

Viewpoint

The Battalion
Texas A&M University

Wednesday
September 28, 1977

No more Mr. Nice Guy

Senate confirmation true-to-form

By DICK WEST
United Press International
WASHINGTON—The word around the Capitol was: no more Mr. Nice Guy. Embarrassment over the Senate Banking Committee's handling of the Bert Lance case was said to have ended the era of love—in confirmation hearings.

From now on, the talk went, presidential appointees could expect hard-hitting inquiries into their backgrounds and qualifications, overdrafts and corporate airplane rides—before they took office.

The first big test of the post-Lance atmosphere came this week on President Carter's nomination of Charles Ferris to head the Federal Communications Commission.

The Ferris hearing by the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation (pick one) was fraught with significance because of his prior service as counsel of the Senate Democratic Policy Committee.

If senators gave him a bad time, they would in effect be doing it to one of their own. Which would mean they would do it to anybody.

Tension in the hearing room was so thick you could have cut it with a wet noodle. And right from the outset it was clear

that Ferris was in for the most vicious but-tering up of his life. Sen. Edward Kennedy, a Democrat noted for his sharp tongue, set the tone by predicting that Ferris would "serve with great distinction."

The Lighter Side

The standing-room-only audience sucked in its breath. Gasps were heard, along with a few cigarette coughs.

Kennedy, you see, is from Ferris' home state—Massachusetts—and thus was in a position to offer parochial insights that other senators might have overlooked.

I couldn't see the nominee's face at that moment, but I have sat across a card table from him enough times to know he is totally devoid of stoicism. I'll bet a dollar his lips were quivering.

The next blow came from Speaker Tip O'Neill, another Bay State Democrat who took Ferris in off the streets this year while he was sweating out the FCC appointment.

It was O'Neill's harsh opinion that having Ferris on his staff had been a "distinct honor." That tough, candid appraisal by



the House leader emboldened committee members to press the attack.

Sen. Ernest Hollings, D-S.C., called the appointment "outstanding." Sen. Daniel Inouye, D-Hawaii, said "the nation is fortunate" to have Ferris as FCC chairman. And so it went.

Since this sort of blood-letting brings out the jackal instinct in reporters, I decided to do a hatchet job on the nominee.

After his rigorous inquisition ended, I went over and asked if he had ever had any overdraft problems.

"I have an overdraft problem every time I sit near a sloppy bartender," he confessed.

Ferris had better watch his step. In the post-Lance atmosphere, an admission like that could be grounds for confirmation by acclamation.

Other side of fraternity story speaks

Editor's note: The following commentary is in response to a "Reader's Forum" by Lee Torbett in the Sept. 21 Battalion. In that commentary Torbett, a fraternity member, asked the University's students to accept "the hand of friendship" from fraternity members. This, like all "Reader's Forums," presents the views of the authors and not necessarily those of the Battalion editor or staff.

Mr. Torbett and all you "friendly, justifiable, and learned" fraternity brothers, let me tell you a little story. It's a story of how you people really do extend the hand of friendship toward your fellow Aggies. It's how you people strive for friendship in the good ole Aggie spirit. It's a story that tells the main reason that most Aggies don't respect fraternities at this university.

My three roommates and I were walking by the party room in an apartment complex last fall. We stopped in the doorway to see what was going on. We were then cordially invited in to have a beer, and were informed that this was a fraternity party. Upon entering we sat our books down just inside the entrance.

After several fraternity brothers talked to us and discovered that we were not seriously interested in joining their organization an almost instantaneous change of mood occurred. We were then rudely treated and rudely informed that we were no longer welcome in their presence. Upon threats of bodily harm and name cal-

Readers' Forum

ling we headed for the exit, escorted by "friendly, justifiable and learned" fraternity brothers. On the way out we picked up our books and headed for our apartment. Then to our utter dismay, from the back of this friendly, justifiable party came the learned outburst of "Stop em, they took something.... stop em." Yea Mr. Torbett we took our books.

We do not condone the actions of the men that harassed you or your wife but

with experiences like the one we experienced or with stories we have all heard about fraternities at other universities it does not even take two brain cells to see why most Aggies are apprehensive toward fraternities. In our opinions, fraternities only serve to divide students even further into small little cliques.

You say, Mr. Torbett, that you are a true Aggie and that you have the right to belong to any organization you choose, so long as it is not immoral, subversive, or contrary to "your" beliefs. Mr. Torbett, the G.S.S.O. consider themselves true Aggies and their organization is not immoral, subversive or contrary to their beliefs. So where do we draw the line?

To quote you, Mr. Torbett, "We are all lucky to belong to such a great and traditional institution as Texas A&M,"—yet you, Mr. Torbett, and your friendly friends strive to tear down one of the traditions that make this university unique. We do not want your divisive clubs here. All two percent actions, such as not saying Howdy, not standing at, or leaving, the football games early, alcohol in Kyle Field,

and two percent liberal views such as fraternities, women yell leaders or women in the band, etc., all strive to destroy the many traditions that make this university unique.

Mr. Torbett last year me and my roommates learned the books more or less; more less, but more importantly we grew, we met new people, and we learned how to get along with other people a hell of a lot better than that fraternity that was in that room that night. We learned a lot about life without the aid of any fraternities. Mr. Torbett, in case you are not aware, A&M is a fraternity in itself and it is no dire need of further liberal changes that will only divide us further.

For men who need a fraternity or a clique to fall back on, to learn about life, we have only one thing to say. Give us that hand you extend and we will lead you in the direction of Austin, where you can be with your kind.

