

# Opinion/Commentary/Letters

## Need beginning language courses

**Editor:**  
Because of a change in major I am forced to take one course in a foreign language. Although I had no foreign language in high school, I felt that since I was in a beginning course that my lack of training would not pose a major problem. What a joke.  
I was put in a beginning German class with students who had as much as three years of German in high school. Admittedly they were in the class for the extra grade points an A in a four hour course can give you. I was left trying to keep up with those who had nothing to learn.

After the first day of class I knew I was in trouble. I checked the schedule and found that Spanish is the only language that has a course for those people with no previous language training. It looked like my salvation. However, I was told by the people in the Modern Language Department that there was no chance of my getting in the class because there were too many people

signed up for the course to begin with. I was stuck in German. I stuck it out for as long as I could. When my other classes began to suffer I had to drop it. Now I will have to find some small school with real beginning courses in foreign language. That way I can graduate.  
Maybe I'm wrong, but it just doesn't seem right that a university of this size would not have true beginner courses to offer its students. I guess I expect too much.  
Paula Chapman, '78

### Drive defensively

**Editor:**  
You are approaching the freeway on the access ramp when the car in front of you comes to a complete stop; what happens? Either you crash into the guy in front of you, or you have a close call.  
Incidents like this are common occurrences especially where there is heavy traffic. Much to my dismay, there are thousands of licensed driv-

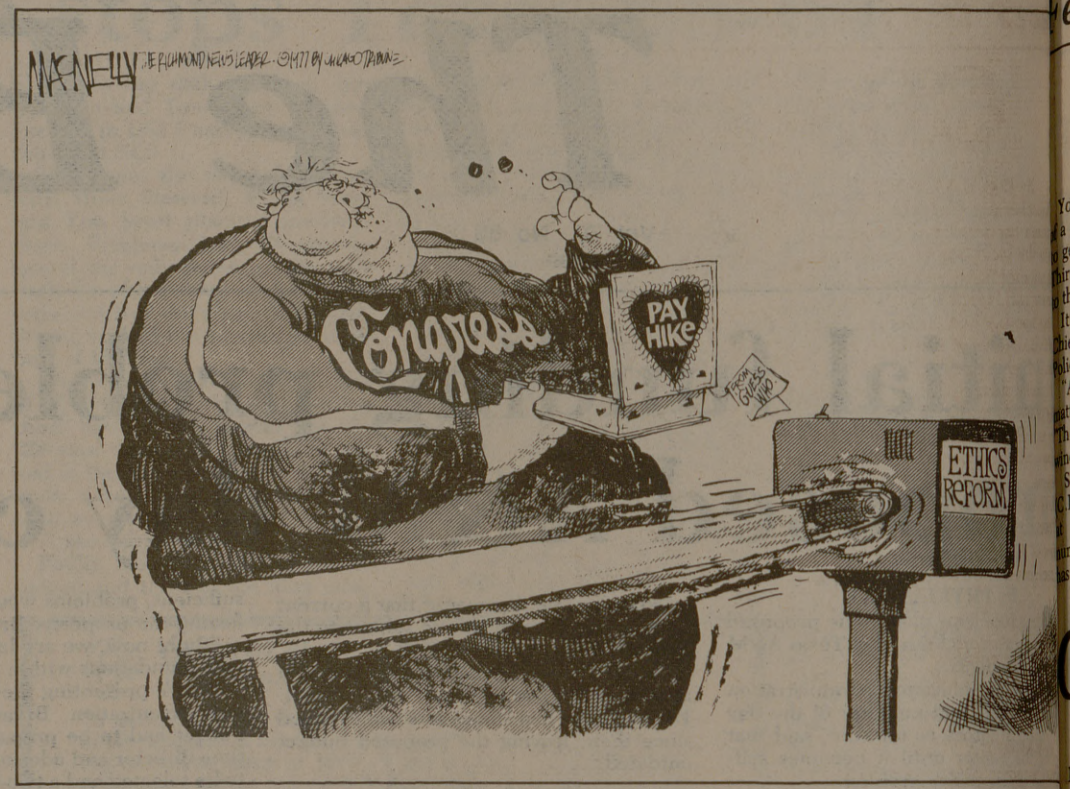
ers who no more deserve that privilege than a first grader. I don't know how some of these people have escaped major accidents. Luck or fate whatever the reason, licensed motorists need to be defensive at all times.  
When did your grandmother or father first receive her or his license? Ten, twenty, thirty years ago? The question occurred to me whether or not drivers who fall in this category would be able to pass a test on defensive driving techniques.

