Page 2 THE BATTALION **Opinion/Commentary/Letters**

Let Senate act on fees

A University administrator is about to have to act on a proposal that rightfully should be acted on by the Student Senate.

Vice President for Student Services John Koldus said yesterday that he will not recommend that \$41,000 in student service fees for the establishment of a student day care center be allocated. The Student Senate last month had recommended that the fees be allo-

Dr. Koldus is right in that the fees should not be allocated at this time, but that action should be taken by the Student Senate. Dr. Koldus now has more information on which to act than did the

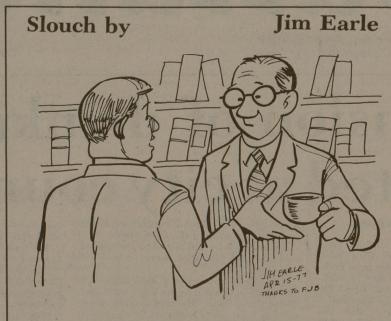
Senate when it originally recommended the allocation. The recommendation by the Senate that the fees be allocated was on the basis of some hoped-for volunteer help and eventual funding

from the College of Education. It is now evident this funding or volunteer help will not materialize this year. It has been established that many students want a day care center.

The idea was right but the timing was wrong. For the past several years, the Senate has had a good record in getting its recommended fee allocations through the Board of Regents

If it fits within the time frame of the budget preparation (for the May 24 Regents' meeting), Dr. Koldus should give the Student Se-nate a chance at reconsidering the allocation before officially acting on it. The new Senate meets on April 25.

We should try to stick as closely as we can to the idea of students controlling the allocation of student service fees and not set a precedent this year of having an administrator having to override the students' recommendations on the allocation of these fees.



"IT'S ON TAX DAY THAT I HAVE MY STRONGEST RESERVATIONS ABOUT ALL OF THE WONDERFUL SERVICES OUR GOVERNMENT PROVIDES US!

Niche in society tough to fin

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the last of a four-part series on homosexu-als, their lives and their problems. The Battalion is aware that the subject is controversial and that almost everyone has strong feelings about it. But The Battalion believes that more is to be gained by intelligent discussion than by rumor and invective. We hope that this series will contribute to understanding and enlightenment.

By JAMIE AITKEN AND SUE MUTZEL

Despite the marked social changes brought about by the sexual revolution of the past decade and a half, homosexuality has, at best, been tolerated by American society, and at worst, feared.

Psychologists continue to study homosexuality in order to determine its place in present society and the pressures it is placing on society for changing norms. The effect that an emerging gay rights movement is having on the nation is affording social scientists a unique look at a na-

tion uncomfortable with a growing fear of the unkown. In 1974 the American Psychology

Association voted to remove homosexuality from its list of mental disorders. Through years of uncertainty on the part of society as to the status of homosexuality, this fear of the unknown has perhaps been the greatest reason that homosexuality has not been allocated a place in our society.

The negative opinion of society to homosexuality appears to be an automatic reaction to society's attempt to maintain the status quo. Dr. Don Woods, clinical psychologist and assistant professor of psychology at Texas A&M University, contends that "one of the best ways of assuring yourself that you don't have a certain trait (of a group) is to repress that group. Students just entering the uni-versity environment are often found

to be insecure and unsure of themselves in a new environment without the cultural padding that may have been apparent at home. In a way, for many, these are the forma-tive years where social mores are

fixed; where for most hete ity is solidified and, in the homosexuality repressed and denounced.

Indeed, one writer conte social pressure in these stag to widespread "homophobia of homosexuality, and mor fear of sexual thoughts ab sons of the same sex. Psychologists have been

to agree to a cause of homo Erasing it as a mental di 1974, they work with the 'sexual orientation," and preference.

