

HEY AG!

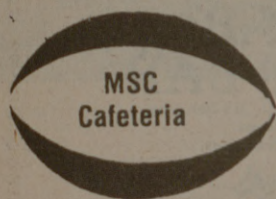
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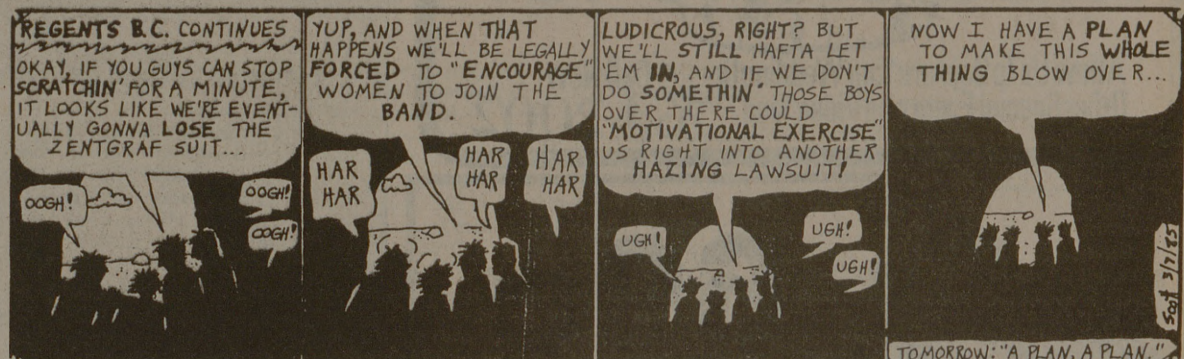
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Warped

by Scott McCullar



Tuition

Smith speaks out against proposed increases

By MARY ANN HARVEY
 Reporter

In a speech Wednesday night, State Representative Richard Smith said budget cuts in higher education would be "unreasonable and irresponsible."

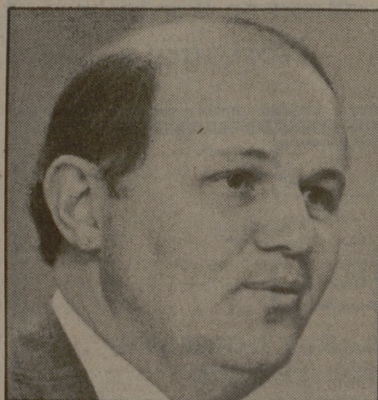
The Memorial Student Center Political Forum invited Smith to speak to students on the subject of budget cuts and the potential effects they will have on college students.

Smith said the proposed budget cuts would be counterproductive because higher education is so important to this country's future.

"I do not support a tuition increase," Smith said. "I don't think that's the way to balance the budget."

Smith said the problem is that the state of Texas, in the last 10 years, spent money in a manner that was imprudent and added that it could have been avoided.

The budget has tripled from \$6.7 billion to \$20.5 billion within the last 10 years, said Smith. Although the population growth has only in-



Richard Smith

creased by 30 percent, inflation has grown 108 percent, he said. Smith said part of this excessive spending is a result of the 1973 energy crisis when oil prices rose from \$3 to \$4 per barrel to approximately \$30 a barrel.

Rather than being prudent with this surplus of money, the state ini-

tiated programs according to the money available to spend, Smith said. He said money should have been put aside for an unexpected drop in revenues.

The drop came when oil prices were reduced which, in turn, affected the state's revenues, he said.

Smith said he is not in full agreement with either of the two proposals under consideration by the House Higher Education Committee for raising tuition.

Smith said he's against indexing as called for in the Thompson plan, which he said would take the responsibility for tuition increases away from Legislature. The Thompson plan calls for a tuition increase for resident students from \$4 to \$15 per semester hour spread over two years. After that, students would be required to pay 15 percent of the total cost of tuition.

The other proposal, the Delco plan, would raise resident tuition to \$20 over six years.