There are many adults who received their license during a time when cars were few and highway systems were far less complex. Today drivers need to be on the defensive with respect to the other motorists at all times.

I strongly feel a need to require all licensed drivers to take a refresher course in defensive driving in order to renew his or her license. Also some type of reflex test should be given in conjunction with the course to determine if a driver is able to respond fast enough while on the road. I think the state should fund both of the above.  
— Margie SantaMaria, '79

In spite of her course reversals it does seem that she favors a more progressive tax, that is one that falls heaviest on the wealthy. But is it fair that one man should pay half his income in taxes while another pays only (sic.) a third. This is the situation in America today (mostly in regressive state and local taxes) and the rich pay half of theirs (mostly in Federal income taxes). It is questions such as these that have been constantly ignored in the debate of taxation. I challenge Miss Taulman to examine them.

In short it seems that Miss Taulman has a great deal of knowledge about taxes but that she has done very little thinking about them. I contend that some thought on her part would have eliminated both her confusion and her stary-eyed faith in equal taxation.  
— H. Ed Mendieta '80



## Carter's reorganization plans should consider current strengths, interests

WASHINGTON — Reorganization of government is the buzz-word in Washington this winter. It was a major theme of President Carter's campaign and it is a high-priority item in his legislative agenda for the new year.

The first skirmish in the reorganization war has now been fought in the Senate. The result, as James P. Gannon forecast in the Wall Street Journal last December, does "give an early indication of whether the pervasive campaign rhetoric of 1976 about streamlining the government can be translated into political reality in 1977 over the protests of those with a stake in the status quo."

The answer is not as discouraging as skeptics would have you think. It indicates that substantial progress can be made in Carter's type of comprehensive reform, but only if there is a good deal of awareness of the power realities and personality factors that lie behind an organization chart.

The Senate reorganization effort, headed by Sen. Adlai E. Stevenson III, D-Ill., had as its purpose rationalizing the jurisdiction of Senate committees and reducing the overlapping and competing time demands on individual senators.

It was aimed, as Stevenson said early in the process, at a situation in which senators were neither generalists nor specialists but "compartmentalists."

We have sliced out daily routines into superficial fragments, and we have divided and subdivided large problems into a host of committee cubbyholes," he said last year. "It is no wonder that there is little consistency or coherence to what we do here."

The plan adopted by the Senate earlier this month does not guarantee "consistency or coherence" in the future. It does not go as far as Stevenson recommended. But it does reduce the number of Senate committees by one-fifth, the number of subcommittee assignments for the average senator by one-third, and the number of chairmanships some senior members accumulated by one-half.

It broadens the jurisdiction of surviving legislative units. And, as political scientist Norman Ornstein, a member of the Stevenson committee staff, noted, it introduces into the Senate rules and committee descriptions, for the first time, such concepts as "transportation, energy re-



David S. Broder

search, environmental protection, international economic policy, consumer protection, government information, intergovernmental relations, revenue-sharing" — all of which were afterthoughts or appendages previously.

The greatest single success of the Stevenson effort was combining the energy issues, which had been scattered among seven different committees, in a new Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

That committee is the old Senate Interior Committee, headed by Sen. Henry M. Jackson, D-Wash., one of the true Senate powerhouses. No such similar consolidation of energy jurisdictions has been possible in the

House; its Interior Committee has had three different chairmen in the last five years.

There is an obvious implication for the President, who is now weighing his own proposal for consolidation of energy functions in the executive branch. The message is to go with strength — not against it.

Yet Carter, from all reports is considering doing exactly the opposite — removing the energy functions from the powerful Interior Department and building his new energy agency around a relative bureaucratic lightweight, the Federal Energy Administration. It has had the same kind of leadership turnover that the House Interior Committee has seen.

The important lesson from the Senate experience is that there are certain jurisdictions where the internal rivalries and interest group pressures are so strong that they almost defy rational reorganization. A practical President would be wary, indeed, of blundering into those areas.

