

Letters to the Editors

Editors, The Battalion:

I would like to take this opportunity to announce my resignation as managing editor of The Battalion.

My reasons for this action, after four years of working for the publication, are as follows:

I feel that as a newspaperman, I cannot work under a situation in which "the general policy" of the newspaper is dictated by persons who are not familiar with the operation of a newspaper.

It has often been said, and loudly, that students are irresponsible when it comes to determining what should and should not be run in a student newspaper.

I don't believe it. The only criteria one should consider in weighing news values are truth, integrity and honesty.

John Brandeis, former U. S. Supreme Court justice, once said in an opinion that the greatest danger to liberty comes from persons of zeal, well-meaning, but without understanding.

The action of the Student Life Committee could be considered in this light. The committee passed a resolution which the entire group had not studied. They did it after a concerted effort by certain student groups who were displeased with coverage of their activities, both public and undercover.

The whole situation stemmed from the John Clark incident in November. Shortly thereafter, the cadet colonel of the corps, his scholastic officers and the fourth group commander came to The Battalion office and said they thought it was wrong of the editors to have printed the story of Clark's ouster. They claimed the printing of the story "hurt the school."

It was not the printing of the story which hurt the school as much as it was the presumptuous action on the part of the students involved in the action.

A student newspaper, if it is to function effectively as a training ground, must be free and uncensored to provide the most realistic atmosphere for the novice journalist.

Many other colleges also have publications boards. The reason given for most of them is that the college administrators feel that college journalists are too young and inexperienced to successfully cope with the problems of operating a newspaper.

When they employ this line of reasoning, the administrators defeat the entire purpose of the college newspaper: that of an effective training ground.

In situations where college editors are free to make their own policies, the editors are in charge of newspapers, not watered-down, rose-colored presentations of what the few think the many should be allowed to read.

I loved this newspaper as much as a person can love something basically inanimate. My life at A&M has been enhanced by my service on this publication. For you who helped kill her by voting for the Student Life proposal, you have my enmity, for you who tried to stem the tide and save her, my thanks. I don't want to work for a publication which goes by the name newspaper if it is no longer that.

Chuck Neighbors '54

Editors, The Battalion:

A newspaper was killed last night.

It doesn't happen often, and when it does it is a sad thing.

Last night a group here acted to put a supervisory board over The Battalion. Cloaking their ideas in high-sounding phrases, this group has killed The Battalion.

Neither this group nor any of the other groups or individuals here who supported their idea used the nasty word 'censorship.' They didn't have to. It's written in their actions.

In every country, at some time or another, there arises a group that is afraid of the truth. To further their own aims, this group

first attempts to silence the free press.

In the United States, our country's fathers recognized this element of society, and checked it by assuring freedom of the press in our Constitution.

The Battalion has consistently printed the truth, no matter who or what it hurt. Like all newspapers, The Battalion believed its primary obligation was the dispersal of objective news.

But some people here didn't like that. They objected to The Battalion printing stories of the senior boot affair, the John Clark case, the theft by students of \$2,500 worth of goods, and many other things, all true.

These people have won. They have killed the newspaper by taking away its freedom.

It's a sad thing. This can be considered as my resignation. I loved The Battalion; it was a great newspaper. Someday it may come back, free to tell the truth to the people who deserve to know.

To all the people here who believe in The Battalion and who have helped us fight censorship, thank you.

To those who have helped kill The Battalion, congratulations. I hope you're happy with what you have.

Harri Baker '55

Editors, The Battalion:

Certain individuals and groups on the campus have seen fit to silence an organ of freedom. Although hiding behind a cloak of words, the proposed publications board can only spell censorship in its worst form.

But why do these individuals and groups wish to oversee the publications of the campus—more specifically The Battalion? Here's why:

When John Clark was ousted from school for expressing his views on student life here, The Battalion printed the whole story. People on the campus immediately said The Battalion had, in the act of printing the story, done something detrimental to A&M. But was it the act of printing the story or the act of ousting a student that was detrimental?

