

Opinion/Commentary/Letters

'Fraternities build, not divide spirit'

Editor:
I, too, would like to comment on the rise of Greek Fraternities and Sororities at TAMU. The purpose of these organizations here is not to divide the Aggie Spirit, but rather to build that spirit and contribute to Texas A&M. These groups do support Texas A&M — in body and in spirit.

The Greek organizations are involved in Bonfire, not only as individuals but also as groups. They will be found in the cutting areas and guarding. They will also be found giving blood, at yell practices, football games and any other Aggie activity. They are among the first to carry on the "Howdy" tradition.

The point I am trying to make is that those members of Greek Sororities and Fraternities are AGGIES first just like every other student attending this University. We are not divided on our unity to this University nor do we intend to divide the Texas A&M campus. I don't know how these organizations are any more prohibitive than many others here. Any person is eligible to apply. The money and social aspect are not quite as drastic as many people tend to think.

Yes, as you might guess I am a member of a Greek organization. I had my doubts about them until I looked closer, met the people and realized that these organizations among other things perform many community services, provide scholarships for those who need them, give access to a variety of social functions (these are not our primary functions!) and provide many friendships.

So please, before deciding that Greek organizations are only detrimental to TAMU because they are inclusive and divide the student

body, take a look from both sides. I was surprised when I did. Yes, I'm glad to be a member of a Greek organization, but more importantly, I'm proud to be an Aggie.
Pam Ellis '78

Upholding ideals

Editor:
In reference to the article by Kevin Venner, I feel that an opinion opposing the GSSO should be stated.

In my opinion (and others) there should be no recognition of a gay organization at Texas A&M. Any time that an issue opposes the highest morals of the general public the reputation of those supporting the issue will be degraded. This will be the outcome of the reputation of Texas A&M, if the GSSO is recognized. I, as an Aggie, want the public to hold this university in highest esteem and to be proud of its traditions, and accomplishments, and philosophy.

Mr. Venner stated in his article: "It is questionable as to whether A&M's philosophy and goals are any better than those of the U.S. . . ."

To coin a well used phrase "this would make any true Aggie's blood boil." When it comes down to the question of recognizing a gay organization I believe that Texas A&M has a greater moral philosophy than that of the U.S. There is no room at A&M for a group of this nature.

I respect Mr. Venner for having the guts to stand up for what he believes to be right, and I hold no ill feelings toward him for doing so. I hope that he will feel the same way about my opinion in that I will back Texas A&M 100% for upholding its ideals and philosophy which have

brought upon this university a reputation that has yet to be surpassed.
Roger C. Reddin

What is right?

Editor:
It is with sadness that I feel the need to respond to Susan Rudd's public abandonment of Texas A&M University's social conscience. I refer, of course, to her letter endorsing the recognition of the Gay Student Services Organization.

It is not her opinion that the GSSO should be recognized that fires my ire but the condescending manner she assumes while explaining to me (and everyone else) that I should "wake up and face the music" of the organization's inevitable recognition. "Face it, the GSSO will be here sooner or later." Indeed, one can almost see the gleam in her eyes as she triumphantly explains that

their threat to involve A&M in court action "is called standing up for what one thinks is right."

Finally, the reader is sopped with what I can only assume to be Susan's effort at courtroom logic. I nearly laughed out loud as she tried to convince me that the majority of Brazos County residents would be happier with a silent surrender than an effort to retain an existing and desirable status.

Bravo Susan Rudd!
I hope you'll pardon me, however, if, in this instance, I am unashamed to be a member of the majority if I doubt the blinding certainty of the GSSO's being recognized, and if I am resolutely against recognizing a group whose members I have compassion for but whose organized existence I believe to be against society's best interest. "It's called standing up for what one thinks is right."
Tom Dawsey

Carter's press secretary seems confident

WASHINGTON — On the night before the second presidential debate, at a table in a San Francisco bar, Jody Powell, Jimmy Carter's press secretary, and Richard Cheney, Jerry Ford's White House chief of staff, found themselves — somewhat unexpectedly — sharing the hospitality of the same group of reporters.

As the conversation developed, someone asked Powell about the origins of the antagonism between Carter and a particular newsman who had been perhaps his most persistent critic during his four years as governor.

It was an awkward question. The journalist involved has become both prominent and influential, and any comments Powell made about him could hardly be assumed to remain at the table.

Cheney watched with interest to see if Powell would respond with a noncommittal "I don't think I want to get into that." But instead of taking the easy out, Powell proceeded to answer the question in detail.

The substance of his answer — as far as this listener is concerned — is still part of a private conversation. But the recital was lengthy and candid. It explored the motives of the journalist in question, and, quite gratuitously, also expressed serious second-thoughts about the wisdom, and even the propriety, of the tactic Carter and Powell had used in attempting to impugn those motives so as to minimize the journalist's attacks.

It would have been a revealing insight for Powell to share with a group of people he knew well. Cheney's expression indicated that he, like others, found it remarkable that Powell felt enough confidence in himself and in his relationship to Carter to share such a story with Ford's chief of staff.

The incident is recounted here as a clue to the character of the man that Carter named as his first White House appointee — the new presidential press secretary whose name and face and voice will soon be familiar to every television watcher.