One is transportation. Just as Lyndon Johnson had to settle for a Transportation Department which omitted the maritime industry, so

Stevenson's efforts to create a unified Transportation Committee in the Senate were frustrated by the interests of road-builders, railroads and others.

Carter could also learn from Stevenson's experience to beware the veterans and the elderly who to abolish the special-interest committees dedicated to those constituencies were shot down in line — and very nearly upset the whole plan. The President might want to hear from Stevenson's experience.

But even with these cautions there is reason for Carter to hearten from Stevenson's experience. "If I had been wiser at the beginning and perceived all of those thickets Stevenson said at the end of the struggle, 'I might not have gotten into so many of them.'"

It is very satisfying to have left a mark with my colleagues, on this durable institution.  
(c)1977, The Washington Post

**Slouch** by Jim Earle

"I'VE NEVER THOUGHT OF YOU AS A MUSTACHE-PERSON!"

### No faith in equal taxation

**Editor:**  
A column in last Tuesday's Battalion (Feb. 15) exhibited a couple of characteristics which deserve more attention than they are liable to get. These characteristics concern the progressive nature of the Federal income tax.

In her column, Miss Taulman seems to be confused not only about how progressive taxes are but also about how progressive they should be. She asserts that it is "too difficult to get rich" and in the next breath she complains that "the rich do not pay their share. Granted she also complains that it is "too easy to stay rich"; perhaps this makes her distinction possible? Even so her complaints seem unlikely since there is no question on the tax form that asks if this is the first year one is rich. Miss Taulman seems to have lost sight of the fact that the Federal income tax is an income tax, not a luxury tax. Her confusion is further demonstrated when she applauds both Carter's tax revision plan that would increase taxes on the wealthy and his call for elimination of the corporate income tax, a measure that would benefit mostly wealthy people.

WASHINGTON — Reorganization of government is the buzz-word in Washington this winter. It was a major theme of President Carter's campaign and it is a high-priority item in his legislative agenda for the new year.

### Readers' forum

Guest viewpoints, in addition to Letters to the Editor, are welcome. All pieces submitted to Readers' 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 name and phone number must accompany all submissions.

**The Battalion**

Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the editor or the writer of the article and are not necessarily those of the University administration or the Board of Regents. The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting enterprise operated by students as a university and community newspaper. Editorial policy is determined by the editor.

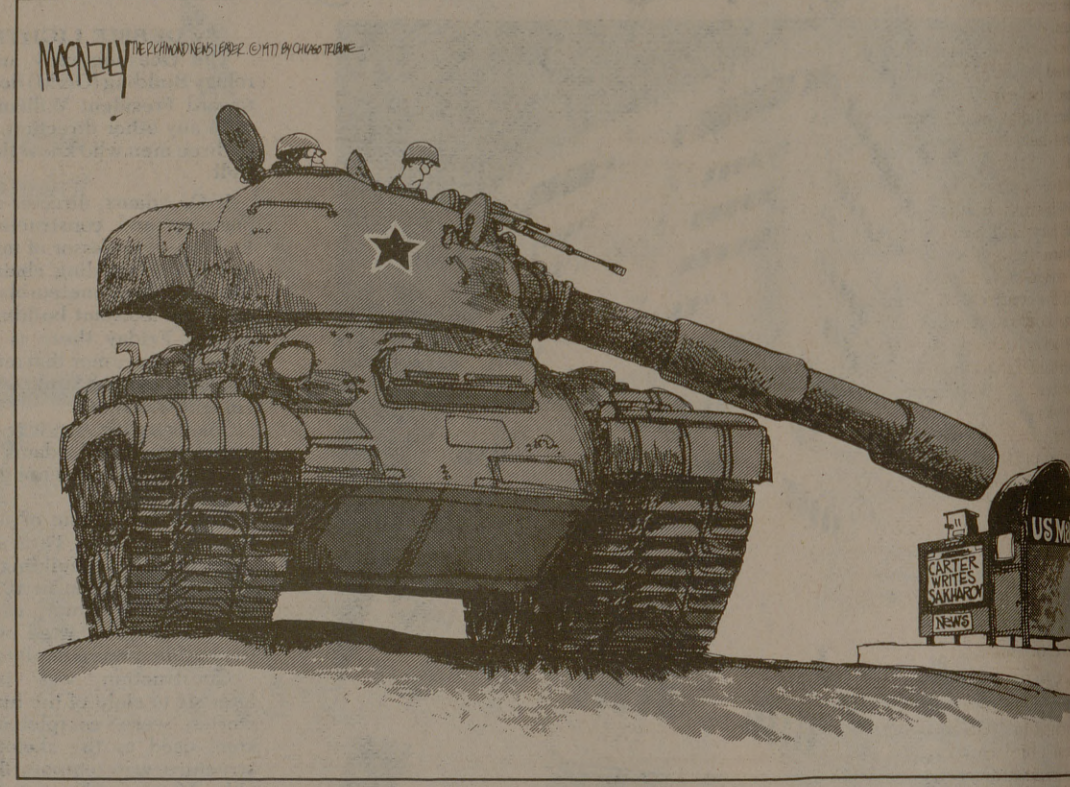
**LETTERS POLICY**  
Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words and are subject to being cut to that length or less if longer. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit such letters and does not guarantee to publish any letter. Each letter must be signed, show the address of the writer and list a telephone number for verification. Address correspondence to Letters to the Editor, The Battalion, Room 216, Reed McDonald Building, College Station, Texas 77843.