The Christian church, in ge appears to consider homos as a sin picked up during a much as one might take up or drinking. Being a sin, it dition to be changed, an i capable of being de Homosexuality, then, is not ered here to be inherited. confirm that no evidence h found to prove homosexuali

netic occurrence. Although causes may be

(See SOCIETY, Page)

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would have been a gross pr

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peer pressure and voting for

not a person. The runoff e are being held today. Every

Students have powerful political weapon gie." I wasn't wrong for wan

vour vote.

Editor:

sed it.

worth it.

Gig 'em.

Baseball team

deserves thanks

games. Several players have said

that the spirit generated by the

"10th Man" was a major contributor to the win. I only hope that we can

send an equally representative and

vocal group of Aggies down to Cougar High on April 22 and 23.

To win 2 of 3 games from the number 1 rated team in the country shows the caliber of baseball that we play here, and the heartiest con-

gratulations are in order for the

team. They won't be satisfied with a

second-place finish, so the trip to

Houston will certainly be well

Editor:

Last night the College Station City Council voted down a proposal by the Texas A&M Student Senate to extend the legal drinking hours in College Station on weekends. This proposal, if adopted, would have al-lowed the local bars to serve liquor until 2:00 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday mornings. This proposal by the Senate was the result of a poll taken some time ago which showed 87 per cent of the student body was in favor of this extension. This poll, if applied to the student body population of 28,000 would show that over 24,000 students support this type of bill.

You may ask, how may the seven voting members of the College Station City Council deny the request of 24,000 students in a town the size of College Station? Do these people have it out for the students? Of course not. Every single member of the council is in some way em-ployed by the TAMU System. They derive their livelihood from the students and the community that supports the students. I am sure that these people voted in the manner in which they thought they repre-sented their constituents best. The reason that these men won't support the students is not because they have it out for us but rather because their interests are not our interests.

The only way the students can insure that they will not continue to get a raw deal from the city council is to insure that the people who make the decisions, support their positions. I am not advocating a stu-dent on the city council. I am advocating some person or persons who will look after our interests and if that person is a student, so much the better.

The students of A&M possess the most powerful political weapon imaginable and thus far they have refused to use it. That weapon is the vote, and until the students get fed up enough with the way they get treated around here to get out and vote, I think they deserve the shaft they are getting. We are not just beer at Sparky's or the Sports Club. There are much more far-reaching ways the city government affects us. Why are rental rates higher in College Station than in Houston? Because the City Council has not seen fit to adopt a policy to stimulate the building of new apartments to a sufficient degree to meet the demand. Have you heard the Aggie joke

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about the teasip who rented an outhouse and sublet the basement to an Aggie? Well, in College Station the Aggie paid \$180 a month for the privelege, and had to bring his own on my part to have based furniture. way, the Corps was not wn publishing a list of cadets runn

To borrow a phrase, I'm mad as hell, and I'm not going to take it any more! If any one else feels the same way, the External Affairs Committee of Student Government is gear-ing up to help meet these problems. The time of the first meeting has not yet been decided upon, but we will try to let you know through The Battalion and other campus media. If we are going to accomplish anything, we will need your help; we will need your input, we will need your interest and concern, and when the time comes, we will need

the opportunity to go to thep vote. Please vote, not Co Corps or civilian for civilian, gies for Aggies. —Debbie William

—Phil Sutton V.P. External Affairs SG quality in students' han

Editor: The last thing I ever thoug do would be to come out in do of the Corps at Texas A&M, have a deep discontent for its To all of the students (and Yell Leaders) who were not at Kyle Field Saturday: Boy, you really mis-

and practices, but what I w up in arms" more vehement The Fightin' Texas Aggie Baseball Team staged two of the most excit-ing baseball games in A&M history. But almost equally as exciting was the huge turnout of Aggies for the remove Secured planary have said is unfairness in any manner toward an individual or a gr I am writing in response Massey's letter of April 12 stated (quite bitterly) that the ity of the student government to reach an all time low n with the participation, to al gree, of the Corps. He know how good or how bad people will be, and that the voted strongly for Corps sh greater degree of organization than in the Non-regs.

