

Opinion/Commentary/Letters

German view of nuclear proliferation

By WOLFGANG WAGNER
BONN, WEST GERMANY — When Vice President Walter Mondale visited here recently, he sought to persuade Chancellor Helmut Schmidt to defer a West German deal to provide Brazil with the facilities to generate nuclear energy. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance has repeated that appeal, and so have editorials in the leading American newspapers.

All these efforts are consistent with President Carter's policy to curb nuclear proliferation. But they seem to have created the impression in the United States and elsewhere that the West German government is irresponsibly trying to help Brazil to build an atomic arsenal.

This issue could poison relations between the United States and West Germany, which are vital to the stability of the Atlantic alliance.

West Germany and Brazil reached an agreement in June 1975 to cooperate in the peaceful use of nuclear power. Under the contract, which amounts to \$5 billion, West Germany will furnish Brazil with eight nuclear reactors as well as installations for the enrichment of uranium and to reprocess fuel. In exchange, Brazil is committed to deliver uranium ore to West Germany.

The government here was acutely aware of the security problems involved in the agreement. Thus it insisted that Brazil, which has not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, nevertheless vow to adhere to its principles, which include a pledge not to develop atomic weapons.

The accord required as well that Brazil agree to inspections by experts of the International Atomic Energy Agency, a United Nations body. In addition, the West German government communicated the contents of the agreement to the Ford administration ten weeks before it was signed. Not only did the United States voice no objections, but the American delegate to the International Atomic Energy Agency, who must have checked

with Washington, voted approval of the deal.

Finally, the West German government submitted the accord to the scrutiny of the Nuclear Suppliers Conference, a group of atomic exporting nations organized by the United States in order to close the loopholes in existing controls. The group gave the contract its okay.

After taking all these steps, West Germany felt confident that the Brazil agreement would encounter no further difficulties. Consequently, both the public and the government here were surprised and chagrined when the U. S. news media began to criticize the accord.

At first, West Germans anticipated that the American press attacks would fade away. But then Jimmy Carter was elected, and it became clear that the incoming administration would seek to block the Brazil deal, at least partially.

This is, of course, what happened. During Mondale's talk with Schmidt, the agreement was the most critical question discussed as the Vice President urged the Chancellor to postpone fulfillment of the contract until modifications of the accord could be worked out. The United States is particularly wary of plans to sell Brazil plants to enrich and reprocess uranium, from which plutonium can be produced to manufacture bombs.

West German opinion initially believed that U. S. opposition stemmed from the fact that American firms failed in their attempts to sell nuclear installations to Brazil in 1974. But this view has largely disappeared with the realization here that President Carter is genuinely hostile to nuclear proliferation and considers the Brazil deal to be dangerous.

The West German government, however, does not share Carter's concern. If the Brazilians merely wanted to construct bombs, government spokesmen here point out, they could have achieved that goal more cheaply by building a few small reactors and hiring foreign physicists prepared to do the job for a price.

The United States has never asserted flatly that the West German agreement would make Brazil a member of the nuclear club. In conversations with the government here, however, American officials have expressed the fear that the Brazilian regime is unstable and that its successors could violate the safeguards imposed by the contract.

Underlying these differences between the United States and West Germany is a fundamental question — whether industrialized nations should export nuclear technology to developing countries.

In the opinion of the West Germans, this cannot be avoided. As they see it, the U. S. notion that key nuclear installations be "internationalized" is simply an abstract

concept that lacks practical application.

Meanwhile, the West German government is facing time pressures. The delivery of equipment to Brazil is due to begin in a few years, but the contract has to be divided up among West German companies, and there are thousands of technicians awaiting the signal to start work. The government here cannot easily disband the project.

Yet West Germany's links to the United States are crucial, and they cannot be easily abandoned either. Hence a dilemma that is not as simple as it is so often made out to be by official American spokesmen or by American editorial writers.

Wagner, the editor of the Hannover Allgemeine Zeitung, writes on political issues in West Germany.

Armed forces standards needed

Editor: In reference to Mark Rankin's article in Wednesday's paper, I am forced to agree that the encroaching failure of the volunteer army may indeed be due to mismanagement.

Rankin pointed out that the draft is comparable to taxation, but that an inequity of the taxation was the lack of drafting weapons systems or food stuffs.

He seemed to overlook the obvious. The services do indeed use dollars and cents to buy the above mentioned goods.

But where does the hard cash come from? The defense budget—more precisely, each taxpayer's pocket. Too content to create sparkling analogies, Rankin could not see the proverbial forest for the trees.

He then proffered solutions to the shrinking number of enlisted Army personnel. Referring to a RAND study (whose credibility cannot be proven, anyway) that suggests downward modifications to physical and mental standards.

I have not read the RAND study referred to in his argument for relaxed standards; but it would seem to be common sense that relaxing those standards is not an answer. What good is an army that is physically unable to survive in combat?

If a man cannot do a minimum number of pull-ups, sit-ups, etc., it would appear he may be incapable of withstanding certain rigors with which he may be faced.

What good is a soldier incapable of fighting?

As far as relaxing mental standards for enlisted men, the problem seems obvious.

Some may have the mistaken impression that enlisted soldiers are mere automatons with no need for thought capacity other than taking orders. Untrue.

Granted, he must take orders in many cases be de-individualized in order to function as part of a larger unit. But he must also have some mental ability. He must have the common sense necessary for survival and for societal function.