Increasing

(continued from page 1)

chairman for administration of MSC Black Awareness, says some minorities are unsure about attending Texas A&M because there are so few minority students on campus.

"Concern is evident in the fact that recruiters are now presenting black life on campus and making it a point to emphasize that black students are there," Bisor says.

Jose Acosta, chairman of MSC Committee for the Awareness of Mexican-American Culture, says minorities experience culture shock when they first come to campus and a few are hesitant about attending Texas A&M.

"That's where organizations like CAMAC try to help out," he says. "We try to acquaint them with other students and ease the transition."

Taylor says minorities are generally attracted to Texas A&M for the same reason as whites: they are serious about their education.

Also, each year 25 percent of the black students and about 10 percent of the hispanic students are offered a President's Achievement Award, a minority scholarship. These are based on PSAT and SAT results and high school counselor nominations. They provide \$2,000 a year and are

renewable if the student maintains certain grade requirements.

Bisor says the scholarships now give minority students a choice between schools. Previously, he says, the University of Texas' minority scholarship offers "blew A&M off the map."

Taylor says the scholarship winners' progress is monitored closely by the Office of School Relations.

Scholarship students have a retention rate of about 80 percent compared to the University average retention rate of about 70 percent, he says.

Also, about one-sixth of the black students are on an athletic scholarship. Taylor says that in 1979, over half were on athletic scholarships.

Athletes who pursue a professional sports career and drop out of school help lower the retention rate, he says.

"If we could eliminate that particular area, the retention would be fairly high," he says. "But retention in the athletic area has increased greatly since Jackie Sherrill has been here."

Current and former students and high school counselors are valuable sources of minority recruitment, Taylor says.

Bisor says using current students to recruit is a fairly new, and very good, idea.

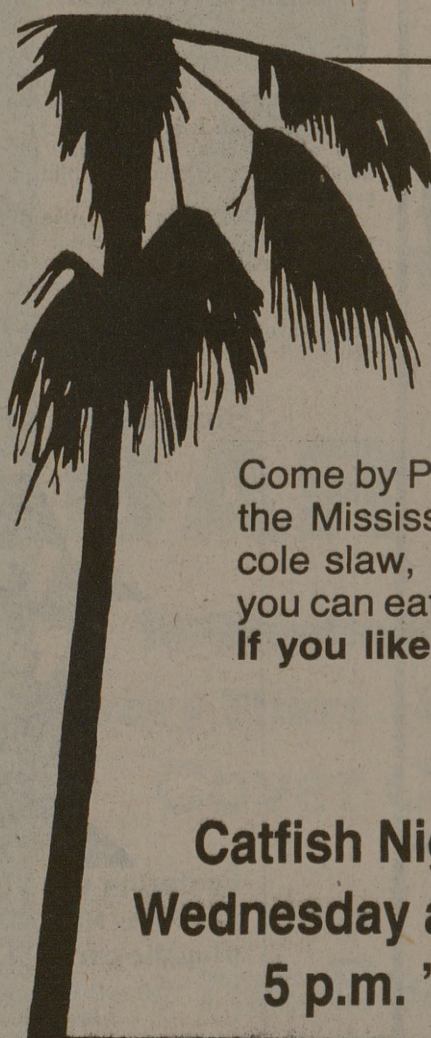
"They're now realizing they can put the student body to work," he says.

The Office of School Relations staff also attempts to visit high schools, especially those in heavily populated areas or that have high concentrations of minorities. The staff tries to make the student aware of educational opportunities at Texas A&M. Then, if the student is interested and willing, the staff will visit the student's home to talk to his parents.

The student is also encouraged to visit the campus. Taylor says if the staff's time permits, they will bring the student here if he is not able to come on his own. For example, Taylor says the office has previously hired chartered buses to bring groups of students to the campus.

Often, the staff will revisit the student, he says.

"We want the student to be fully aware of Texas A&M University," Taylor says. "That's why we feel it's important to visit the campus and see what type of situation they'll be involved in."



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