

The Battalion

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VP candidates face off in 'bitter' debate

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ATLANTA — Democratic vice presidential candidate Al Gore and Vice President Dan Quayle argued over leadership and the economy Tuesday night in a biting debate of campaign under-studies spiced by James Stockdale's passionate denunciation of the political gridlock in Washington.

President Bush and Quayle were like "deer caught in the headlights" when the recession struck, Gore charged, paralyzed and unable to respond. He pledged that Democratic presidential candidate Bill Clinton stand for change.

Quayle quickly retorted that Clinton and Gore would "make matters much worse. Jobs will be lost," he said, adding that Clinton would raise taxes and spending, as well. His was a finger-waving, angry demeanor from the outset, attacking Clinton in vigorous remarks over and over again.

Stockdale exploded at one point after Quayle and Gore argued, saying, "I think America is seeing right now the reason this nation is in gridlock." He said Ross Perot was the man to fix things in Washington.

Stockdale stressed his non-politician's status from the outset. "Don't expect me to use the language of the Washington insider," he said. "The centerpiece of my life was the Vietnam War."

He went on to describe leading the first bombing run over North Vietnam, being shot down and held as prisoner of war for seven years.

On abortion, Stockdale said, "I believe a woman owns her body and what she does with it is her own business. Period." That was Gore's position, too, but not Quayle's.

When the subject turned to health care, Stockdale seemingly had little to say. "I'm out of ammunition on that one," he said after Gore and Quayle clashed.

The candidates argued briefly over the environment, the topic of a recent book by Gore.

"I read Sen. Gore's book," said Stockdale. "I don't see how he could possibly pay for his proposals in today's economic climate," he said.

Gore defended his work, but Quayle then followed with an attack on a specific section — citing page 304 and sparking a did-did not exchange over whether Quayle was describing a \$100 billion passage accurately.

"Mr. Vice President — Dan, if I may," Gore said. "If you don't try to compare George Bush to Harry Truman, I won't try to compare you to Jack Kennedy." It was a reference to 1988 vice presidential candidate Lloyd Bensten's debate salvo: "Senator, you're no Jack Kennedy."

Quayle derisively noted that it hadn't taken Gore long to bring up the subject of that debate.

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ANALYSIS

By GARY P. CARROLL

City Editor of THE BATTALION

Was it a vice-presidential debate, or was it a screaming match between two upset children and one unwary and seemingly un-caring innocent bystander?

Senator Al Gore, Vice President Dan Quayle and Former Vice Admiral John Stockdale faced off Tuesday night for an incredibly childish display of whining rhetoric and free-flying accusations intertwined with feeble attempts of self aggrandizement.

It's true that we don't elect a vice president, and after the 'debate' it's clear to see why.

Political analysts will more than likely address the few positives for each candidate.

The fact that Vice President Quayle looked somewhat strong

compared to four years ago goes without saying. He was on a mission to get Governor Bill Clinton and he went after Clinton vigorously.

All America wants is for Clinton to "tell the truth," Quayle said. "What it boils down to is trust. Can you trust Bill Clinton?"

Gore battled the 'anti-trust' theme of Quayle.

"The current administration points the finger of blame with one hand and hands out pink slips with the other," Gore said.

It was during the ensuing exchange between Quayle and Gore that Stockdale jumped in with what may have been one of the most timely statements of the evening.

"I think America is seeing right now why the nation is in gridlock," Stockdale said.

When the candidates addressed the issues it seemed as if they would get back on track and actually have a focused debate, but those times were few and far between.

One topic that did receive sustained attention, if only for a few seconds, was the health care issue.

Gore said that if criminals had the right to a lawyer, then each American should have the right to a doctor.

Quayle agreed that each American should have the right to access medical care but that it should not come at the expense of the taxpayers.

Quayle said that Clinton would raise taxes to fund a rationing of health care while the Bush ad-

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Folding newspapers reflect poor economy

Trend spells end for two-paper towns, department head says

By TODD STONE

Reporter of THE BATTALION

The days of a two-newspaper town are numbered as tough economic times and a more selective readership squeeze the profits of competing daily newspapers, said journalism department head Dr. Charles Self.

"That (trend) causes a lot of people great sadness," Self said. "There's a kind of energy and excitement in those kinds of (two newspaper) towns that are missing in cities today."

San Antonio appears to be the next victim of this trend. Last week, The Hearst Corp. announced it would purchase the San Antonio Express-News and may close the city's other paper, the Light, if a buyer cannot be found.

Most media experts believe the Light will fold because it has a sizable circulation disadvantage. Since 1980, 174 daily newspapers have closed across the United States.

