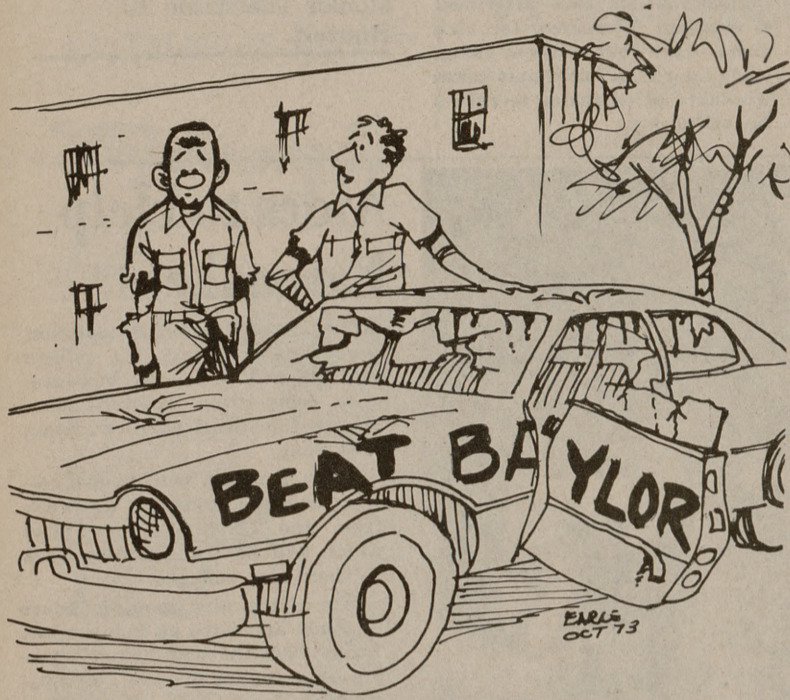


CADET SLOUCH

by Jim Earle



"Next time we get that bear, we'll use your car!"

Batt Commentary

Concerned Voting

To some, the upcoming November 6th constitutional amendments election may seem like an exercise in futility. The Texas Constitutional Convention is scheduled to begin January 8. Any amendments ratified in November will be rendered null and void when the new constitution is accepted, so why bother to vote on amendments destined for elimination?

The Constitutional Revision Commission, headed by Robert W. Calvert, has completed its work and submitted a modified version of our state constitution. The new draft, about 13,000 words long, is probably an improvement over the 50,000 word monster we now have. But all is not rosy. Most agree the draft represents an improvement, but many controversial portions of the document were forged out only after heated and sometimes bitter debate. Wordings were approved, then revised after more discussion. Narrow decisions existed in many instances.

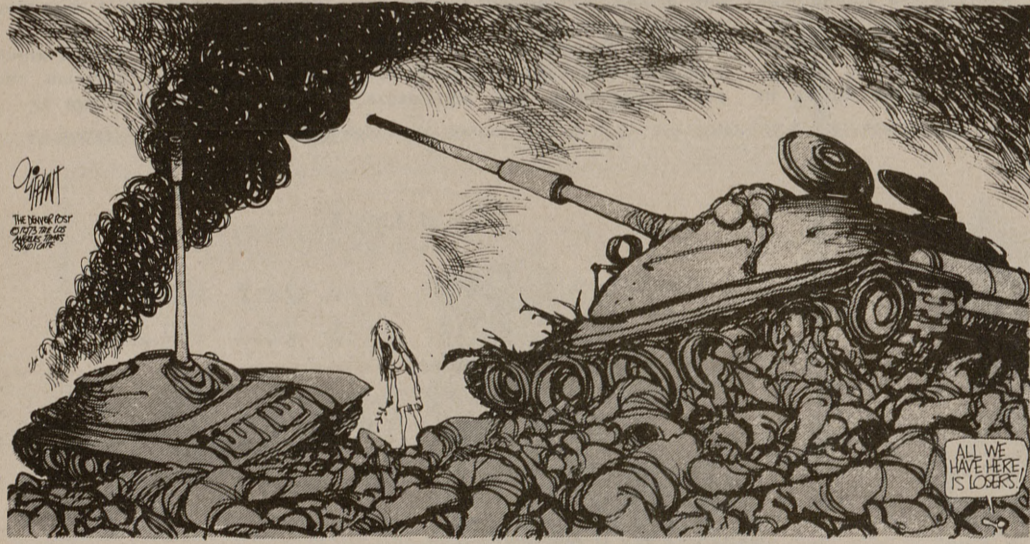
The list of controversial items provided in the new constitution includes prohibiting garnishment of wages for personal service, prohibiting the state and its political subdivision from "sponsoring or operating lotteries or other gambling enterprises," and the deletion of the "right-to-work" guarantee.

A group of Republican legislators, has said it will oppose any candidate for the constitutional convention who does not support a right-to-work clause. Some members of the revision commission, dissatisfied with the results of the commission's work, are openly lobbying for rejection of the new draft. In short, the new constitution may not get finished next year, meaning we are stuck with our present constitution and its amendments.

Secondly, since the convention will be composed of legislators who are subject to the pressures of the powerful and ever-present Texas lobbies, the final document may just be unacceptable to enough Texans that it does not get ratified in the general election next fall, in which case we are once again left with the 1876 model and amendments.

Either event would justify voting in the next election. Finally, even if a new constitution is adopted, the outcome of next month's election is important. The election will, if enough people vote, give the legislators a show of public opinion on the issues with which the amendments are concerned.

Vote, the effort won't be wasted.
—Rick Brown



The Battalion

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Lease Line

Housing Commission Answers Queries

By BARB SEARS

These questions come from current cases being handled by members of the Fair Housing Commission.

