

"I alternate between the two to express my individualism!"

ABM Fight Looms

Last Tuesday, President Nixon told his news conference he would announce the fate of the proposed anti-ballistic missile system early this week. Now he has postponed that announcement until Thursday. One reason for the delay could be that Nixon is reluctant to commit his administration and the nation to an immediate deployment of the system because he anticipates negative public and legislative reaction.

Opponents have pointed up several major flaws in the pro-ABM arguments, including the following:

The system may be obsolescent before it is deployed. It is not intended to defend against sophisticated Russian offensive ICBM's but only against the first Chinese threats in the 1970's—threats which will go past the system's capabilities to meet them.

The \$8 billion price tag on the first, "thin" system is likely to be multiplied by subsequent attempts to defend against the Russians. Sen. Stuart Symington recently cited a Washington research organization's estimate that this figure could reach \$400 billion—more than the entire amount of the national debt. Defense spending for the Vietnam war has already forced curtailment of needed social-welfare programs, and Sen. Edward Kennedy has asserted that further such diversion of billions of dollars "could divide the country."

An often-heard argument in favor of the system is what columnist William H. Stringer has termed the "instinctive, 'knee-jerk' response" to news that Russia is installing a similar system: "We'd better do the same, pronto!" This presumes, of course, that Russia makes no errors in defense policy, and thus ignores completely the system's drawbacks.

Some backers of the system contend that this sort of "keeping up with the Joneses" is needed as a backdrop to the summit talks expected sometime this year. With both the U.S. and the Soviets organizing defensive missile systems, the argument runs, negotiators could comfortably consider cutbacks in offensive weaponry. But Former Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, in opposing the system while in office, noted that U.S. superiority in offensive weapons gives it enough second-strike strength to offset great numbers of defensive missiles.

The initial \$5 billion which Congress voted last year for the originally-proposed system is an undeniable reality. But Senate opposition to the Pentagon's "reappraisal" and subsequent hiking of cost estimates also seems increasingly real, with Majority Whip Ted Kennedy leading that opposition. If Nixon foresees a major battle for appropriation of the additional funds, his reluctance is understandable.

LISTEN UP

the batt forum

Editor,

The Battalion:

I detest not being allowed to name individuals . . . but, we certainly don't want to hurt their feelings (if they have feelings).

Coffee is more important to some individuals than is Silver Taps. The following is a fine example of what is not an Aggie. While posted as a road guard at Monday night's Silver Taps, I had the misfortune to watch several young "people" stroll into their dormitory while Silver Taps was being played. All concerned knew the meaning of "Taps" . . . at least, they claim to know. Confronted with the information, one individual—class of '70, and

professing to be a former member of the Corps of Cadets—claims it to be no one's business other than his own. Further, he states that he is not an Aggie, but a "student." I agree, definitely he is not an Aggie; we might also question his relationship with the human race. Surely there is a place where this individual and his comrades can more easily be "merely a student."

Don R. Mathis '65

★ ★ ★

Editor,

The Battalion:

To the Duncan Dining Hall Staff: My compliments to the chef. The steaks were good last night.

Gary Martin '71

Bulletin Board

TONIGHT

Aggie Wives Bridge Club will meet at 7:30 p.m. in the Memorial Student Center. Intermediates question period begins at 7:20. Regulars, intermediates and beginners with previous instruction are invited.

THURSDAY

Tyler-Smith County Hometown Club will meet at 7:30 p.m. in room 2-C of the MSC. Pictures will be taken; wear Class "A" Winter or coat and tie. Sweetheart will be elected.

Gavel Club will meet at 7 p.m. in the YMCA basement.

Mid-County Hometown Club will meet at 7:30 p.m. in the lobby of the Memorial Student Center. Club sweetheart will be elected.

DeWitt-Lavaca County Hometown Club will meet at 7:30 p.m. in room 203 of the Academic Building. Officers will be elected.

Tonight On KBTX

- 6:30 Here Come the Brides
- 7:30 Good Guys
- 8:00 Beverly Hillbillies
- 8:30 Green Acres
- 9:00 Hawaii Five-O
- 10:00 Final News, Weather and Sports
- 10:30 Wednesday Night Movie "The Young Lions"



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THE BATTALION

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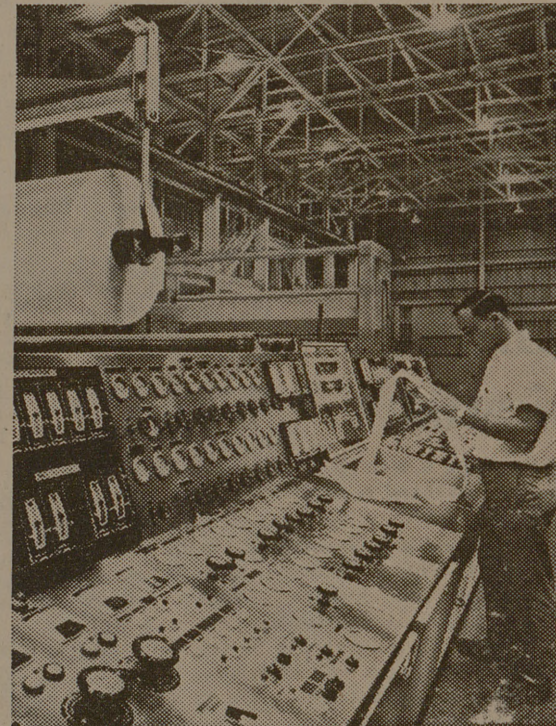
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On campus

