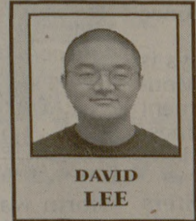


## He drives, he shoots, he scores!

### Bradley's surging campaign could overtake Gore, make strong bid for party nomination



DAVID LEE

overhaul of the campaign-finance system, Bradley is telling the public what they want to hear, while Gore is busy debating the merits of obscure and frivolous legislation with George W. Bush.

If Gore wishes to make it past the primaries, he must follow Bradley's example. From the straightforwardness of his platform to the handling of discrepancies in his past, Bradley has run the ideal campaign. Rather than letting spin doctors and policy planners dictate his moves, Bradley has run the show from the beginning, making him a much more credible, believable candidate.

One such example comes from Bradley's admission of marijuana use during his youth. When addressing questions concerning his drug use, Bradley has stuck to his guns, giving direct and consistent answers.

Needless to say, his marijuana use is now a mere footnote in his campaign. Unlike Gov. Bush's flip-flop approach to his alleged cocaine use, Bradley nipped the issue in the bud early on. He admitted the indiscretion in his recent biography *Time Present, Time Past*.

Bradley also has been the only candidate to draw up a comprehensive alternative to the existing campaign-finance system. Other than Republican presidential candidate Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., Bradley is the only candidate proposing a facelift of the system. He has gone so far as to challenge his fellow presidential candidates to refuse "soft money" contributions, large donations made to the party and then filtered to candidates in order to exceed limits on contributing to individual campaigns.

His proposals include an easier process for voter registration and free political broadcasts on television before elections. His hope is that general federal elections will eventually be funded entirely by the U.S. government.

On the issue of gun control, Bradley's platform is a reflection of the public's recent outcry against the gun lobby. In his interview in *Rolling Stone* magazine, Bradley promised to push forward "the toughest position ever taken by a presidential candidate" toward gun control.

This platform includes mandatory registration of all handguns, required comprehensive safety courses and the elimination of gun dealerships in residential districts.

"We are at a time where there's a growing body of public opinion that will make common-sense gun control a possibility," Bradley said.

The problem with this approach is that Bradley might be promising the public too much. Although his intentions are good, the actual implementation of his proposals are unlikely. Understandably, political pundits have blasted Bradley's approach for its "wish list" nature.

However, the fact remains that Bradley is a welcome alternative to the other presidential candidates.

His common-sense campaign strategy has made him a viable candidate for the Democratic nomination.

Unless the opposition takes note of this, Bradley may be on the fast track to the White House.

David Lee is a junior economics major.



JEFF SMITH/THE BATTALION

## GOP should not balance federal budget on backs of working poor

The Republican Party is at it again. In the '80s, Reagan's "Voodoo Economics" gave a big tax cut to the rich and powerful.



ANN HART

The money the wealthy saved on taxes was supposed to "trickle down" to the common man and create opportunities for the working poor.

But the common folk are still waiting. And it looks like they may have to wait longer still.

The GOP has come up with a smoke-and-mirrors gimmick to make everything work out so they can ride off as heroes into the sunset on their trusty horses.

But they are not considering the condition of their mounts. The horses that are supposed to carry the heroes into the sunset are the working poor.

When House Republicans needed a loan recently to balance their budget plan, they took the money from a tax benefit called the earned income credit, which has given tax breaks to poor families for the past 25 years.

Republicans did not want to touch the Social Security surplus. They did not want to raise taxes for their rich buddies. They did not want to cut any of the pork-barrel programs that keep them living the high life inside the Beltway.

So when they needed money, the most logical place to get it was from poor people.

The idea of asking people to give what they do not have is in-

furiating. But from a politician's perspective, it makes perfect sense to rob someone powerless to stop the crime.

People who are poor do not generally participate in political life. When earning a living is a daily struggle, almost everything beyond the bare necessities must go. Each expenditure of energy must be paid in cash.

Many poor people regard the endless forms, red tape and appointments necessary to collect public assistance a full-time job.

There has been a theory circulating for years that all forms of social welfare and public assistance are actually crowd control of the poor.

When times are tough, aid for the indigent expands.

When the economy begins to grow and create jobs, welfare contracts, forcing people into the job force.

The GOP apparently used this logic — which suggests the poor do not need to be helped directly during economic booms — to justify its elimination of the earned income tax.

Needy citizens who formerly received a lump sum of money from the government, handy for paying debts or buying food, they will get their money in true Republican fashion — the trickle-down way. The result amounts to an interest-free loan for the government.

Maybe it is not fair to blame it all on Republicans.

No one party controls the entire country. Considering Washington's track record, one wonders if anyone is in control at all.

Here is a refreshing idea, Republicans: When balancing the budget, give the poor a break. If that means cutting fat from the budget somewhere else, so be it.

Less is more, especially when it comes to the government. An acceptable alternative for the poor has always been, "If you cannot afford it, do without."

