

Listen up

Knocking the editor's replies

Editor: Although I respect the editor's opinions as a third-party observer and, in fact, agree with many of them, I was under the impression that "Listen up" was for the students to express opinions on topics important to themselves and to be answered by other students with their own opinions. It seemed that the editor's job in this column consisted mainly of presenting the letters, noting any clear misstatement of facts, and providing answers to questions asked of or accusations made to the university administration.

I feel the editor should restrict any personal comments to editorial articles, as was done in "The 'real' Aggies" (September 28). An editor exerts a great amount of influence just in choosing the letters to be published without making a student's opinion look foolish by following his letter with a reply, at times indignant, which the student cannot immediately answer. Last year's editor of *The Battalion* began in the same way, and this matter was called to his attention. This university has its share of dissenting opinions, and many of these may be unnecessary, but freely debating issues is to be preferred to having a campus of 14,000 conformists.

Finally, if this letter is printed, let us learn what other students think. We do not want the editor to supply our replies.

Peggy Pearson '69
P.S. At the risk of being labeled a "militant coed," I think that "Maggie" is a pretty nickname for "Margaret," but to be a Maggie is depressing.

Replies to letters are one way I can express editorial policy on subjects without having to write a lengthy and repetitive editorial. Also, they are letters to the editor, which is me, and I feel I have a right to reply.

On the subject of selecting which letters are run, I run all that are legible, even those that

are not typed, and aren't vulgar or incomprehensible. Occasionally I don't run a letter because it says virtually the same thing as another one has, but other than that, everything is run.

If there are any other opinions on the replies, or opinions of the same sort, I'd like to see them. —Ed.

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Editor: What has happened to Texas A&M? What is becoming of the "West Point of the South?" Are we not becoming as any other university in this country, only that we have a large ROTC program.

These are questions that should and can be asked by just what has been said and seen of only a month of the 1971-72 school year. Traditions. Traditions are what makes this fine institution and they are already beginning to die. Progress is the main reason given. Why should this be?

Students are losing respect for the Corps, for which this school was established and still stands for. Letters have been exchanged back and forth in this Listen Up column and this also produced an editorial. What was accomplished by all this exchange?

And now another tradition is being eliminated. That of midnight yell practice. A changed route, for reasons that aren't very substantial and could be taken care of by more than changing the route. Yell practices are something no other school in this country can boast. Especially the "march on Kyle Field."

The next thing that we will eliminate will be "Sawing Varsity's Horns Off" — or standing at the game or by not even lighting the Bonfire, if there even be one.

The Friday night yell practices have been the same for more than 30 years. It involves the whole school—but the way the new route change is, it will involve no one but the Corps and will become no more spirited or exciting

than our Tuesday yell practices. Criticism was given the civilians for not participating, this way they aren't even given a chance and miss the fun of yell practices, which are probably the most exciting thing on this campus.

The Twelfth Man needs all the support it can get. It needs all the spirit it can give to those "Fightin' Texas Aggies"—if a shorter route is being sought for the reason of having a shorter yell practice or because the "going is rough" to Kyle Field, then this institution is defeating its purpose of building men.

Aggies, let's get together. Let's join in getting the Spirit of Aggieland back to where it should be. Let's support the Twelfth Man and those "Fightin' Texas Aggies."

My feeling, as probably is most of the student body, is that the route should not change and something should be done otherwise to elevate the problem.

W. Morris '74

A&M as the "West Point of the South" or as a school that stands only for ROTC is dead—fortunately.

As for Midnight Yell Practice being eliminated, that's not quite true. The intent of the changes is to make the practice more effective, rather than the semi-riot we now have.

If you wish to keep marching on the old route to Kyle Field, be our guest. But you might want to know that soon Military Walk, a major part of it, is to be converted to a hole in the ground, and therefore mud. I doubt the Band will mind you climbing over and around the slime, but please don't ask them to do it.—Ed.

★ ★ ★

Editor: First of all, I would like to apologize to all civilian students and Maggies who feel that Corps members have insulted them in one way or the other in the past several years. I myself have been

guilty, I know, of doing just that on occasions at yell practices, football games, etc. However, I would ask these people to understand that being a member of the Corps is perhaps a somewhat more passionate experience in respect to belief in Aggie and Corps traditions than being a civilian student.

You might note that I differentiate between Aggie and Corps traditions, for that is the point of this letter. I feel that many people fail to realize that many former Aggie traditions accepted by the one-time all military student body are now Corps traditions, such as juniors doing pushups at yell practice, fish spurs for the SMU game, and many others. Personally, I feel it would be absurd for civilian freshmen to "whip-out" like Corps fish. However, I would expect all Aggies to hump it, wildcat, and stand erect during the Spirit. Those are examples of Aggie traditions. All I ask is that civilians accept and respect Corps traditions, both civilian and Corps member alike stop bear-baiting each other as teasings and Aggies do, and all Aggies unite behind the Fightin' Texas Aggie football team, which will be in the Cotton Bowl on New Year's Day.

