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THE BATTALION Friday, May 15, 1953

-Editors', Students' Voice-

# **Battalion's Letters to The Editor Policy Explained by Former Editor; Same Today**

gularly.

Co-editor Clayton Selph summed up the objectives, opinion-making and goals of The Battalion in an article April 19, 1951. No material changes in this policy have been made since that time. The article is herein reprinted in full.-The Co-editors.

#### By CLAYTON SELPH **Battalion Co-Editor**

OUT OF ALL the letters written to The Battalion, there fectively. has emerged strong evidence that much of our readership does not know how, why and by whom Battalion policies are formed.

Such a situation is serious because as long as it exists there is little chance for you, our readers, to understand The Battalion and to criticize it constructively.

First, we shall make clear what Battalion opinion is and where it may be found. That done, a discussion of how Bat-talion opinion is formed, who forms it, and on what basis, will be in order.

Occasionally an editorial is printed on page one. When this is done, it is so labeled.

These editorials, and they alone, are Battalion opinion. The Battalion editorial columns are its heart and mind. They carry no by-line and are not signed. They represent the Without them it would be dead and uninteresting to its staff opinion of the newspaper, not that of any particular individ-ual. Several students do research for these editorials and write them. Each of them goes to The Battalion co-editors Battalion editorial opinion. An opinion is expressed on a partifor approval, correction, or rejection.

so it is they who must decide what is shall be.

### **Editors Express Batt Opinion**

The editorial column, then, is that part of The Battalion in which the editors express the opinion of the paper on var-ious questions and problems. Editorials present that side of a question which the editors, after careful investigation and consideration, decide is the right side. It is the opinion of The Battalion as decided by the editors and is not advertised or branded as being any other.

Columns, on the other hand, are signed articles appear-ing on the editorial page or on the sports page which represent not Battalion opinion, but the opinion of the individual writer. Columnists gain the authority to express their opinion in this way be demonstrating an ability to think clearly, showing a sincere interest in the problem to be discussed, and by serving a long and strenuous apprenticeship in one of The Battalion's news departments. Such a piece of writing is an expression of individual opinion, not a Battalion editorial.

letters.

sent both sides of every issue. To the contrary, it is you, our this college.

it is their responsibility to communicate their views to The group that means "A&M College." Battalion in a letter.

The readership has, in this case, a decided advantage, because the letters column is read by more people than is the editorial column. It would be impossible for The Battalion to present these opposition views, because it does not know what they are. If Battalion writers do not agree with the opposing view, it is certain they cannot present it accurately and ef-

The Battalion has always invited and welcomed such letters. And many of them are printed to the exclusion of important news stories that should be published. Battalion editors feel that letters from readers are as important as news, editorials, or any other sections of the paper provided such letters present honest and intelligent views. But in order to stick to our policy we are forced to publish many communications which are a waste of both our space and your time.

## "Batt Should Express No Opinion"

A letter writer has asserted that The Battalion should Battalion opinion is that opinion expressed in articles which are labeled "editorial." For the most part these are found on page two under the heading "Battalion Editorials." express no opinions. We should like to point out here that ganizations, to work on The Battalion if there was no editorial opinion.

and its readers.

Many letters have implied that the readers must accept cular issue not primarily to swing your views from side to The co-editors are responsible for this editorial opinion, side, but to encourage your interest and investigation. It is for this reason, and so that it can serve you, that The Battalion investigates and strives to locate the side of right of every issue.

If you think through a problem carefully and find you still disagree, fine. We have done our job and you have done yours.

## How Is Batt Opinion Decided

Now, just what do we take into consideration when desiding what stand The Battalion should take on a particular issue? For the key to this we will go to the slogan found just under our nameplate at the top of page one. It reads, "Pub-lished in the Interest of A Greater A&M College." We do not take that slogan lightly. When we take a stand on any issue, our decision is weighed in the light of those words.

Just what does A&M College mean, as used in our slogan. To us, first and foremost, it stands for an educational institution owned and administered by the people of the State of Texas.

So that opposing opinion may be expressed, The Bat-talion, like other newspapers, opens to its readers a space for letters. That means you and I, your parents and mine, and other citizens who have no sons in College. It also includes the elected, appointed and employed officials of this State and One writer has charged that The Battalion does not pre- those include the employees, faculty, and administration of

Letters to the editors column of The Battalion has played a vital part in the campus life of A&M students. Demanding as much, if not more, readership than any part of the paper (with possible excep-tion of the comics), students make use of this means of expression re-ti is their responsibility to communicate their views to The

So it is that we ask ourselves, "What is best for Action College?" And, as you know, what we decide is best is not al-ways what the college administration or the student body this heat the college administration or the student we are fool that we are

doing so "In the Interest of A Greater A&M College." Like-wise, when you put your opinions into a letter, we expect your thought also to be in the interest of A&M.

Of necessity, if the college is to grow and prosper, your the South. Although his term as thoughts cannot be only in your interest, the interest of the president of A&M was short, his Senior Class, the civilian students, the Cadet Corps, or any other segment of A&M. All of A&M and the years ahead must be considered.

Keep in mind in your criticisms that when you lash out at the entire paper you are speaking to many students who are giving their time in your interest. Criticism of Battalion thinking should be defined as such, that it will pertain only to the co-editors, who are responsible for receiving and considering such criticism.

# **Famous** Prexy

(Continued from Page 3)

While serving as governor, Ross heard of a school on the Brazos River, which was failing and would soon be closed by the legislature. The school was called Texas A&M and had the reputation of being a reform school for incorrigible boys.

Ross told the Legislature he would take the presidency of this school if it was not closed before he finished his term as governor. The Legislature agreed not to close A&M, and Ross took the presi-dency in 1890. Before long he had

A&M just so they could be near the famous president.

When Ross died on Jan. 4, 1890 his death was mourned throughout memory will always be a symbol of the college's greatness.

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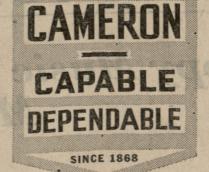
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