

NSL marches on!

Usually in circles or going the wrong direction

WASHINGTON — The National Student Lobby, a product of the Sixties' student activism, is \$57,000 in debt, one month behind on its staff payroll, fighting annual rumors of failure, hiring a new executive director and hoping for a better day.

Debts are such that any one of its creditors could force the lobby into bankruptcy. The current NSL director, Arthur Rodbell, said the staff could earn \$60,000 in a week



selling bumper stickers, but he'd rather not do it that way. He is looking for student volunteers.

If the NSL does turn itself around this year, and avoids predictions of ruin, it will still have to solve the problems of disenchantment and philosophical differences in its diverse membership.

NSL's financial instability has never recovered from a management decision to double the payroll to cover full-time salaries for its seven-member staff.

The \$300 NSL receives from its full-member schools and \$150 from half-members, along with a canvassing operation in the District of

Columbia, account for the only income for the four-year-old lobby.

The approximately 175 member schools of NSL are faced with a choice, either put out the time and effort needed to stabilize the organization or abandon this form of collective lobbying.

The Washington-based lobby started in April of 1971 as an outgrowth of two California state lobbies. The California lobbies were supported entirely from student government funds, and the campus politicians still make up the core of its membership.

Take the problems of individual student governments and amplify them to a national scale and you have NSL, a former NSL director commented. Long-winded orators and heavy bickering over relatively minor procedural points take their toll on the effectiveness of the student workshops at the conference. Political subgroups spring up and vie for power within the organization, often downplaying efforts to influence Congress toward student-backed legislation.

ing, since the only bill he was concerned with has been supported by our local congressman, Ole Teague. The bill would provide a \$1,500 tax break per student for parents. The new external affairs vice president, Jerri Ward, did talk to Teague Friday, but confined his discussion to possible topics for A&M's annual Student Conference on National Affairs (SCONA). She is planning chairman for SCONA next year.

Carol Moore, one of NSL's 18 directors and an A&M student, remained in College Station during the conference due to a time conflict and confusion with student government over the paying of her expenses.

Both the A&M and Texas Tech delegations have claimed the lobby, which they contend is controlled by eastern schools, has not adequately represented their campuses feelings.

NSL staff members point to their annual student referendum as their indicator of student opinion. However, there is a question as to how reliable that indicator is. Rodbell says he hopes member schools give the referendum as much circulation as possible (preferably through a ballot at school elections). He admits however, there is no guarantee of adequate dispersal of the referendum. Rodbell has no record to refer to if returned referendum represents one student opinion or 1,000.

NSL is at a low ebb, but a former chairman of the NSL Board, Willie Edwards, had a few words of optimism for conference delegates. Every year, he said, when everything looks like it's going to fall, we come back and meet again and lobby on Capitol Hill.

Just the facts, ma'am

Was Williams unresponsive? Decide for yourself

A funny thing happened on the way to selecting next year's Battalion editor.

President Jack Williams' much-touted committee system failed. Although two members of the Student Publications Board, Dr. Gary Halter and Student Body Vice President of External Affairs John Nash called for reconsideration of the selection of James Breedlove, board chairman Bob Rogers refused to call a new meeting.

On Thursday, Feb. 27, Williams

said that of the two present candidates for Batt editor (LaTonya Perrin and Will Anderson), one would not be editor as long as he, Williams, was president of TAMU, even if it meant no student newspaper were published.

This comment was taken to indicate an animosity by Williams toward Perrin. On Friday, March 28, Perrin went to see Rogers, associate professor of journalism, for advice.

Rogers suggested she go to Williams and ask what the problem was

and "be frank" with him. After deciding on this course of action, she asked Rogers if there were any others who might be able to do the job that he would suggest. They discussed as possibilities Will Anderson, Judy Baggett, Roxie Hearn (all of the Batt staff), John Coleman and James Breedlove. Rogers indicated that he considered her as his preference of those discussed.

Before leaving, Perrin asked if she could count on him for a recommendation from Rogers for Williams if he had any questions about her professional qualifications. Rogers assured her that she could.

Perrin then had a similar conversation with C. J. Leabo, journalism department head, in which he said he considered Greg Moses, present Batt editor, another good candidate for the position. He, too, assured her that she could count on him for a recommendation on her professional qualities for Williams.

