

Charges against Reagan need to be investigated

As a sixth-grader, I well remember the mock presidential election we had in our history class. I led an ill-fated John Anderson campaign. At any rate, the Reagan supporters rallied behind Jimmy Carter's supposed ineptitude regarding the Iranian hostage crisis.

At the time, the state of 52 Americans in a foreign country seemed like a rather insignificant matter on which to base the choice of a president. But most of my classmates were reflecting the views of their parents. To the voters, the hostage situation was quite significant.

Since Reagan's inauguration, unsubstantiated cries of how his campaign arranged a deal with the Iranians to hold the hostages until after the election have frequently been heard. After all, it seemed quite odd that the Americans were released minutes after Reagan was sworn in.

Last week, some startling new evidence on this matter was revealed. The New York Times broke the story in an op-ed piece by Gary Sick. PBS then



Matt McBurnett
Columnist

detailed it well in a "Frontline" documentary.

Gary Sick was Jimmy Carter's Iran expert on the National Security Council and, for years, has doubted any underhanded dealings by the Reagan campaign. He has now done an about face. He told Newsweek that the evidence is "a consistent pattern of activity, with stories from a lot of people (and) a political logic. ... When I look at the whole lot of it, I cannot conclude that nothing happened."

If the information on which Sick speaks holds true, these dealings would quite possibly constitute the most insidious behavior in the history of the U.S. presidency. Watergate would look as harmless as a taffy-pull in comparison.

The information is quite convincing. The basic story is that Reagan, upon election, traded favors with Iran if they promised not to release the hostages until after the election. His campaign officials knew, and admitted in 1980, that a release before the election would greatly enhance Carter's place in the polls, so the Reagan camp leaked word of an "October surprise." Carter's promising negotiations with Iran took an abrupt downturn after September.

The hostages were freed in January, and shortly thereafter, tons of military equipment were headed toward Iran via Israel to aid Iran in its conflict with Iraq. Both Sick's story and the television documentary cite numerous sources. Reagan's foreign-policy adviser for the campaign, Richard Allen, has said that he met with an arms dealer who offered "to deliver the hostages to the Reagan forces." He refused. On "Frontline" the arms dealer who claims he offered the deal to Allen said that Allen's cohort Laurence Silberman told him, "We had our own contacts."

Former CIA director Bill Casey's name also has been thrown around. I do not believe that this is simply another case of blaming the dead guy. The new reports claim that Casey, then Reagan's campaign director, began negotiating a deal with an Iranian cleric in meetings in Madrid in July and August of 1980.

The reports also quote brothers Cyrus and Jamshid Hashemi who claim to have set up the meetings in Madrid between Casey and a Khomeni representative. Former Iranian president A.B. Sadr said in a recent book that he knew of the deal.

Other sources said the deal was finalized at two meetings in October 1980 in Paris and that Casey was there. George Bush was even rumored to have been on the scene, though the White House denies that claim.

Sick claims that there are more than 15 people scattered around the globe who tell stories that vary in detail but do not conflict. "I can't prove every step of the way. My point is, isn't there

a question here that deserves to be examined?"

The most recent Newsweek contains an excellent story on this subject from which I extracted much of my information. Sick is undoubtedly correct in his statement that there is definitely something here, and it needs to be examined. For Reagan's sake, this material had better not be factual. His image almost has been tarnished beyond repair by the Iran-Contra dealings.

The saddest part of the story is that actually is believable. I would not doubt its authenticity for a second. Maybe Reagan's image is tarnished in my eyes already. A full-fledged investigation is certainly warranted. If the Reagan camp actually plotted to win the election at the expense of American citizens, it is difficult for me to think of just punishment for these despicable dealings.

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MARGULIES
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NEW JERSEY



University suffers from hidden social problems

Larry A. Hembree
Reader's Opinion

I have been told on many occasions that the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents embraced academics only because they had to, to keep A&M from going under and that their only real concern was with the Corps of Cadets; but seldom has it been demonstrated so clearly as in the events of the last two weeks surrounding especially the recruitment of Gen. Schwarzkopf.

Not only did they fail to consult the A&M Faculty Senate prior to making their decision and apparently fail to tell the general this, but they brushed aside their own stated criteria deemed appropriate for a chancellor: "A command of respect in the national arena of academics and distinguished intellectual stature."

It's obvious also why the Faculty Senate originally was shut out of the decision-making process, considering a letter they endorsed earlier to the regents calling for "a distinguished record of teaching and scholarship commensurate with a tenured professor, experienced in university planning, an earned doctoral degree and the abilities to articulate a clear and progressive vision for the entire system as well as its diverse components" as necessary attributes in a chancellor.

Are not the regents exhibiting the same too-limited perspective of administrative responsibility that put A&M on academic probation not too long ago? Is this not the same mentality that Stanford found so repulsive as to vote us out of the PAC 10?

The future of A&M is on far more shaky ground than its recent prosperity would seem to indicate. Local businessmen still are reluctant to invest in student housing on the scale which is normal for other universities.

And need we wonder any more why sports announcers cast A&M in such a bad light? It's not just recruiting scandals — they know, even if we don't, that these are just symptomatic of broader, underlying social problems, that something very ugly is out of control here at A&M — something that arrogantly does exactly what it wants and doesn't care what academic or humanitarian interests it offends.

The Schwarzkopf controversy ranks as probably A&M's worst public-relations scandal to date, because not only did it expose the tunnel vision of the administration and what with the denials and office absenteeism, the fact that their word could not be trusted for all the world to see, it undoubtedly is an embarrassment to the good general himself.