Bob Rogers, professor of journalism, said television has contributed to the decline of newspapers as more people trade their daily newspaper for TV soundbites.

"People used to come home and pick up the paper," Rogers said. "Now, they come home and turn on the television (because watching) a newscast doesn't take any effort. Reading takes some planning, some effort, some concentration."

"Television just changed the way people approached the news."

Still, Rogers said TV doesn't provide the depth news coverage of newspapers.

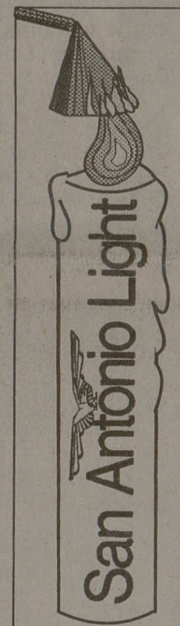
"If you look at local television news casts, it's as if they're inventing the world every day and not doing a very good job at it," Rogers said. "I don't mean to sound overly critical, but local television news is superficiality to the Nth power. The network people do a little bit better job, but holy smoke what do you expect when a long story is 30 seconds."

Rogers said newspapers legitimize events to the public, and readers turn to print news to validate what they have seen on TV.

"People will go to a football game and then the next morning, they will go out and get all the Sunday papers they can find because they want to see what all the writers say," he said.

"Reading and writing are not going to go away."

Still, Self said newspaper readership has also declined over the years as more specialized publications, from magazines to corporate newsletters, have emerged. Self said readers are giving up the second



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daily newspaper for publications that affect them more directly.

"Normally, if it's one city, you're going to need one (daily) newspaper, and then specialized publications," he said. "It has become clear that if a newspaper is to survive, you have to better provide what readers need from their newspaper for it to be essential in their community."

Today, newspapers are competing with other media more for advertising dollars than quality news coverage.

"Advertisers today have discovered alternatives, and those who still advertise in newspapers want to advertise in just one newspaper that reaches as many people as possible," Self said. "They don't want the overlap they get in advertising in two newspapers."

Rogers said there just isn't enough of an economic base to support two newspapers even in most major cities. This trend has especially hurt afternoon dailies who have continued to struggle to survive.

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Media will survive cuts, professor says

By TODD STONE

Reporter of THE BATTALION

Bryan-College Station media will survive despite a limited economic base and the recent recession, said A&M professor of journalism Bob Rogers.

"This community can support what's here," Rogers said. "In fact, the community has supported them (local media) through reasonably tough times."

There are 10 radio stations, one daily newspaper, a daily university newspaper, two weekly newspapers and one TV station that depend on advertising revenue.

When the economy is strong, businesses advertise, Rogers said. But during an economic downturn, many businesses scale back advertising.

Rogers said A&M's presence supports and stabilizes the Bryan-College Station economy. In turn, the local media benefits.