The 26,000 Non-regs have their apathy time and time a their very poor turnout at time (6,000 voters out of 28,00 dents). Should not the election given to the majority winner the sideline complainers the something different but aren -Clark Whiteside, '78 ing to work for it?!

Plutonium benefits outweigh risks

By ROBERT PATLOVANY Plutonium is a toxic, radioactive element, the existence of which has produced much controversy. But it is a good fuel which, with existing technology, can produce cheap electricity.

Even with billions of dollars of research solar energy and other alternate energy sources cannot hope to compete with plutonium as an energy resource for making cheap electricity. For a conventional size electrical power plant output, 20 to 40 square miles of solar collectors would be required. An orbiting solar power collector will require a five mile diameter parabolic receiving antenna on earth to collect the

microwaves transmitted from the satelite. If you think solar power would be clean, think of the environmental impact of 20 square miles of solar collectors, or of a 5 mile diameter hole in the ground.

Of course, the biggest controversy is over the safety of having so much plutonium around in the first place. Environmentalists warn

and that it should therefore be ban-ned forever. They are concerned about power plant explosions that could kill thousands of people. These people tend to look at the plutonium risk just a little out of perspective. All of man's activities involve a

risk of some kind. The logical way to

Readers' forum

handle risk is to weigh the costs of the risks with the savings of the benefits. Wherever the savings significantly outweight the costs, the

activity should be carried out. Plutonium, being toxic and radioactive, involves a risk with its use. It is not, however, the most toxic substance known to man. Many people have died from the effects of botulism toxin, which is more toxic. Thousands of people worked with plutonium during World War II on the Manhatten Project. Because of the rush to win the war, safety precautions were not

plutonium poisoning. These work-ers, their children and their grandchildren have experienced no statistical increase in any kind of cancer or birth defects when compared with the statistics for the unexposed general public.

there has been no one incident of

The issue of safeguards for the control of plutonium is the possibil-ity that plutonium could be pilfered from a reactor fuel reprocessing facility and machined into homemade nuclear explosives by a small determined group of scientists and machinists.

For this reason, some people say the United States should have nothing to do with plutonium for fear of giving terrorists the chance they need to build a nuclear explosive. If the risk is viewed out of perspective with the other risks that are routinely taken for granted, a valuable fuel resource may go untouched by this country.

No estimate of the money needed to maufacture a home-built bomb has been less than one-half million that its use will cause increases in cancer to the general population up to modern standards. In spite of the reduced safety considerations, about a \$12 million expenditure by

cheaper ways for a terrorist to kill thousands of people than with a nuclear weapon. Every day tank trucks carry butane, propane, ammonia, methane, and chlorine, to name a few, on the Interstate 610 loop around Houston. Last summer, an ammonia truck exploded in the open air killing 30 and injuring nearly 200 people. Before that, a butane truck exploded near Eagle Lake and flew 200 yards through two mobile homes before coming to a stop in a third mobile home. Some nuclear power critics still

the group wanting to cause trouble

There are many far simpler and

worry about a nuclear power plant exploding like a nuclear bomb dur-ing an accident. Even if all the electronics and mechanical control systems fail, it is physically impossible for a nuclear explosion to take place in any power reactor. There have been accidents at nuclear power plants, but after over 250 reactoryears of experience, no one person has ever died from a commercial nuclear power reactor accident. The biggest accident so far was a fire three years ago at the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) Brown's Ferry plant which damaged electrical control circuits. There were no injuries and the reactor was not damaged, but the "disaster" story made front page news across the country. The damage was repaired, and since last October, TVA has reduced its customers' electric bills by \$3 per 1,000 kilowatt hours because of the cheaper nuclear fuel costs. With fuel costs rising as utilities are forced to use the more expensive coal, this country could use a few more disasters like that. Breeder reactors convert uranium-238 into plutonium-239, while using uranium-235 and the converted plutonium to produce electrical power. A breeder pro-

duces more fuel than it uses by ety, and if plutonium recycle is not implemented soon, nuclear power may only last 20 years. President Carter wants to stop all breeder reactors from being built in this country because of plutonium risks, eliminating a nearly selfperpetuating source of cheap electricity. It appears the Cabinet could use a Department of Optometry to help Carter see the risks in perspective with the benefits

