

Battalion EDITORIALS

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FRIDAY, JUNE 13, 1947

Whither Bound? . . .

We recently read a list of objectives that had been adopted by a non-state-supported university in Texas. Ordinarily lists of objectives make dull reading and are usually ambiguous. Even though objectives become outdated and outmoded, they usually remain ambiguous and unchanged throughout the years.

Believing that the objectives of this university had such a direct application to A. & M., we chose to reprint several of them.

"1. It is the purpose of this institution to provide the kind of informed, thoughtful, and constructive persons demanded in the maintenance and enrichment of Democracy."

We want to know if our engineers, our agriculturists, and our doctors of veterinary medicine are taught that their discoveries and techniques must be adapted to the uses of society and to the furtherance of Democracy?

Right now the entire world is in danger because scientists have been busy making discoveries; they haven't taken time to find out the social applications of these same discoveries. Your existence and mine is threatened as a result of this failure.

"2. Realizing the interdependence of nations in the modern world, we accept as a major responsibility the development of constructive world-mindedness among all our students."

We think that institutions throughout the country have completely missed the boat on this important responsibility.

"3. While _____ University is anxious to provide as much technical education as its resources will permit, it is determined to maintain an increasingly effective program of liberal education because it believes the future of Democracy depends upon the development of persons who know how to think, persons who know how to weigh issues, who are able to discern between truth and error. . . ."

We believe that there is room at A. & M. for the same program. Oh, yes, we can hear the howls go up from the engineering and agricultural schools, but we can even more distinctly hear the walls of those graduates of the A. & M. College whose education fitted them for identifying grasses and for making drill presses, but whose intellectual curiosity had been stimulated so little that they had no understanding of the democratic processes or of their responsibilities as citizens.

Texas University recently received much unfavorable publicity on cheating among its student body. We will wager that the number of students currently enrolled at A. & M.

G O P in Texas . . .

Should Texas adopt the two-party principle in politics? The Republicans of the state not only think so, but are trying to do something about it. Although they shy away from any such designation as "Operation Lone Star," the Republican Club of Texas is conducting a vigorous campaign from Dallas headquarters.

There is little doubt that many citizens of Texas who vote Democratic every election are really Republicans at heart. They say as they vote, "What's the use? Republicans can't win in this state anyway."

The Battalion believes that Texas would be much better off if these voters cast their ballot for a party which nationally represents their ideas, rather than confusing Texas politics by splitting the Democratic party into two quarrelling factions.

Potato Burning Time . . .

Henry Wallace was roundly jeered for killing the little pigs, for throwing oranges in the river, and for plowing under cotton during the depression years. It must be admitted that most of the ridicule came after regaining prosperity.

Last month Americans received a taste of depression medicine when 28 tons of Irish potatoes were soaked with kerosene and burned. This episode took place in Alabama, a state with as high a percentage of malnutrition among its citizenry as any other state which we know.

Coming on the heels of a presidential plea for aid to Turkey, Greece, and Latin America, this wholesale destruction raised a cry of protest from an outraged America.

Secretary of Agriculture Anderson was asked to explain why the United States government was buying Irish potatoes only to burn them, when so many countries were starving. City housewives were asking why they had to pay \$6 a bushel for Canadian potatoes, when our government had Alabama potatoes at \$2.70 per hundred to burn.

who could write a reasonably correct essay or theme would be so small as to create a national scandal!

We think that the gift of expression through the written and spoken word is a precious one.

But we can't blame the student for adopting a false sense of values about such things when his steam lab instructor tells him that steam is the only course, and when his agronomy instructor tells him that his ability to identify grasses is all that counts. When instructors who should know better become a party to such asinine procedures, our only logical conclusion must be "is there any hope?"

Compared to the academic load of other institutions A. & M. students carry a heavy schedule—much heavier than most. We receive little recognition for this as an institution, and we think it is due to a laboratory craze which exists on the campus. Some students spend half their time walking to and from two-hour laboratories that actually meet for thirty minutes. Still we go through the ritual of putting such laboratories in the curricula.

Most students think the present curricula is loaded with chaff. We think so too. Much of this chaff may be found in those courses in which the instructor feels it his duty to acquaint the students with the textbook by reading therefrom for fifty minutes at each class session.

When the chaff is weeded out of the curricula, we favor the adding of more courses in the fields of English, history, modern languages, and other Liberal Arts Departments. We recommend more book reading and more report writing. We are not talking about some of these reports that have been typed over and submitted to instructors for the past ten years. We know of reports that were originally written in the late '30's that are still drawing down good grades. There may be some educational value in the ability to retype a theme, but we think that it speaks poorly of the instructor.

He is either pretty "thick" or he doesn't care. Take your choice.

"4. _____ University believes that the best education for Democracy is truly democratic education. Hence, the school will be operated not by the Board of Trustees alone, nor by the administration, faculty, or students alone, but by all of these groups working in collaboration and cooperation."

With that we must agree. We would add only one qualifying statement: "All privileges must be accompanied by responsibilities."

Now that Texas has been "put back into the union" (according to Ellis Arnall by the freight rate decision of the Supreme Court, we think it time for us to become a "pivot state" in national affairs, rather than one that is considered always "in the pocket" for the Democratic party. And that can be done if Texas goes two-party.

But just as we come to this conclusion, the Republican party has demonstrated that there is one point—just one—on which the most conservative Texas Democrat cannot go along with his conservative Republican friends. Ah, yes, the tariff again. In future histories it may be written that the Republican tariff of 1947, which stabbed Will Clayton in the back, destroyed the hopes of the GOP for an Elephant victory in Texas.