Hopefully Rankin does not pro-

pose allowing mentally and physically deficient persons into an organization whose sole purpose is his defense.

I for one would not want emasculated morons attempting to defend me.

—Steven E. Reis

West campus traffic control

Editor: Time does not seem to have improved the parking situation at A&M, so I have accepted the parking conditions as they are.

However, it does seem that University or city officials would be able to do something about traffic congestion. Specifically, where the west side of the campus adjoins Wellborn Road.

The heavy flow of traffic on Wellborn Road makes it seemingly impossible at times to either enter or leave the campus. It is not uncommon to wait 10 minutes and longer to enter the campus, and the situation is dangerous.

Vehicles are darting in front of oncoming traffic, rushing at every opening in the flow, trying to muscle their way through. Evidently, people are willing to risk life and limb to secure one of the few parking spaces available. Almost every morning, I witness close calls and near-accidents.

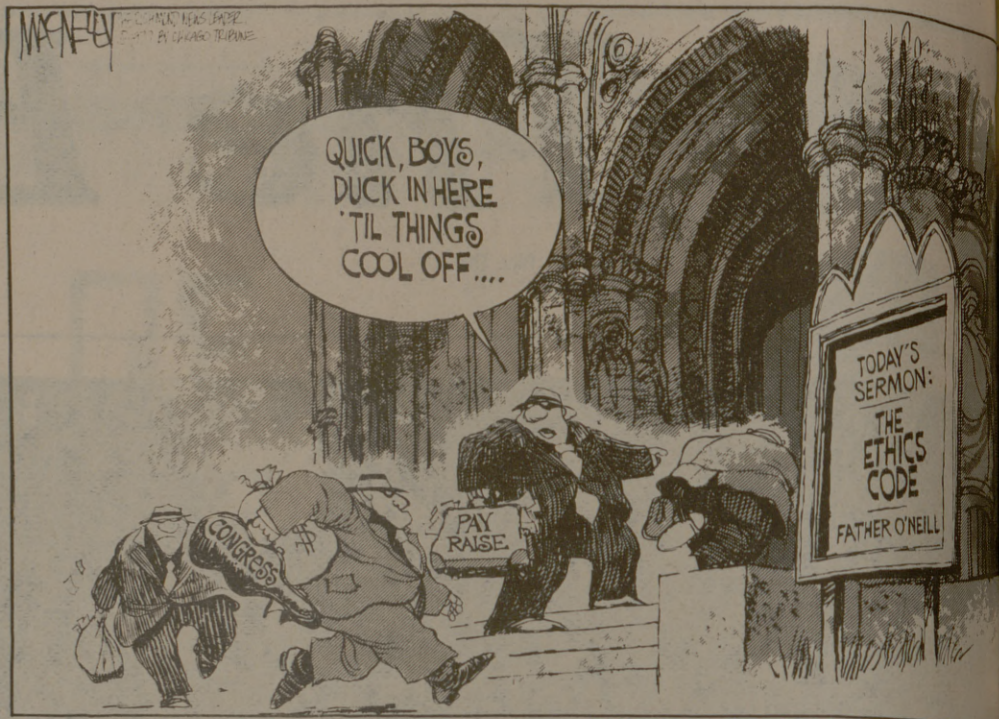
It would seem that administrative authorities would be sufficiently aware of the dangers created in this location to be concerned. Concerned enough about the well-being of the people who must use these streets to take some action to regulate this traffic.

I do not feel that this is expecting too much. Other streets have traffic regulating devices. What makes this one different?

—Marvin Isaacs, '78

Abortions are 'absurd' idea

Editor: The very idea that abortions should be allowed to reduce the



Fraternities becoming part of A&M social life

By SCOTT PERKINS

Whether you are for them or against them, fraternities have grown to be a significant part of the social life at Texas A&M University.

Since their emergence in force a couple of years back, membership has increased steadily. This corresponds with the growth in A&M's enrollment.

Membership in a fraternity increases your realm of friends, both in the fraternity and outside it. It gives you the chance to know more people," said Earl Blankenship, a senior and a member of the Sigma Chi fraternity. With the increasing size of the University, you have more of a chance to meet more people quickly, he added.

But the growth of the fraternities has its problems also. Fraternities have met with a good deal of opposi-

tion from some groups on campus and that opposition is still present.

Robert Burke, a junior member of Sigma Epsilon, said that harassment "occasionally" occurs because more people have fraternities.

Bill White, a sophomore member of Sigma Chi, said that, usually, the members of the fraternities know seem to be more sympathetic to us than the non-reg. fraternities.

Blankenship added, "I joined the fraternity, and I know the members of the fraternities know seem to be more sympathetic to us than the non-reg. fraternities."

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The Battalion

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Address correspondence to Letters to the Editor, *The Battalion*, Room 216, Reed McDonald Building, College Station, Texas 77843.

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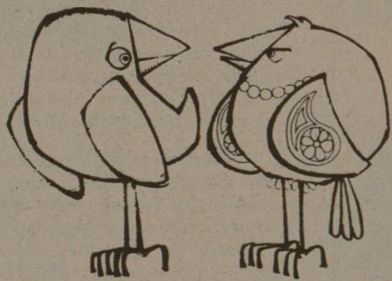
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Completed application forms should be returned to Bob G. Rogers, chairman, Student Publications Board, 301 Reed McDonald. Deadline for submission of applications is 5 p.m. Tuesday, March 22.

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The *Aggieland* editor will serve for the academic year 1977-78.

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