Ceteris paribus Apathy, rationality, and voting

voters than if the election is be-

By MARK BANKIN

One of the headlines describing last week's local election read, 'Voters appear apathetic in council member election." If I had been asked to write that headline, I think it would have read, "Voters appear rational in council member elec-

tion I am tired of seeing the word 'apathetic' applied to perfectly rational behavior. It is my belief that individuals evaluate the costs and benefits associated with voting. Those who feel that there are net benefits will vote and those who feel that one vote will determine the outcome.

tween two moderates. The cost associated with the election of a conservative is very high in the mind of the liberal as well as vice versa. Likewise, when the contest is be-tween individuals of similar views, people will consider the costs of either being elected about the same and the benefits of voting for one rather than the other will be trivial. This does create a paradox, however, in the sense that the more alike the candidates, the more likely

This is to say that the nuisance associated with the physical act of voting is a very real cost to the voter. Voter participation will be much greater in a system where you can vote by telephone or proxy than in one where you have to travel five miles only to stand in line for two hours. Similarly, the degree of in-formation that the voter possesses will influence his behavior.

One of last week's candidates One of last week's candidates made the statement that people uranium is the easily used 235 variwere "confused" as to the relationship between the location of their residences and the particular wards which were represented by candidates. If this were true, then it can be said that it was simply too expen-sive for the "confused" individuals to ascertain the correct information. In point of fact, the "confused" individual excuse probably more adequately explains why 4.56 per cent of those registered voted as opposed to maybe 5.56 per cent in the absence of confusion. On the other hand, maybe voter "confu-sion" was responsible for making the turnout as high as it was. Only in America can the nonvoting individual be variously described as apathetic, confused, or rational.

that there are net costs will pursue a more favorable activity. The most common explanations regarding "voter apathy" are, in fact, var-iations on this theme.

If there is a large dispesion in candidate ideologies, people will vote

The individual chooses among candidates based on the relationship among the views of those running and his own. This is to say that when there is a liberal and a conservative contesting the same position, there is likely to be a heavier turnout of

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

The Battalion is published Tuesday through Friday from September through May except dur-ing exam and holiday periods and the summer, when it is published weekly.

Mail subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester; \$33.25 per school year; \$35.00 per full year. All subscriptions subject to 5% ades tax, Advertising rates furnished on request. Address: The Battal-

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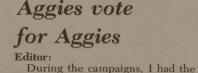
This is to say that, in the case of closely contested elections, your vote may be powerful in its poten-tial to elect a "body" yet weak in its ability to determine a particular political philosophy. Few liberals would bother to vote in an election between Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan. The most extreme example of the effect of a lack of ideological choice is the case where a politician runs unopposed as was the case in the three College Station council races.

If it is relatively easy to vote, people will vote.

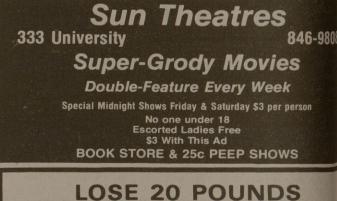
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on their election system with aim toward more student i ment in the elections (such a tioned in the editorial by J. April 12th). The ability and/o ity of the student governme solutely in the hands of the opportunity to talk to several candibody; if the Non-regs don't l dates. When I asked one guy run-Corps running things, then da ning for yell leader if he was a c.t. or a - get out and vote! non-reg, he answered. "I'm an Ag-- Marie Cowie '75 an



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