The Department of Agriculture explained the potato fiasco this way, and we are inclined to believe it—The United States government is pledged by law to guarantee Alabama farmers \$2.70 for 100 pounds of potatoes. The Alabama market became flooded, and the government stepped in and purchased the surplus. Freight costs to transport them would have been excessive; farmers didn't want the potatoes for stock feed; and there were no dehydration plants in the area. So the potatoes were burned.

Farm officials recognize the potato incident as only the beginning of a series of headaches in such food commodities as corn, wheat, eggs, fruits, and vegetables. We will have food surpluses in the midst of a world of starvation.

Pictures of Americans burning potatoes don't have much appeal for a hungry man. On the other hand these surpluses could be put to use in rehabilitating an impoverished world. Such foodstuffs could speak louder for the democratic cause than any amount of lip service to the rights of man.

A Short Story Dealing With Long Lines . . .

McGargoyle Pedals From Houston to A & M And Uses Military Tactics to Register

By Ivan Yantis

Gypsum McGargoyle was justifiably weary. After riding his bicycle from Houston to College Station, he wanted to curl up under any convenient tree and sleep; but he had not ridden a hundred miles to doze in the shade. The pith and marrow of his current undertaking was education—he wanted larnin'.



Yantis

his clothing was a quaint mixture of new mufti and thread-bare khaki. Blushing the man riding the lawn mower, Gyp asked the whereabouts of Goodwin Hall, but being as yet uninitiated into the realm of foreign languages he could not comprehend the directions given him. He pedaled up the broad tree-lined avenue looking for someone else to tell him where to go. He did not see the car approaching on the wrong side and scraped into it closely. The policeman in it told him in no uncertain terms where he could go.

At last a kindly looking old chap pointed Goodwin out for him, and he glided up to the side door with a tingling anticipation of being on the threshold of a great event in his life.

"Whatcha need, Bub?" asked the demure young lady at the information desk. She dragged deeply on her cigarette and spat violently on the floor.

"I am a new student here. Could you tell me where to register?" "Cheese, they get dumber every year," she muttered. "See that sign, kid? It says 'New students register here,' hop to it!"

Gyp hopped to it. Here his army training stood him in good stead.

The line which he hopped to wound thrice around the office, did a serpentine sort of movement through the door, and disappeared. It was slower than a tour of guard duty.

Two hours later a thoroughly bedraggled Gyp was at the head of the line just as the recess for lunch was called. Rather than lose his fortunate standing in line, he forewent lunch and chewed the sole of his shoe for nourishment.

When the gentleman returned to his desk after lunch, he stared at Gyp with distaste bordering on contempt. He was a frustrated man whom the vicissitudes of life disappointed. He dreamed of being a sea captain shouting picturesque orders on a wind-swept deck. Occasionally he forgot himself in the office and shouted to his secretary to "Reef the jib!" or "Jettison the mainmast," but she was onto his ways and merely continued her typing, cursing the unkind fate that forced her to support her husband. The desk-bound sailor shoved a ream of papers to Gyp for his signature and told him to go to Sbiaa for registering.

Eight separate and distinct lines extended from the entrance of Sbiaa Hall like the tentacles of an octopus. After three tries Gyp got into the right one and at length arrived at the door, but lacking the proper clearances from the Registrar, he had to run down to the Administration Building, get them, and come back to start all over again.

The man at the modern language table in Sbiaa was a pleasant chap in a beret. He smoked a foul-smelling cigarette with a glossy, green tip.

"Ah, our first sucker—I mean, our first customer. You look like a bright fellow," he purred. "What may I do you for?"

"I want to learn to parlez-vous French," Gyp answered eruditely. "And you've come to the right place, young man. I don't know of any other department here at school that teaches French. Yesir, mighty smart of you to swing your business our way, and we appreciate it, too." He handed Gyp a quarter. "Oh, OH, I see you are new here. Before we can fix you up, you'll have to get approved by the dean, the athletic department, and Good Housekeeping."

You run see them and then come back here." The dean had no record of any Gypsum McGargoyle.

"Are you sure that's your name?" he asked.

Gyp said he was fairly certain it was. At last the records of one Gibson O'Grandiose were decided to be those sought. The athletic department offered him a scholarship if he would wind an electric clock twice a month and play football. He declined, not wanting anything to interfere with his studying. The

let him out till he completed registration. Weakly he started back. However, it was too much for human flesh to bear; he collapsed on the floor, certain that someone would give him succor and more important food.

CRACK! And Gyp flashed up from the floor with welts of pain searing across his back. Composing himself, he noted the source of his agony. The dean, looking quite like Charles Laughton, stood by stonily at his boss's male wielded the cat-o-nine-tails on the unconscious bodies of those too weak to stand up.

This was indeed the survival of the fittest!

Deans Are V. I. P.

Armies have colonels, corporations have vice-presidents, and colleges have deans. Deans are nice people. They have telephones. They have carpets. They say,

Deans are hand shakers in reception lines. Deans are delegates at conventions. Deans make speeches. Deans read the erudite magazines. Deans meditate and when alone, sing softly to themselves, "Curricular, curricula, curriculum."

Deans are as necessary to a college as chromium is to a car. Without deans and chromium you have only junk piles.

Heaven will bless you if you are kind to deans.

"What ho! my good fellow."

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"BEAST WITH FIVE FINGERS"

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and THURSDAY
"KINGS ROW"

The Battalion

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