No disciplinary action was taken against the men who were responsible for Clark's leaving school.

After the Clark incident, definite actions were begun to try to control The Battalion, but to little avail. Last night, the persons behind these actions succeeded in their purpose when they had a censorship board passed over student publications. But they hid censorship behind the word "supervision."

One person admitted that the publications committee was aimed primarily at The Battalion. However, they still insisted that the committee was not to censor but to "advise."

By "advise" the committee said that if they "advised" an editor to do something and he did not comply, then he would be removed. But they said this was not censorship. What, then, would they call it?

Does the college fear that if the people of Texas know a few bad things about A&M along with the many good things that our enrollment will drop? Is this why they want to "advise" the editors of The Battalion? Are they afraid of truth?

A&M College has a great past, and possibly a great future. However, if the main object of a college is to educate, how can this be accomplished if one of the country's principal freedoms is suppressed? Maybe they are afraid of education.

A&M will have a hard time living down the many things that have happened this year. But the suppression of free-thinking, even though it differs from your own opinion, will never help remedy the situation.

With deep regret I submit my resignation.

Jon Kinslow '55
Former City Editor

The Battalion

Lawrence Sullivan Ross, Founder of Aggie Traditions
"Soldier, Statesman, Knightly Gentleman"

The Battalion, official newspaper of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas, is published by students four times a week, during the regular school year. During the summer terms, and examination and vacation periods, The Battalion is published twice a week. Days of publications are Tuesday through Friday for the regular school year, and Tuesday and Thursday during examination and vacation periods and the summer terms. Subscription rates \$9.00 per year or \$3.75 per month. Advertising rates furnished on request.

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News contributions may be made by telephone (4-5444 or 4-7604) or at the editorial office room, 202 Goodwin Hall. Classified ads may be placed by telephone (4-5324) or at the Student Activities Office, Room 909 Goodwin Hall.

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Editors, The Battalion:

I hereby submit my resignation as feature editor of The Battalion. This resignation is given with both a feeling of regret and a feeling of pride.

I'm proud of my three years with The Battalion because I can look back and say I worked with a newspaper—one that never bowed to any group and one that never gave up its primary purpose of printing the truth.

Its aim was printed boldly on its masthead—"Published Daily in the Interest of a Greater A&M College." And to the day the censorship board was placed over it, it carried out that aim.

I think it is unnecessary to elaborate on the things the paper has done for the college, the community and the students. When College Station residents pass their new school buildings, they'll remember. When members of the college staff pass the Memorial Student Center and see new projects and new-born democratic organizations, they'll remember. When students look at the improvements made in the last few years, they'll remember. Yes, a lot of people will remember a lot of things.

There never has been nor will there ever be an organization which can meet the demands and needs of the people of America without constructive criticism. Improvement is the synonym for America and this applies to everything including colleges.

A&M has made many gains over the years, gains which we were proud of. Yet, like anything else, there are many things to be sought. Only through constructive criticism can these things be accomplished.

With the coming of the editorial board yesterday, A&M hurt itself and its students much more than either realize. A&M is in a head-on race backwards. But the board is here, and no mere words in this letter will do anything about it or cause anything more than a few cursory words.

So I hand you my resignation and keep my pride and regret. I wonder if those who voted in the board can keep half as much?

Bob Hendry '54
Ex-Battalion Feature Editor

The Editor (or to whom it may concern)

The Battalion

Dear Sir:

As I tender this resignation from the staff of The Battalion, there is little I can say that hasn't been said in various letters reprinted in these columns.

I deeply regret the need to sever my connections with the newspaper, but to continue writing under an editorial board would be more offensive to me than anything I can imagine.

The light has been turned out on the campus, and I certainly do not choose to remain with those who prefer to grope about in the dark.

For the record, I would like to say I have not always been in accord with editorial policies, but to establish a censoring panel is a gigantic leap in the wrong direction.

I can speak with a great deal of authority on the subject of "canned news" since I lived on it for three and a half years, along with the entire Japanese civilian population.