Kim Bannister '73

Senator speaks on population

Often, an article excites me either for its honesty in an age of compromise, or for its novel approach in an era of redundancy. Last year, at Texas A&M, Senator Robert Packwood (R-Ore.) presented a speech that really seemed to have less circulation than it deserved, at least I never heard about it in Indiana last year. I would like to use this column to share some excerpts from that speech in case some of you missed it.

ON POPULATION: Let's take a look at the population problem just of the United States. By the year 2000 . . . we're going to have 300 million people . . . we'll have roughly half a billion people by . . . 2050 . . . That's one problem, the second being we have more women in the child bearing age . . . than they are spread throughout the rest of the population . . . So even if we reach a replacement rate of 2.11 children per family today, we will level off . . . between 275 and 290 million people.

. . . I'll set forth a postulate, . . . Packwood's Population Postulate: the quality of life is inversely proportional to the number of people times the square of the area in which we live.

ON CONTRACEPTIVES: It does no good for them to be available if people don't know how to use them. . . the ultimate . . . purpose ought to be to make contraceptive information and devices available to every person . . . re-

gardless of . . . educational background . . . income. So that nobody gets accidentally pregnant.

ON ABORTION: We have no more right as a government to compel pregnancy than we have to compel abortion. . . I've introduced the National Abortion Act, which if passed, would simply void all of the state abortion laws that have any restriction . . . that prohibits a woman's right to have an abortion.

ON VOLUNTARY STERILIZATION: . . . there's no reason why . . . we cannot again . . . make available . . . information and facilities to encourage . . . those who would like to have sterilizations.

ON POLITICAL ATTITUDES: You've got to quit being a spectator in the game of government. "can't" is a euphemism that politicians use to say "I won't" don't want to."

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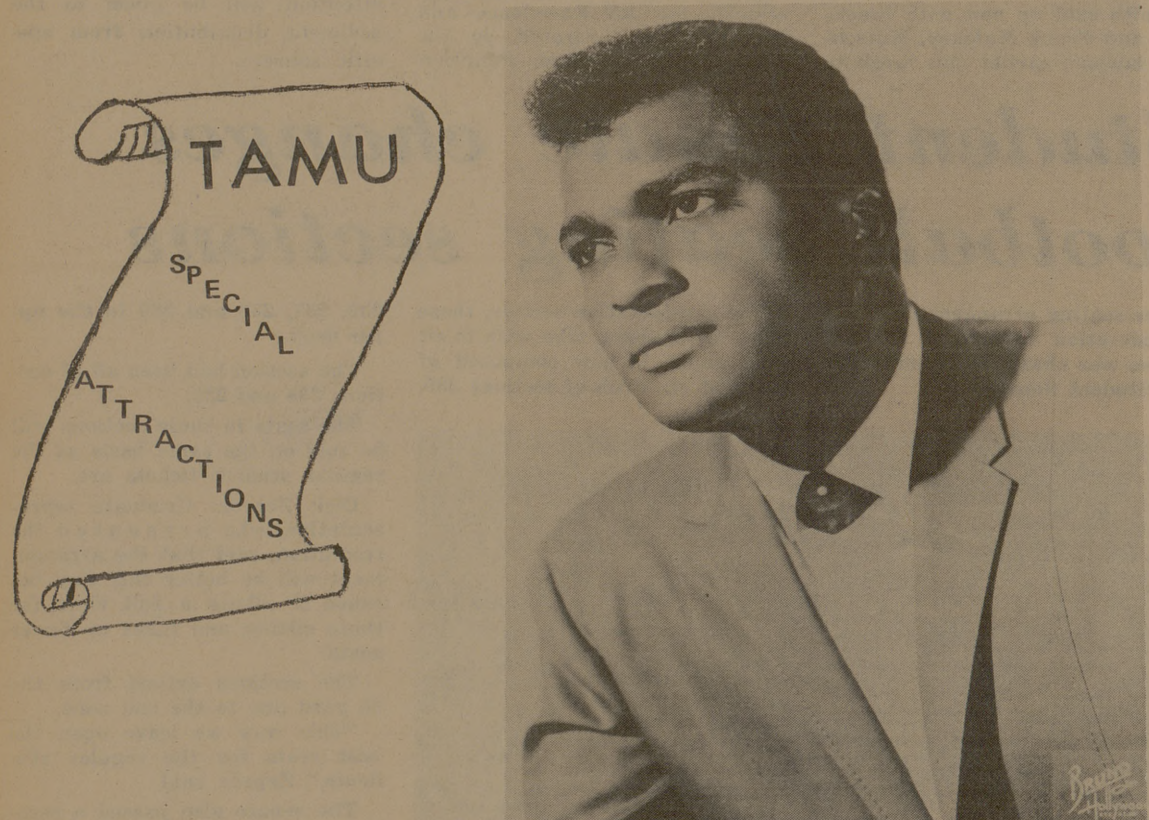
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