Puryear Hall), or 108 YMCA Bldg. Call 845-5826 for additional information if needed.

Mobil

5K CHARITY FUN RUN

Aggies Run Your Heart Out!



Beginning at 5 p.m. on Saturday, April 1, hundreds of runners will take off for a run that'll be loads of fun and will save lives. In conjunction with the Student Engineering Council, Mobil will make a contribution to the Bryan-College Station-American Heart Association for each runner in the race. And, there'll be prizes for the winners too! The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd males and females to the finish line will each win an award. And, a special Masters category will award the fastest male and female who's 40 years of age or more.

The first 750 people to register will receive a Fun Run T-shirt and other special prizes. So be the first to register between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. at one of the following locations:

Blocker — March 27-28
 MSC — March 28-29
 Zachry — March 27-29

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 (PLEASE PRINT)
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 ADDRESS: _____ ZIP: _____ PHONE NO: _____
 T-SHIRT SIZE: (CIRCLE ONE) L XL AGE: _____ SEX _____
 STUDENT: DEGREE/MAJOR _____
 FACULTY: DEPARTMENT _____

WAIVER OF LIABILITY
 (Must be signed for entry to be accepted)
 In consideration of acceptance of this entry, I the undersigned waive and release any and all claims for myself, my agents and heirs against all sponsors and officials of the Mobil Charity Fun Run for any injury or illness which may directly or indirectly result from my participation in this event. I understand the event begins promptly at 5:00 p.m. - rain or shine.

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____
 (Signature of Parent or Guardian if entrant is under 18 years of age)

When Bush took the oath of office on Jan. 20 he was already fighting an uphill battle in his relations with Congress. He began his tenure with one of the worst strategic positions of any newly-elected president in our history.

Edwards said a skilled leader would be necessary to overcome the disadvantages of Bush's position.

But this is not the only obstacle, Edwards said.

Bush has been tightly restricted in taking policy initiatives, while the primary source of the constraints is the budget deficit.

The overriding concern has yet to meet the requirements of Gramm-Rudman-Hollings, Edwards said, while reducing expenditures is also extremely difficult.

Most of the budget falls under the heading of 'uncontrollables.'

"Policies in this category range from Social Security to payments on the national debt," he said. "Ronald Reagan cut all that was politically feasible to trim from 'discretionary' domestic policy programs. Bush could not make a mark by wringing even more from them."

Edwards said that left defense spending as one of the few areas which could be cut.

He said support for Bush increasing the defense budget was minimal because Reagan had done that by asking Congress to allocate more

Candidates turn to bilingualism for extra edge with Hispanics

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Candidates for statewide offices increasingly are trying to use their linguistic skills to reach Hispanic voters, but a political consultant warns more harm than good can develop if their Spanish is poor.

Some office-seekers have tried to learn with language tapes, travel to Mexico or both, claiming their interest in Spanish is not only political, but an attempt to communicate and do business with the largest-growing ethnic group in Texas.

The value of bilingual speaking skills is widely debated, however, particularly since an estimated 85 percent of Hispanic Texans can speak English well.

The potential candidates contacted by the *San Antonio Light* in an informal poll who have taken Spanish lessons are all Democrats.

They include U.S. Rep. John Bryant, considering a run for attorney general; Duncanville state Sen. Chet Edwards, a possible lieutenant governor hopeful; Attorney General Jim Mattox and Treasurer Ann Richards, both gubernatorial candidates; and Fort Worth state Sen. Hugh Parmer, a U.S. Senate hopeful.

"I think Hispanics are looking to see that the candidates themselves understand the culture, understand the concerns and really treat them like Americans, not like ethnics," said Lionel Sosa, a San Antonio advertising executive and frequent consultant to Republican candidates.

"It has always been my advice to candidates that if you do not have a good command of the language, do not try it because it comes off patronizing," Sosa said.

Edwards, Mattox and Parmer traveled to Mexico to learn Spanish, while Richards attended a one-week course in Houston and Bryant is privately tutored weekly.

Among potential candidates who claim to know Spanish without lessons is Republican gubernatorial hopeful Clayton Williams, a Midland businessman and rancher who said he learned it while growing up on a Pecos County ranch.

San Antonio state Rep. Dan Morales, accused by potential rivals of not knowing Spanish, claims to have learned it in his church.

Aspokesman for San Antonio attorney Roy Barrera Jr., who is considering another run for attorney general, said Barrera grew up bilingual.

Republicans who do not know Spanish are U.S. Sen. Phil Gramm, Railroad Commissioner Kent Hance and Texas Secretary of State Jack Rains, both possible gubernatorial candidates; and Rob Mosbacher Jr., a possible lieutenant governor candidate.

Information requested in theft, murder cases

Crime Stoppers is looking for any information relating to an unsolved Jan. 27 robbery and an unsolved Jan. 20, 1988 murder.

Sometime between 5:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 27 and noon Saturday, Jan. 28, suspects forcibly entered the premises of Eddy Stone Enterprises in the 3400 block of east Highway 21 in Bryan.

After entering the compound, suspects used the company's truck to steal more than \$20,000 worth of tools and equipment. Items stolen included a steam cleaner with compressor, electric welder, grinders, a trailer and various tools.

No suspects have been identified. Investigators believe the thieves were familiar with operations at the shop and will attempt to sell the items in this area.

On Jan. 27, 1988, Lydia Schumacher, 72, was slain in her home in Frenstat, nine miles south of Caldwell in Burleson County near the intersection of FM 976 and FM 2774.

Evidence indicates that a suspect broke out the glass in the rear door, unlocked the door, entered, surprised the victim in her bedroom, then beat and strangled her to death.

No suspects have been identified

George W. Bush, the president's son who is considering running for Nonbilingual Democrats who may be on 1990 ballots include state Comptroller Bob Bullock, an expected lieutenant governor candidate, and two of the party's four possible attorney general candidates, Land Commissioner Garry Mauro and John Odam, a former aide to Gov. Mark White who tried to learn with tapes, but said he would not attempt Spanish on the campaign trail.

Two weeks ago, Parmer tried out his recently acquired Spanish in announcing his U.S. Senate campaign.

Investigators believe the suspect knew the victim and intended to assault her since the house is not visible from the road and no items were stolen.

Six months ago this crime was featured on Crime of the Week and Crime Stoppers received only two calls. To date, investigators have exhausted all leads and have no viable suspects.

Crime Stoppers needs the help of anyone with information regarding either of these crimes. If you have any information, contact Crime Stoppers at 775-TIPS.

Once called, Crime Stoppers will issue a special coded number to protect the callers identity.

If the call leads to an arrest and grand jury indictment, Crime Stoppers will pay the caller up to \$1,000.

Crime Stoppers also pays cash for information regarding any felony crime or the whereabouts of any wanted fugitive.

Brazos County
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