The next week, Perrin went to Williams' office to see him about the statement. She was told that the quote had been misinterpreted by not only those on the Batt staff, but also by the university community as a whole.

Williams indicated that he did not have any particular objections to Perrin being editor, but felt that to try to clear up the issue at that point would only make the problem worse.

Over spring break, Rogers was announced as the new head of the journalism department, effective Sept. 1 and head of the Publications Board, April 1. Leabo had earlier announced that he was stepping down. The Publications Board was to be reorganized, with all faculty members replaced. The students were not to change because of administrative difficulties with such a change so close to the end of the semester.

Board meeting on April 8 when the board elected a new editor for next year, four of the new appointees voted for Breedlove. The tie-breaking vote being cast by Rogers.

The two voting student members voted for Perrin as did one faculty member. The third student member abstained.

On the day following last Tuesday's vote, Halter was booted from The Battalion office while he crossed the parking lot. Halter went to the office to talk to Greg Moses, present Batt editor, and Rod Speer, last year's editor and present city editor who had been the boosers.

After learning of staff discontent with Breedlove's selection and the possibility of a massive staff walk-out, Halter went to see Rogers and asked to change his vote. He was told that the process was already complete (meaning Williams had approved the recommendation) and that it was too late to do anything about it.

The recommendation had not been approved by Williams. That was done some time Thursday afternoon, Williams later revealed. When other members of the Batt staff learned Halter wanted to change his vote, Gerald Olivier and Mike Perrin talked to Halter at his

home that night.

Following that meeting, Halter agreed to ask Rogers for a new meeting, Thursday morning. Perrin then talked to Nash who also agreed to request a new meeting.

The Batt talked to Halter following his conversation with Rogers on Thursday. Halter indicated he would not push for a new meeting to avoid hurting the publications board's image.

"I made a mistake, and I admit it, but not for publication," Halter said.

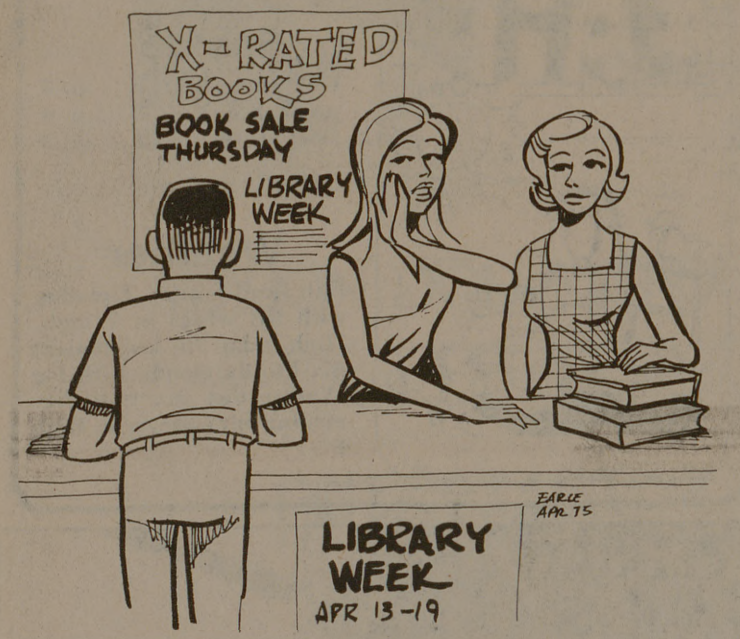
Batt staff members assumed Williams would want the board to make the best choice for Batt editor rather than decline calling a new meeting to help its image with the administration. With this in mind, Olivier and Douglas Winship, Batt news editor, talked to Williams in his office Friday morning.

"I don't care what the present Batt staff thinks," Williams said, "I received a nomination and approved it. I'm not going to reverse that because somebody talked to the Batt staff and now wants to change his vote. If Dr. Halter made a mistake, he'll have to correct it next time."

Just goes to show, the good guys don't always win. Or do they?

Slouch

Jim Earle



"We don't really have any, but we'll have a big turn-out, I bet!"

The Battalion

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Address correspondence to Listen Up, *The Battalion*, Room 217, Services Building, College Station, Texas 77843.

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