

Editorial

A modest proposal

As Texas A&M approaches its Centennial Celebration, an opportunity for the University to take a firm step forward presents itself. This coming January, three positions on the Board of Regents must be filled. What better way could A&M fulfill its goal of being "planned for the future" than to take the progressive step of seating a student on the Board?

This act by itself would reveal the true spirit of change for the better and erase the image held by some that A&M is just a "cow college."

The idea, at first thought, seems to be radical, not because it transgresses any deep-seated American principles, but only because it is untried.

The idea is actually of a conservative nature in that it reaffirms basic American democratic principles.

While it would be a first in the history of Texas' state universities, the primary motivation behind such a move would be representation for those who currently have none. This idea of being fairly represented is the same one that motivated a cluster of colonies to take on a world power 200 years ago in their quest for a voice in their own affairs. From this struggle was formed the basis of representation of the citizenry on which our nation stands.

In recent years many students have felt that the Board of Regents was beyond their influence. By substituting one of the positions on the Board with that of an elected student representative, a vitally-needed line of communication would be opened. When one takes into account that the decisions of the Board affect every student, the logic of a student voice on the Board, even if it is in the minority, is obvious.

The election of the student member of the Board could take place in the spring preceding the year he or she would take office. Obviously, for a student to be elected to this one-year term, he or she would have to be responsible, experienced, and concerned with student problems or there would be no hope of receiving a majority of the votes.

Even though the ultimate decision rests with Governor Dolph Briscoe, he can be strongly influenced by the recommendations of the Board of Regents.

The young people of today must be drawn into the mechanics of our political system through the efforts of today's leaders or else our system will fall by the wayside in time.

D.F., J.N.

Readers' Forum

Guest viewpoints, in addition to Listen Up letters, are welcome. All pieces submitted to Aggie Forum should be:

- Typed triple space
- Limited to 60 characters per line

• Limited to 100 lines

Submit articles to Reed McDonald 217, College Station, Texas, 77843. Author's phone number must accompany all submissions.

Slouch

by Jim Earle



"What scares me most about dressing like this is th' fear that my mother will hear about it!"

Queen Elizabeth not the second

Editor:

I am a Scots Aggie, and I'd like to point out your mistake in labeling Queen Elizabeth of Great Britain with "II. (Batt., 21 Sept.)"

This is a popular misconception, mainly disseminated by the English, and exhibiting their arrogance in regarding their country as being all there is to the United Kingdoms (sic).

The present monarch is Queen Elizabeth I of Great Britain. How come? Well, the first Queen Elizabeth lived and reigned before the union of Scotland and England in 1707—and with her successor in 1603, James VI, England was brought under Scottish rule to begin with. Thus the present queen is Elizabeth I of Scotland, as the whole country should properly be called. (We Scots can be almost as bad as the English.)

Colin Crombie '79

Showing respect

Editor:

This past weekend I found still another in the long list of reasons for being proud to be an Aggie. During the Texas A&M-Kansas State football game I watched two Kansas students do what an Aggie would never do, they embarrassed their school with their bad manners.

During the half-time period several Texas A&M alumni were in-

ducted into the Lettermen's Hall of Fame. They were introduced and presented with plaques in the center of the field. On the east side of the field two of the Kansas football trainers played a private game of toss with the football.

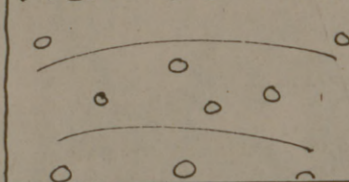
I can understand that the cere-

mony was of little interest to the

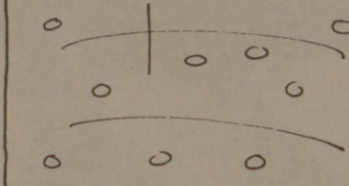
but out of respect for the men be- honored, I feel that they could have refrained from their game. It was distracting to the people sitting behind them who were trying to watch the ceremony.

La Donna Young

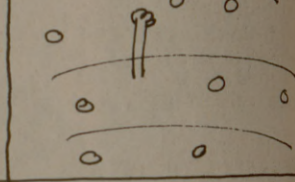
Further more...!
TODAY'S DISCUSSION
WILL CENTER ON
THE HIPPIE
DISCOVERY OF GRASS



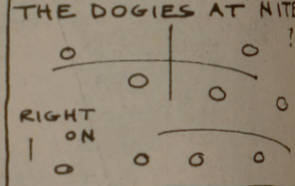
SIR, HIPPIES WERE
NOT THE FIRST TO
DISCOVER GRASS -
KICKERS WERE



YES, SEAT #34 -
WHAT IS IT?



I MEAN WHAT ELSE
IS THERE TO DO
WHEN YOU'RE OUT ON
THE RANGE WATCHING
THE DOGIES AT NITE?



Carter handled tax reform issue sloppily

WASHINGTON — What Jimmy Carter didn't need before the first debate was what he got — a rip-roaring controversy stemming from his own sloppy discussion of the sensitive subject of taxes.

The whole strategy of the past two weeks in the Carter campaign had been essentially defensive — to avoid giving President Ford any

opening that would allow him to take the offensive against his challenger.

The Carter camp liked the first debate just as it was — on domestic issues and the economy, with Ford defending the record of the past two years and the status quo, and Carter promising he could do better.

The speech Carter gave to the Michigan AFL-CIO last week showed he was loaded for bear on the economic issues. It was tough, specific and effective — all the things worried Democrats have been saying he must be in his confrontation with the President.

