

Readers' forum

Czechs again; round two

By DAVID KORANEK and ALTON PRIHODA

Since our first letter in this column last week in which we complained about the University's decision to discontinue the Czech language program at TAMU, Dr. Anne Marie Elmquist, Modern Languages Department Head and Dr. W. David Maxwell, College of Liberal Arts Dean, attempted to defend their position on this issue with some rather unsound arguments.

In her so-called clarification of the Czech situation in the April 29 issue of the Battalion Dr. Elmquist stated that she had not promised that Czech would be continued if enough people signed up for it but that the petition would be forwarded to Dean Maxwell. This definitely was not the impression she gave us, whether by miscalculation or intention, and the entire Czech Club feels that they could not have misunderstood her at that meeting last fall. Her remark that she was surprised at not having heard from us earlier was quite humorous, the facts being that we had not even heard of the decision to drop Czech until late in the spring of 1975 and additionally, most of us had not been on campus during the summer.

Dr. Elmquist mentioned only one specific case of an attempt to locate a professor and gave the rather silky excuse that "other advertisements and correspondence yielded no positive results." She failed to mention whether the department had ever considered hiring someone who could teach both Czech and another language, which was an important point we made in our first letter. Specifically, we know that a certain Dr. Holik was not considered because, having received his PhD from Texas A&M he was given the impression that, since it is somewhat unofficial University policy to frown upon hiring its own graduates, he probably would not get the position, if one was available. Isn't it odd that Dr. Elmquist herself received her PhD from Texas A&M, in the same field

as this very well qualified candidate, and that she is now Department Head.

Dr. Elmquist also stated in her letter that the petition that she had requested and received was undated, a point which is obviously insignificant and irrelevant. We feel that this statement alone is highly indicative of her true feelings on the TAMU Czech language program.

Most of the statements in Dean Maxwell's letter in the April 30 edition of the Battalion were not only inaccurate but indicated his total ignorance of the Czech language program here at Texas A&M. Perhaps the Summer Study Program was no secret at other colleges and universities but it certainly was a Texas A&M. To cite specific evidence, last spring an announcement from the Department of Modern Languages appeared in the Battalion concerning the University's Summer Study Program for German, French and Spanish students with no mention whatsoever of the Czech program. With discrimination of this sort no wonder so few students knew of the Czech language program.

Another of Dean Maxwell's statements was that "only by widespread promotional effort did we succeed in attracting the 25 students from across the nation." There was no widespread promotional effort of the program, what little was advertised certainly was not done through the efforts of the "we" to whom the Dean refers (it was done personally by Prof. Skrivanek), and not only were 25 participants easily found but another 19 applicants had to be turned down due to the number of available scholarships.

That there should be chagrin on the part of the University that only 5 of the participants last year were Aggies is not entirely clear. After all, that number was quite reasonable considering the enrollment in Czech at that time and that not all of the students were qualified or desired to participate. In previous years more Aggies had participated. Moreover, what better means does the University have of advertising itself

throughout the state and nation than by accepting as many non-Aggie participants as possible. Also, the Dean had stated quite clearly that economics was a primary reason for discontinuing Czech and what could be more economical than out-of-state participants paying 10 times the tuition rate of students from Texas.

Finally, Dean Maxwell stated that "at the expiration of our agreement with the University of Prague, one of the universities mentioned was prevailed upon to continue the program, none of the others indicating a willingness to do so." Firstly, this statement indicates how familiar he was with the Program because the Czech institution concerned was Charles University in Prague — not the University of Prague. Secondly, to say that University of Texas was prevailed upon is hardly correct and a much truer statement would have been that they took it immediately upon learning that it was available, no questions asked. Thirdly, no other university communicated a desire to take over the Program because as late as January of this year Texas A&M still had it, but within a few short weeks it was under the direction of UT. Certainly these other universities believed that A&M was not stupid enough to give up a program of which it was "justifiably quite proud."

We hope that these facts have helped to "clarify the clarifications" of this issue and regret that to do so we had to resort to personal attacks on the University faculty and administration and question their motives and credibility.

Hopefully, everyone is now more aware of the one-sided battle that we in the Czech Club have been fighting and will show their support and interest. You are urged to attend this semester's last Czech Club meeting to be held tonight at 7:30 at T2C Hensel (married student housing). For more information feel free to call 845-4242 or 846-2252.

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Listen Up

Corps helps unite students

Editor:

Regarding the letter you ran comparing the Corps to a social fraternity (Spirit erosion, May 4), there are a few inaccuracies.

Kee Nethery said the Corps "divides and isolates students from each other." The Corps is less than one-twelfth of the school now, but the traditions that are supposed to make A&M unique are preserved by cadets. Notice the predominance of close-cropped hair at Silver Taps. The gathering for the campus muster in G. Rollie was three-fourths cadets. Divides and isolates? No, the Corps plays a major role in keeping this cross-section of American youth united to the extent it is.

Nethery suggests cadets must climb a social ladder. That implies

hell week and frat parties. The Corps offers hell for two years and some beer. There are differing opinions about the value of the training the Corps offers, but I think one thing is obvious. The "ladder" cadets have to climb is not easy and it is certainly not social.

The Corps and the Greek system do not have the same goals. The majority of cadets go on to a hitch or a lifetime in the armed forces. I suspect that very few members of fraternities go on to be professional Greeks. Also, did you ever notice that all cadets tend to look pretty much alike even though they represent different social classes, races and nationalities? A uniform is a very efficient method for social leveling, and there's nothing wrong with that.

The biggest difference is the method of entering either the Corps or a social fraternity. The Corps accepts anyone who passes the physical. Some cadets quit the Corps because of grades, personal problems or a plain dislike of Corps life. But no one is denied admittance because he didn't play politics with his upperclassmen.

I am not attacking social fraternities or civilians or anything. If that is what students enjoy, then it's no concern of mine or anyone else. It's just that I resent being accused of taking from the unity of the school. The Ross Volunteers as they are now may be pretty close to being a social fraternity, but the Corps as a whole? No way.

Will Anderson

Druggist speaks

Editor:

In regard to the article in the April 29 Battalion, concerning use of

psilocybin mushrooms, several important facts were omitted. Number one, it failed to mention that these mushrooms are found only in cattle manure, and that all others, even though they may fit the description given, should be strictly avoided.

Secondly, concerning the psychological hazards of their use, the article made no mention of how to avoid a bad trip other than complete abstinence. Because of their tremendous power to alter one's state of consciousness, mushrooms (like LSD and mescaline) should generally not be used where the user is confronted with the normal social situations. Psychedelic drugs often bring about an experience which is

far too 'heavy' for socializing. One should not use them in the manner as alcohol and marijuana. Users should know that the stress and direction of a trip is often dependent on the setting in which the drugs are taken than the drug. Also people should be aware that a mushroom trip is not necessarily any others and can be radically different. Should a person have a bad trip it is advisable to get them in a safe place and try to talk to them. It is unnecessary to take such persons to the hospital because a trip lasting about ten hours, and the legal hassles resulting from a hospital visit, much worse than the bad trip.

Name withheld by request

Reporters needed

Applications for positions on the summer and/or fall Battalion staff are now being accepted.

The Battalion is seeking part- or full-time reporters to cover campus, city and sports news on a voluntary or paid basis, according to qualifications and availability of funds. Also, photographers are needed.

Application forms are available in Reed McDonald 217 between 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. weekdays.

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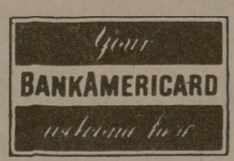
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