As a prisoner of war, I was given only the war news the Japanese wanted me to hear, so I never believed anything they told me.

Under an editorial board, A&M students will be given only the news considered fit for them to read. How much will they believe, and for how long?

Since I already possess a paid-up subscription to The Battalion for the remainder of the school year, I plan to receive future issues fully prepared.

I will sit down with The Battalion in my right hand and a resignation

in my left, for as long as I can stand it.

Bob Boriskie '55
Ex-News Editor

Editors, The Battalion:

The Student Life Committee has set up a publications board to guide and assist, in other words censor, The Battalion.

Sponsors of this board say that censorship is not intended. Yet they readily admit that the editors would be removed if they differed in opinion with the board and continued to publish the paper as they saw fit. The grounds would be incompetence. If this isn't censorship, what is it?

It is not a newspaper's job to print stories that will merely be pleasing to the readers. Its job is to print the news, whether pleasant or unpleasant to certain institutions and individuals.

There has been a drive in recent years to limit news and news sources in all parts of the country. This country was not founded on such principles and when the college segment of the population, men who will be leaders of the nation tomorrow, begin to think along this path, our social system is certainly on the downgrade.

This move toward censorship has been so open that Sigma Delta Chi, the national professional journalism fraternity, has had to go on record recently as opposing censorship in any form or inference.

Therefore, I feel that the only course left for me is to separate myself from The Battalion and this publication board.

Gerald P. Estes '55

Editors, The Battalion:

It's hard to give up something you have worked for so long, but after last night's action of the Student Life Committee, I have no course but to resign my position as sports editor of The Battalion.

Over a period of several years now, a small but powerful group has tried to gain control of The Battalion under the disguise of some kind of "advisory" group. Well, now they've got it—you can judge for yourself from here on whether it's for good or bad.

But first I want to get in my two-cents.

The name of A&M will be blasted on the front pages of the state's papers again. Some will say it is all because of the action of a small, narrow-minded clique that controls The Battalion. They have a right to say this if it's what they think.

But it's not true, and here is why. This staff has always printed the news objectively on the news

pages of The Battalion. On the editorial page, as on the editorial page of any other newspaper with a spinal column, the opinions of the editors have been openly published.

And for this, among other things, a censorship board was set up.

Sure, it's not called a censorship board, but do you think a news story on the John Clark affair would have appeared in The Battalion if this board was in existence then?

But the school was hurt by printing the story, you may say. Stop and think—was it the printing of the story or the forcing out of school of a student who expressed his opinion that hurt the school? Some people didn't want that story printed, but it was printed anyway.

Some people didn't want the story printed about the students who had stolen \$2,500 worth of property. Bad publicity for the college, don't you know? But it was printed anyway.

I'm proud I worked on a newspaper that printed these things. I hope that you have been proud to read a newspaper that printed them—because you won't be reading anything like that anymore in The Battalion.

Jerry Wizig, '55

Editor, The Battalion:

To the Bowlers—

Can this new committee censor bowling scores? Why not? If it can censor everything else, it can

pass on bowling scores. So from now on out, if you good, freedom-loving Aggies want to find out who bowled what, come on over to (See LETTERS, Page 4)

Looking for a Spot to Begin a Career?

THE Bell Telephone System offers a wide variety of opportunities for graduates who can qualify.

Next Thursday and Friday, February 25 and 26, officials of these five Bell companies will be at the Placement Office to talk to A&M men about a career when they graduate:

- **Western Electric . . .** manufacturing unit of the Bell System. Also develops, makes, and services electronic products for the armed forces.
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- **Sandia Corporation . . .** applied research, development, and design on ordnance phases of atomic weapons.
- **A.T.&T. Company . . .** builds, maintains, and operates the nation's interstate communications system.

How about dropping by the Placement Office and arranging to talk to these officials?

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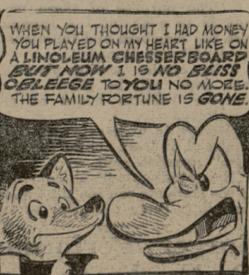
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