And then in a weekend interview with the Associated Press, Carter incautiously opened the door to counterattack by a discussion of tax reform that can be charitably described as confused.

After telling the AP — as he had many other interviewers — that his idea of tax reform "means people who have a higher income would pay more taxes at a certain level," he was asked what constituted "higher" in his mind. "I don't know," he said. "I would take the mean or median level of income and anything above that would be higher and anything below that would be lower."

Well, a "median level of income" is a specific measure. In 1974, it was \$12,836 for the median American family, and it's gone up slightly since then.

If Carter meant what he said, then Republican vice-presidential candidate Bob Dole was justified in declaring that the Democrat planned to raise taxes for half the American families — including those in that \$12,000-to-\$15,000 bracket who are not normally considered affluent.

But that interpretation was unacceptable politically, whatever its economics. Stuart Eizenstat, Carter's issues director, undertook to redefine the middle-income family up to the \$25,000 level. Whatever a median means to other people, Eizenstat said, for Jimmy Carter it means the bottom, the middle and all but the top 10 percent.

Not to be outdone, Ford in an interview with Reader's Digest said he wanted to cut taxes for a "middle" group of families from the



David S. Broder

\$8,000 to the \$30,000 level, which bends the meaning of words even further.

There is more than semantics to this problem, for the real roadblocks to effective tax reform come from the politicians' worries about that very "middle-income" group. Carter discovered that fact earlier this year when he incautiously hinted that he might tamper with the mortgage interest deduction — a mistake he has been trying to recant ever since.

But the fact of the matter is that we cannot forever avoid the conflict between tax reform and the tax privileges of middle-income families. There is no way to balance the books without boosting income taxes for many who do not consider themselves rich.

Until this year, when it achieved modest reform without an overall tax reduction, Congress has been avoiding this dilemma by sugarcoating its "reforms" with tax cuts for everyone.

That is a delightful system — with only two drawbacks: higher budget deficits and an overall tax system that is increasingly inequitable.

As the individual income tax rates have been reduced, we have moved further and further from the point where even prosperous times can produce a balanced budget. And we have shifted the burden of financing government to other, more inequitable taxes — flat-rate federal payroll taxes and the regressive state and local sales and property taxes.

The income tax provides a steadily smaller share of federal revenues, while Social Security taxes provide an ever larger share. Between 1974 and 1976, it is estimated that Treasury revenues from flat-rate payroll taxes grew \$16 billion, while the receipts from the so-called progressive income tax grew only \$11

billion.

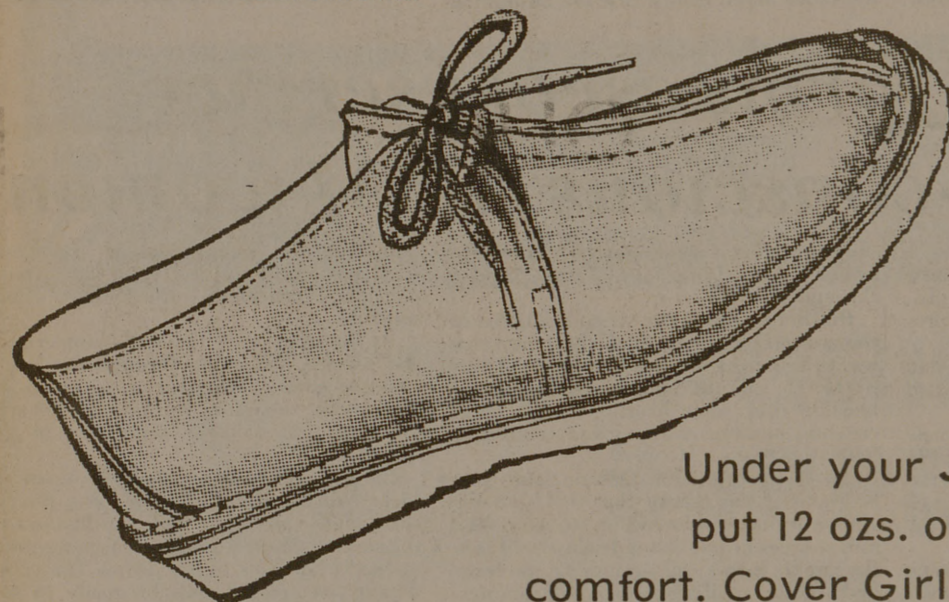
Real tax reform in this country must begin by restoring the federal income tax as the prime instrument for financing government, and in turn requires realistic, upward adjustment of the rates for the middle-income families. Ford and Carter are equally guilty of avoiding this reality, but Carter compounds it by the pretense of promising reform without the political courage to describe honestly what it would entail.

His comments to the AP were politically dangerous, but his habit of disowning them was even more disingenuous.

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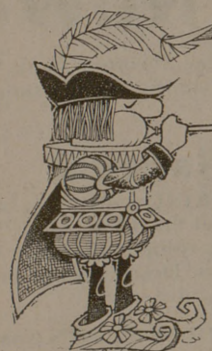
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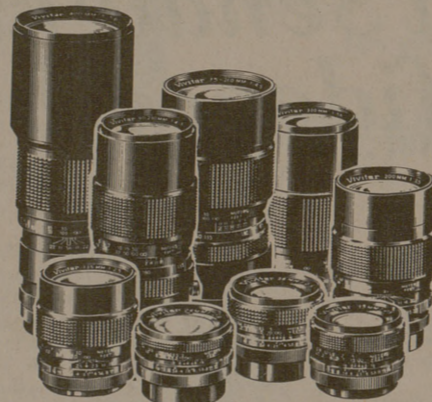
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