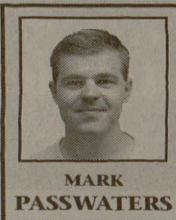
Perhaps the government should use the same frugal rule of thumb when balancing its own ballooning budget.

Ann Weaver Hart is a senior English major.



MIKE LUCKOVICH ATLANTA CONSTITUTION

## Military coup in Pakistan raises fears of nuclear confrontation



MARK PASSWATERS

against the wishes of the military, which has always held great power in Pakistan. Kashmir has been the cause of two major wars between India and Pakistan in the last 52 years, and the Pakistani military still wants to incorporate the mostly Muslim Indian province into Pakistan.

This summer supposed "rebels" took up positions on the Pakistani side of the Kashmiri border, fighting with Indian forces. These forces were at the very least supplied by the Pakistani military and were most likely disguised Pakistani soldiers. As the skirmishes increased in ferocity, India and Pakistan both threatened the other with full-scale war and nuclear annihilation if fighting did not stop. Sharif took the threats seriously and tensions subsided, a development that did not sit well with those supposedly under his authority.

The situation in Kashmir caused the relationship between Sharif and Pakistani Army Chief of Staff Gen. Pervez Musharraf to sour even further, as Musharraf and other military leaders saw it as a loss of face.

Sharif fired Musharraf Tuesday. The military responded by arresting Sharif and taking over the government.

Musharraf claims Sharif was attempting to make himself a dictator and that the prime minister's actions had caused the nation to become unstable.

Whether this is true is not really

an issue to people outside of Pakistan. What is of far greater concern to the world is quite obvious: Are the members of this coup intent on fighting over Kashmir again?

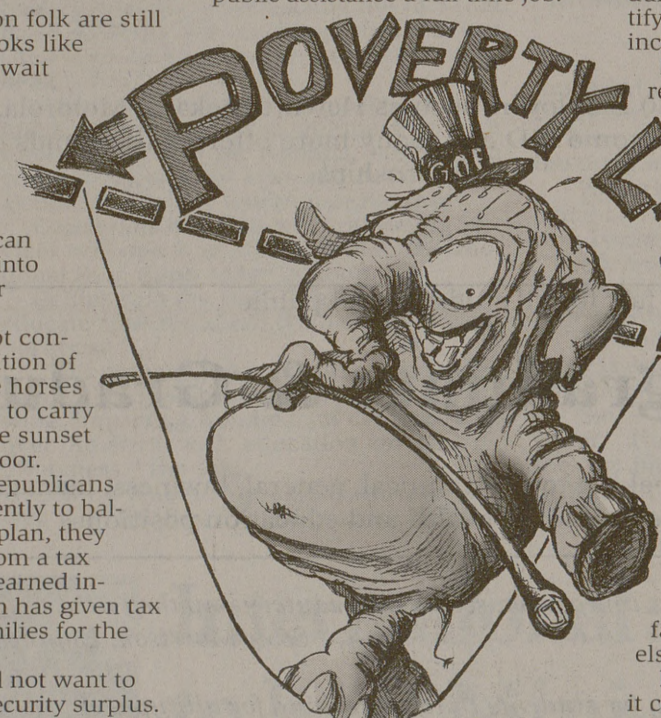
If the answer is yes, the coup could be a disaster for not only Pakistan and India but the whole world. Despite the fact that Pakistan has a population of 139 million and 500,000 armed men, it could not possibly win a war against India. The unwillingness to let the Kashmir issue go, coupled with this almost certain outcome, could easily lead to nuclear confrontation.

While the U.S. State Department says it is opposed to coups and democracy must prevail in Pakistan, it should be worried about something far more basic. Never before in human history have two nuclear nations with so much hatred toward each other had an issue that could lead to confrontation at any time.

The threat of nuclear armageddon makes a slightly bigger impression on the human psyche than the potential loss of democracy. The United States should be doing everything in its power to make sure these new Pakistani leaders will continue Sharif's course on this issue, if nothing else.

Otherwise, the overthrow in Pakistan could be an overthrow of global peace.

Mark Passwaters is a electrical engineering graduate student.



MARK MCPHERSON/THE BATTALION

While the political parties hold conventions and primaries, the working poor will be working.

It is likely they will be working on Election Day, too. And this means the politicians who have robbed them will not have to answer for their crime.

### MAIL CALL

#### Chechen terrorists provoked conflict

In response to Elizabeth Kohl's Oct. 12 column.

Kohl should be more informed and careful in offering her one-sided opinion on political situations in foreign countries.

The murders of innocent civilians were not started by Russia. Chechnya is by no means the innocent "scapegoat" or cuddly teddy bear Kohl portrays it to be. Over

300 people were maliciously killed in their own homes as a result of Chechen terrorists' apartment bombings.

The unprovoked terrorist attack caused Russia's military reaction as a final means to stop the slaughter of its citizens.

Please remember that there are always two sides to every conflict. If you venture to offer your opinion on one, at least make sure you are sufficiently informed on both.

Maria Morgun Graduate Student

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor. Letters must be 300 words or less and include the author's name, class and phone number.

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