Represented nationally by National Educational Advertising Services, Inc., New York City, Chicago and Los Angeles.

Mail subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester, \$33.25 per school year, \$35.00 per full year. All subscriptions subject to 5% sales tax. Advertising rates furnished on request. Address: The Battalion, Room 216, Reed McDonald Building, College Station, Texas 77843. United Press International is entitled exclusively to the use for reproduction of all news dispatches credited to it. Rights of reproduction of all other matter herein reserved. Second-Class postage paid at College Station, Texas.

**MEMBER**  
Texas Press Association  
Southwest Journalism Congress

Editor: Jerry Needham  
Managing Editor: James Aitken  
Assignments Editor: Rusty Cawley  
Features Editor: Lisa Junod  
News Editor: Debby Krenak  
News Assistant: Carol Meyer  
Photography Director: Kevin Venner  
Sports Editor: Paul Arnett  
Copy Editor: Steve Reis  
Reporters: George Maselli, Paul McGrath, Lynn Rossi, John Tynes, Lee Roy Leschper Jr., Mary Hesalroad, Jan Bailey  
Asst. Photo Editors: Tracie Nordheim, Mike Wilby  
Student Publications Board: Bob G. Rogers, Chairman, Joe Arredondo, Tom Daussey, Dr. Gary Halter, Dr. John W. Hanna, Dr. Clinton A. Phillips, Jori Ward, Director of Student Publications: Guel L. Cooper.



**Texas A&M University**

# DIRECTORY

**\$2.50**

Available at —

## Student Publications Office

216 Reed McDonald Bldg.

## Texas A&M Bookstore

## University Bookstore

**SCANLIN'S LAUNDRY & CLEANERS**  
(New Owners — Bill & Alice Beené)  
Specializing in  
**DRESSMAKING — ALTERATIONS — REPAIRS**

Open: 7:00 A.M. to 10:00 P.M. — 7 Days a Week  
Attendant On Duty: 7:00 to 6:00 P.M. (Except Sun.)

**SELF SERVICE LAUNDRY & DRYCLEANING**  
OR  
**FULL FAMILY SERVICE (WASH, DRY & FOLD)**  
708 N. Rosemary 846-9823

**LAKEVIEW CLUB**  
3 Miles N. on Tabor Road  
**Saturday Night: Roy Robbins and the Availables**  
From 9 p.m.-1 a.m.

**STAMPEDE DANCE**  
Every Tuesday and Thursday Nights  
Ladies \$1.00 Men \$2.00  
All Brands, Cold Beer 40 Cents  
8-12

**Mansel's Wheel Alignment**

- Strobe Light Wheel Alignment
- Front End Wheel Alignment
- Wheel Alignment For Foreign & American-Made Cars
- Brake Service

300 W. 25th St. BRYAN 822-2089 779-4862

**WANTED**

"Dandy Don"  
Alias Donny Williams has been a member of the 3C Gang nearly two years. Don't let his fool you — a ruthless character. Dandy Don is now a student at Texas A&M.

**3C BBQ** Across The Tracks  
Nearly Downtown Bryan