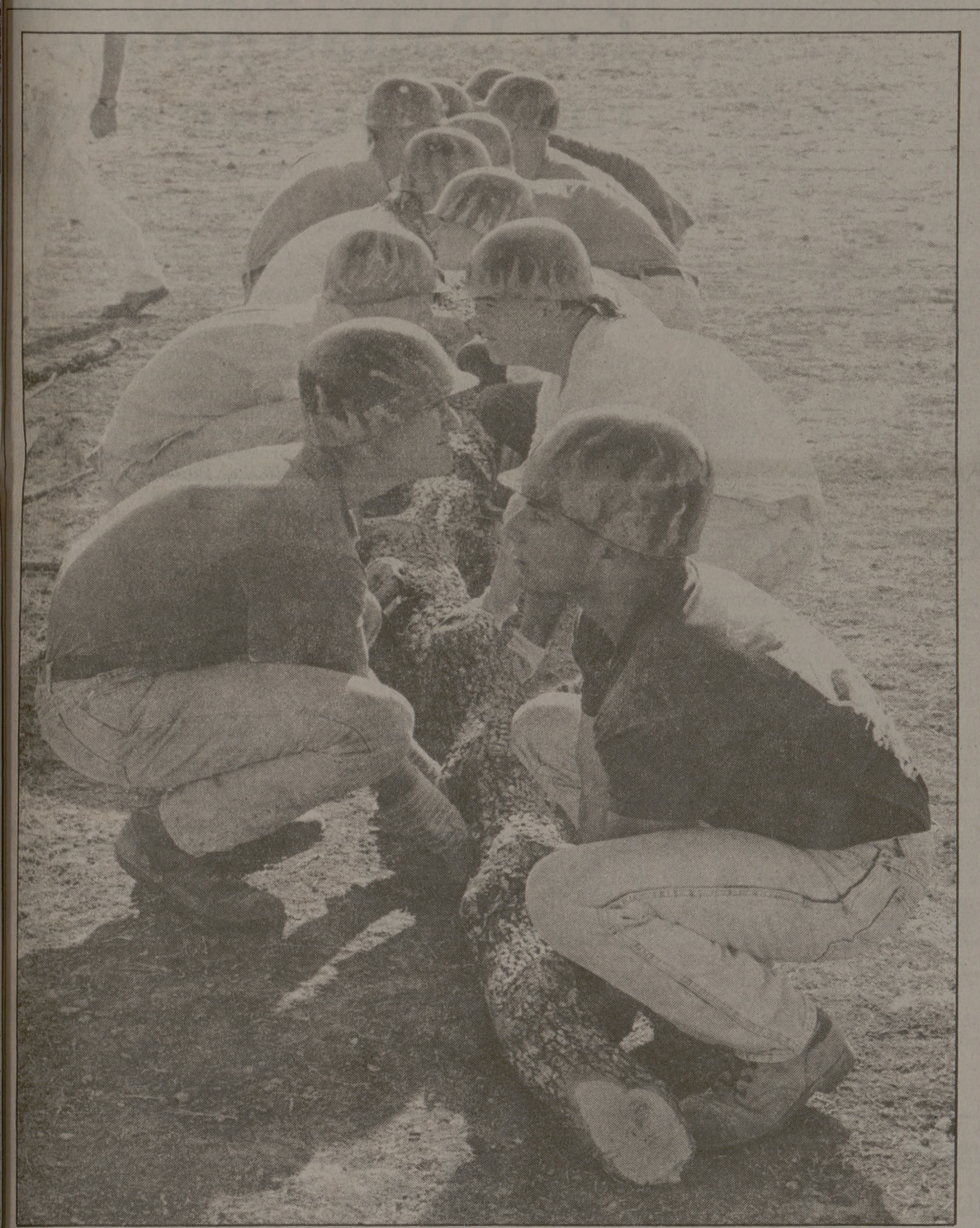
Dr. Charles Self, A&M journalism department head, said Bryan-College Station could support even more media.

"I don't think this (media) market is saturated by any means," he said. "In fact, I think there is room for more competition in this market because in this community, we have a relatively high-educated population that has sophisticated interests."

Still, Rogers said possible state higher education cuts may pose a threat to the local economy and media.

"If A&M is cut to the point where the purchasing power represented by A&M and the people who work for A&M is cut, then obviously that has an impact on the whole community,"

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RANDY NICHOLS/The Battalion

Members of Company D-1 work at the Swamping Party Tuesday afternoon. They and members of other companies and residence

halls moved the logs Tuesday evening. The logs have been arriving at the Bonfire site since last week.

Tuition fees increase 10 percent, report says

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BOSTON — The cost of attending public colleges and universities has increased at a double-digit rate for the second straight year, far ahead of state and federal financial aid, the College Board reported Tuesday.

The cost of higher education ranges from \$321 a year at the public, two-year College of the Mainland in Texas City, Texas, to \$24,380 at private Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, N.Y. The highest-priced state school is the University of Vermont, which charges in-state students \$10,006 for tuition, housing and a meal plan.

Average tuition and fees at four-year public universities and colleges rose 10 percent to \$2,315 this year, the College Board reported. Room and board charges the total to \$5,841. At two-year schools, the average increased to \$1,292.

A lot of students have been driven from public colleges and universities and people are also having trouble affording community colleges at this point, said Stacey Leyton, president of the U.S. Student Association.

This fall's 10 percent hike follows an increase of 13

percent last year.

The increase in the cost of private institutions has been slowing, partly in response to competition for a dwindling number of traditional-age students.

At four-year private universities and colleges, tuition and fees now average \$10,498, and at private two-year colleges, \$5,621 — increases of 7 percent and 6 percent. Room and board adds an average of \$4,575 to the cost at private four-year schools.

"Given the state of the economy and its impact on state budgets, many people expected much larger increases this year, particularly in the public sector," said Donald M. Stewart, president of the College Board, a New York-based association of 2,800 higher education institutions.

Many colleges and universities are cutting programs, laying off some faculty and staff, and deferring maintenance of buildings and equipment.

"Even with the big tuition increases, they're still losing ground," said David W. Breneman, former president of Kalamazoo College and a visiting professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Colleges and universities are also being squeezed by falling public budgets for financial aid.

Federal, state and institutional financial aid rose less than 8 percent last year and the maximum