Jody Powell is the archetype of the Carter insider — a Georgian young enough and smart enough to be Carter's son; a man who has total loyalty to the one politician for whom he has ever worked; but a man who demonstrates that loyalty, not by his worshipful attitude, but by the diligent



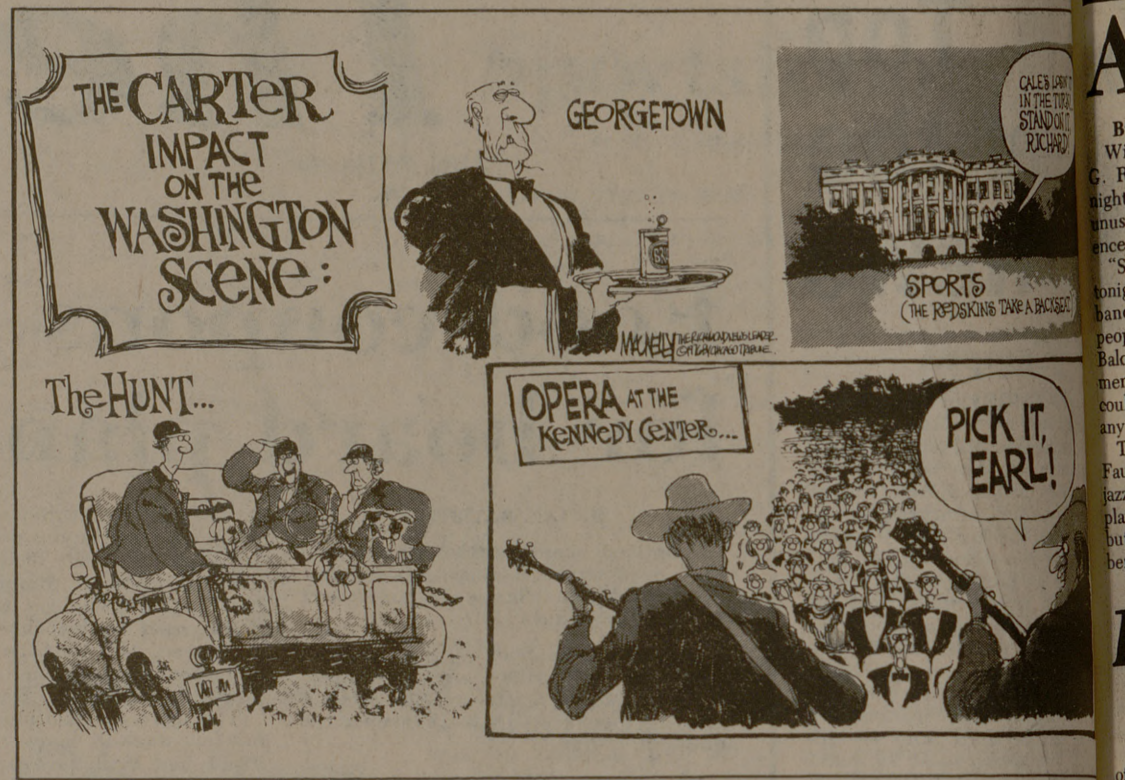
David S. Broder

exercise of his own good judgment.

Every reporter who covered the Carter campaign has seen Powell correct Carter publicly and disagree with his boss when he felt it was necessary. Powell has often been a critic of the press coverage of Carter, and he has never been shy about expressing his criticism — directly and forcefully — to the reporters involved. But, so far at least, he has managed to remember that the press has a different responsibility than he does, and that the "adversary relationship" cannot deteriorate to open warfare without harming both Carter's interests and the public's.

The tone of the dealings between Carter and the correspondents covering his campaign was a pretty healthy one. It was not a love-hate relationship.

To his credit, Carter made little effort to seduce the press or enlist its members in his cause. To their credit, most of the reporters covering Carter resisted any impulse to join his circle of advisers and adopted an attitude of skepticism toward him untinged, for the most part, by any personal hostility.



Communication between the press passengers on Peanut One and Powell and the other principals on Carter's staff was open, continuous and uninhibited on both sides — a healthy atmosphere to transfer to the White House.

In his comments since his formal designation as the White House press secretary, Powell has made it clear he will continue to be both an inside policy adviser to Carter and the manager of his external public relations.

There are both advantages and hazards in that approach to the job — as indicated by the experience of Bill Moyers, the Lyndon Johnson aide on whom Powell is explicitly modeling himself.

As an insider, Powell can speak with knowledge and authority on behalf of the President. But also as an insider, he will inevitably become a party to internal policy and personality conflict that will color the view of the White House he presents to the outside world.

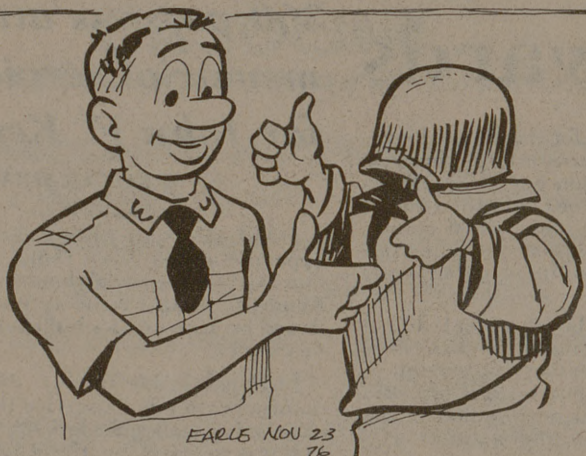
Most important of all, the more he has his own "inside" reputation riding on the success of policies he has recommended to the President, the more difficult he may find it to play

his vital "outsider" role of appraising the President's press and public reaction to those policies.

Jody Powell is taking on as presently tough job and defining the most challenging terms possible. He's not going to have a lot of time or uninterrupted family time over the next four years. But he earned the confidence of his boss, the admiration of the reporters who know him — and those are important assets with which to begin.
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Slouch by Jim Earle

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