Question: I signed a nine-month lease at the end of August, but I want to move out of my apartment in December. What can I do?

Legally, if you are 18 years of age or older, you are bound to fulfill your lease, if you absolutely must move out; however, you should tell your landlord as soon as possible (at least 30 days before the date you wish to leave) and you should both try to work something out. Most landlords are agreeable to such action if a replacement tenant can be found, so you would probably not get any hassle at all if you could find someone to move in when you leave.

If you cannot find a replacement, you will probably not get your deposit back. The landlord would be justified in keeping it to cover the next month's rent while he tries to find a new tenant.

ant.

Because students' plans change so much, the FHC strongly recommends that student tenants demand three-month or semester leases unless they have lived in the apartment complex previously and are familiar with the manager and the rules.

Question: I paid a deposit for a college Main Apartment in the summer, but the apartments were not completed at the beginning of school this fall. The management put up many of the tenants in a hotel, but then had us move in, although the apartments were not completely finished. In my case, there was not an apartment available and so they offered me a storage room for temporary accommodation. I reluctantly agreed, but when I came to move in, the door of the room was locked and the manager was nowhere to be found. I want out now. I am sick of the whole thing. How should I proceed? Can I sue them?

Answer: If you were promised a place to live for September in your lease, then the landlord is clearly in violation of that contract. The wrong done you is obvious, and because you have such a good case, I don't think you will even need to sue. The FHC will assist you in writing the owner and demanding your deposit and rent back. If the landlord will not cooperate, then the next step would be the courts. If the sum is under \$150, the Small Claims Court will help. You can file your claim at the office of the Justice of the Peace, in the third floor of the Brazos County Court House.

If the total is over \$150, you will need a lawyer to represent you in county court. If you should win in county court, your attorney's fees would be paid by the landlord. As a rule, however, the Small Claims Court is much faster and less trouble, and there is less danger of being stuck with attorney's fees.

Question: I moved out of my apartment in August and still haven't gotten my deposit back. I need the money pretty badly right now. How can I get it back

soon?

Answer: If you moved out in August, that was before the new rental law came into effect which states that deposits must be returned within 30 days. The old law which it replaced just said that deposit refunds should be made within a "reasonable

amount of time." However, if you have waited more than 45 days, there should have been plenty of time for the landlord to check his records and issue you a refund.

You should personally contact your manager again, and the Fair Housing Commission will contact him also. Usually a few well-plac-

ed reminders will work. If you not get a response within a week then we can write to the landlord and state in definite terms, a "reasonable amount of time" has now elapsed and if he does not return your deposit, you may to obtain it through the Small Claims Court.

Alert Effects Broad

(Continued from Page 1) to report there. The fort is on an alert. All forts in Texas are on alert and all people assigned to military bases in Texas report immediately.

Many scheduled activities at the bases were cancelled Thursday, but not affected were the mock warfare maneuvers at Ft. Bliss near El Paso, with units from Ft. Bliss, Ft. Hood and some military units from New Mexico taking part.

Air Force Maj. Bill Duerre, information officer for the maneuvers, called Brave Shield VI, said, "We haven't changed our plans. As far as exercises are concerned, it is 'go.' I cannot comment on the alert or beyond the scope of this maneuver."

At 2 a.m., the 67th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing and Austin 2nd Tactical Co., Bergstrom AFB, Austin were put on alert and all personnel ordered on duty.

Wives of officers at Goodfellow AFB at San Angelo were quoted as saying their husbands were called to duty "in the middle of the night."

Maj. Morrow S. Crum of Sheppard AFB at Wichita Falls, would not comment on the alert but other sources confirmed the base was on alert status.

Kelly AFB and Ft. Sam Houston at San Antonio reported they had issued "certain alert procedures."

"We are in a state of readiness now," said Col. Harry Huff of 433rd Troop Carrier Wing, which was assembled for an early morning briefing. He added, "We are sitting and waiting for instructions from headquarters for

any possible future action."

Lt. Larry Burriss, public information officer at Dyess Air Force base at Abilene, confirmed that security procedures for getting on the base were tightened. Two retirement ceremonies, medal presentations and a parade scheduled for Thursday were canceled.

In Dallas, Air Force Col. "Chappie" James, a former Pentagon ace and now a public relations officer for the Pentagon, was scheduled to speak to student leaders, teachers and Dallas school administrators Friday. The speech was canceled.

Texas Legislature

(Continued from Page 1) also be considered when voting. Those favoring the amendment cite the present pay scale, \$4,800 per year (the national average is \$16,000) as evidence enough for change. Basically there are three kinds of people who can suitably live on the \$4,800 salary: those who are wealthy; those who have businesses which do not demand constant attention, and those who receive assistance from various patrons. An adequate salary for legislators would mean more independence from special interest lobbying and fewer pressures from having to have outside employment. The corruption in Texas government, say proponents of the amendment, the willingness of Texas state legislators to engage in illegal activities for personal gain, in part stems from a need by our elected officials to supplement their meager \$4,800 salary. "You get what you pay for," say proponents of the amend-

ments and if we want quality officials we are going to have to pay for them.

Opponents question the argument that higher salaries will necessarily attract better officials to state office. Since state office is an honor as well as a job, type person who runs will be for the position anyway, regardless of the pay scale. Also, opponents, Texans do not want expensive full-time politicians running the show. Part-time citizens—part-time legislators are better judges of the needs of the citizens of Texas. Presently a legislator receives \$4,800 for 140 days work every two years. \$4,800 is adequate compensation for 140 days work, say opponents, and the 140-day sessions leave the legislator 500 days to augment his income in his private occupation. Increasing the salary would just be a waste of taxpayer money, they continued.

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