A charismatic, effective leader, an able administrator for business, possibly even a candidate for high political office he is but he is no more a distinguished scholar than the professors here are able generalists.

The life of the mind isn't dead yet at Texas A&M; recent actions by the Faculty Senate on the issue of sexual orientation and chancellor selections prove that — something the Board of Regents obviously had not anticipated. Should the status quo side of A&M succeed in intimidating these interests, however, I do predict the onset of a tremendous moral problem as students, athletes, faculty and members of the University choose to distance themselves from this institution and the reputation it has established for itself.

It would simply be too easy considering the military climate of opinion here to be persuaded into a no-nonsense approach before long that would have everyone marching along in step — disastrous mindset for an institution of higher learning. It was, in fact, precisely this type of thinking that precipitated the series of protests during Gen. Rudder's resignation.

Should the students follow the faculty suite and the Board of Regents take their input seriously, A&M might still come out smelling like a rose.

There are 40,000 students at this University, and 38,000 are not in the Corps of Cadets.

Larry A. Hembree graduated from Texas A&M in 1969.

MAIL CALL

The Battalion is interested in hearing from its readers and welcomes all letters to the editor. Please include name, classification, address and phone number on all letters. The editor reserves the right to edit letters for style and length. Because of limited space, shorter letters have a better chance of appearing. There is, however, no guarantee letters will appear. Letters may be brought to 216 Reed McDonald or sent to Campus Mail Stop 1111.

Thanks to student leaders

EDITOR:

April brings many changes in almost every single student association on our campus. New people with fresh ideas and energy become officers and another chapter is closed, leaving behind us a year full of work, new experiences, happy and sad moments; but most of all, a year dedicated to the service of our fellow Aggies and the Bryan-College Station community.

I would like to thank all of the following student leaders for their time, dedication and friendship, but especially for the love to our University and traditions that they have shown throughout the time they served as officers of their associations:

- Ty Clevenger, Student Government president
- Jonathan Whittles, Corps commander
- Kyle Jacobson, RHA president
- Matthew Wood, MSC president
- Dan Vrudny, Graduate Student Council president

- Eleanor Manson, Senior class president
- Brant Ince, Head yell leader
- Sandra Burke, Married Student Apartment Council president
- Keith Powell, Off-Campus Aggies president
- Cindy McMillian and Lisa Robertson, fall and spring Battalion editors
- Carl Carrey, Black Awareness Committee chairman
- Kim Bennett, Pan-Hellenic Council president
- Donella Schmidt, Panhellenic Council president
- Darren Smith, Interfraternity Council
- Georgete Lopez-Aguado, CAMAC president

There are some other names coming to my mind, especially those persons who always help behind the scenes with little or no recognition. You all have done an incredible job this year. On behalf of the international students at Texas A&M and myself, thank you.

Juan Ignacio Corujo
ISA President

The Battalion

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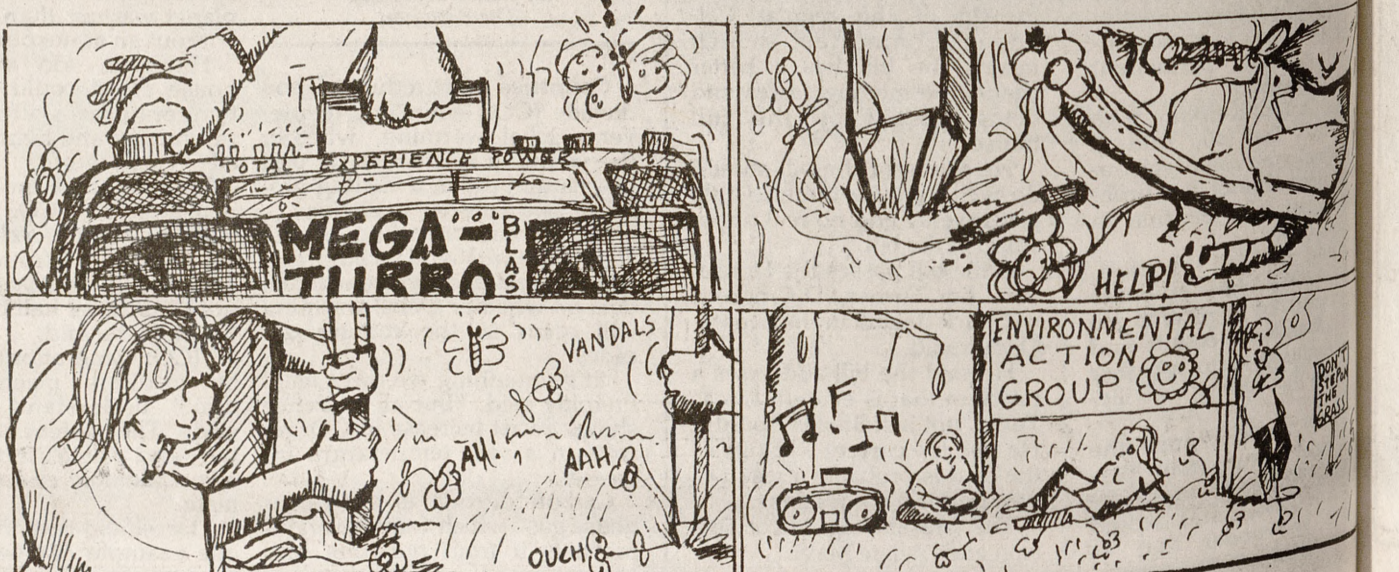
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