Tuesday, March 25, 1969

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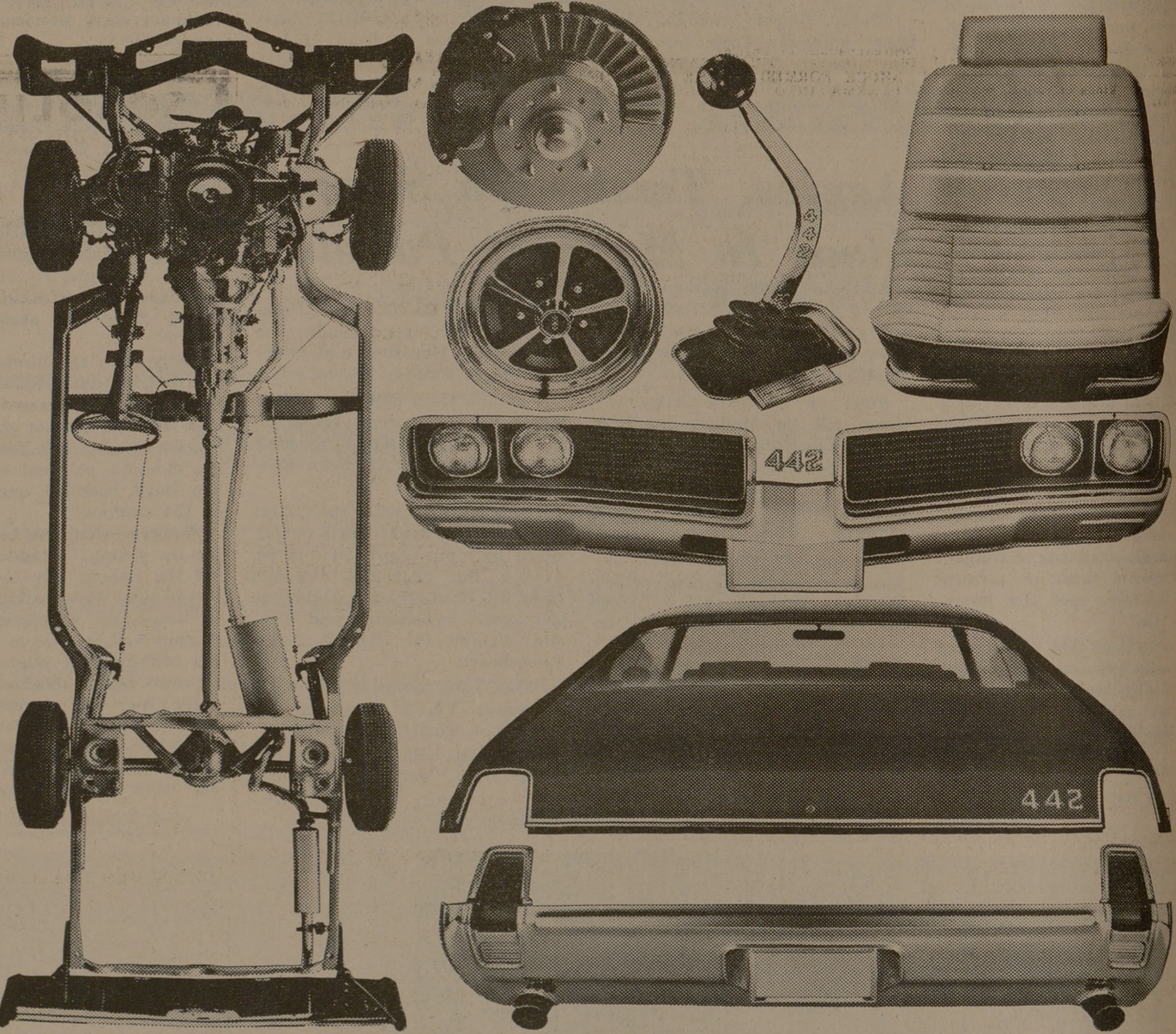
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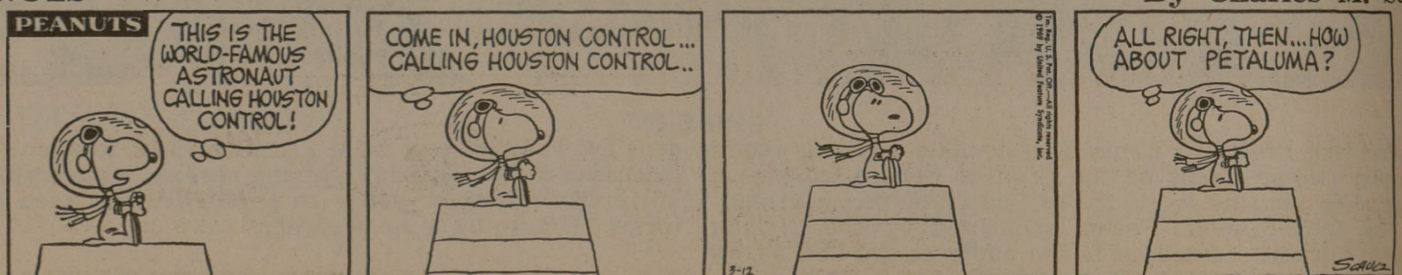
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