Ronnie Wise '80
Doug Vorpahl '80
Ken Benton '80
Jim Davis '80

Letters to the editor

Students still most unique part of A&M

Editor
About 6:45 a.m. on Monday, September 19th, I was sitting in my car at the parking lot across from Rudder Tower. You may recall that there were several hundred students camped out in front of G. Rollie White Coliseum waiting to purchase tickets to the Texas Tech game. I thought what dedication to football! However, the real story took place a few minutes later. The ticket windows were to be opened at 7:00 a.m. in order to allow the students an opportunity to get to class.

As I looked at all the empty cans and litter I thought what a shame. And then much to my amazement some fellow with a very firm voice said, "All right, Aggies, the windows are soon to be opened and we've all got to remember that we are Aggies—let's line up and number off, and every other person step out and let's police-up this trash." Well, much to my amazement no one complained, but immediately set about the task of cleaning the place. In a matter of five minutes every piece of paper and all the cans were in containers and the place was spick-and-span. I couldn't have been prouder to be part of Texas A&M University, and my heartiest congratulations to all of you who cared enough about your campus to help keep it clean.

People often ask what it is that makes A&M so unique and I've always firmly believed that it is the students. Congratulations to all of you and keep up the good work!

Robert L. Walker
Vice Chancellor for Development

Loyalty wanning

To The A&M Student Body:

Twenty-two years ago I attended Texas University. I have been an ardent Longhorn fan. I've been among the thousands who screamed "Poor Aggies" on many Thanksgiving days. I've laughed at the Corps, the seniors in their boots, and told my share of Aggie jokes. I am definitely not a "holier than thou" football fan.

This fall my daughter entered A&M. Through her enthusiasm, I have slowly accepted the great A&M traditions, the spirit, loyalty, and togetherness of Aggie supporters. I have even "humped it" on a few occasions. In other words, I was becoming a dedicated Aggie. Now I am really confused.

Saturday night I attended the showing of the Aggie-Tech game. Things were looking pretty slow in the first quarter. Then the Tech quarterback was injured. I could not believe what was going on around me. The audience was in a frenzy: cheering, screaming, jumping up and down. A close-up of Allison appeared on the screen as he rolled on the ground in obvious pain. As he was helped off the field, the yell

leaders stood in front of the crowd leading the enjoyment of the moment. I can understand applauding a good sack on a quarterback, but applauding an injury?

Please set me straight. Is this also part of the Aggie tradition? Is this the way A&M supporters like to win? I am certain Coach Bellard and the team do not share in this feeling. If they could change anything about Saturday's victory, I am sure they would have preferred to beat Tech with Allison in the game. I am glad the team and coaches and the nation did not witness this demonstration which, in my opinion, was sickening. A&M has a potential National Championship team, and the team deserves a number one ranked "twelfth man."

If there is an explanation, I really need to know it. I am high on the Aggies, but my new found loyalty is wanning.

—Mrs. W.M. Day

Editor's note: There can be no acceptable explanation for the type of sportsmanship described here and in numerous other remarks made since Saturday's game against Tech. When a student lets the drive for victory take precedence over the more human aspect of concern, it is time to re-evaluate the meaning of "spirit," whether it be that of A&M or any school.

Hopefully, this kind of attitude is not representative of A&M, and from the actions of many Aggies who watched quietly as trainers attended Allison on the field, the cheering of some should not be mistaken for all of A&M. At the same time, the actions of those who found Allison's broken leg reason to rejoice should rightly be condemned as an insult to that highly regarded ideal known as "Aggie Spirit." Those outside Texas A&M have every right to question the highly-touted tradition of sportsmanship that they have learned to respect at this school. Texas A&M has the serious responsibility to make sure the question does not come up again.

Spirit prevails

Editor:
What is Spirit? To Texas Tech it is the mocking of the Texas Aggie Band on local TV stations each night for a week, it is yelling during the singing of "Spirit," it is yelling "poor Aggies" after one touchdown, it is booing when the Aggie Band comes on the field (but sitting in awe during the performance) and finally spirit is the inability to be able to accept defeat.

While attending the Texas Tech and Texas A&M game last weekend in Lubbock and sitting with the students of Texas Tech I learned what their kind of spirit is. I am very proud of the Texas Aggies and I

hope this type of immature spirit never prevails on the campus of Texas A&M University. Gig 'Em Aggies!

—Sharon Stern

Student grateful

Editor:

I would like to take this chance to express my thanks to *The Battalion* staff.

Last Thursday night at Yell Practice, it was announced there would be a Midnight Yell Practice in Lubbock. The directions to it would be published in the paper's Friday edition. Great, except I was leaving before it came out. So, I called *The Batt* and explained my problem and they found me a set of directions for which I'm very grateful. Thanks a lot.

—Chris Drake '81

Grass for enjoying

Editor:

Michael Porterfield's letter concerning the use and abuse of the University Center's lawn (*Batt.*, Sept. 26) undoubtedly reflects the attitude of many TAMU students. His opinion, however, is not shared by all of us. Insisting that no one walk, sit

or stand on the lawn merely because it's "memorial grass" seems at best irrational. Witnessing the vehement criticism dealt towards offenders of this tradition, one might surmise that buried beneath the MSC lawn lie the bodies of "Old Ags."

To truly memorialize the MSC lawn, we should let ourselves enjoy it rather than declaring it forbidden territory or holy ground. I don't advocate transforming the lawn into a thoroughfare; it is no less effort to use the sidewalks. However, what harm can come from relaxing or eating lunch on the grass?

—John Purcell

Recycling needed

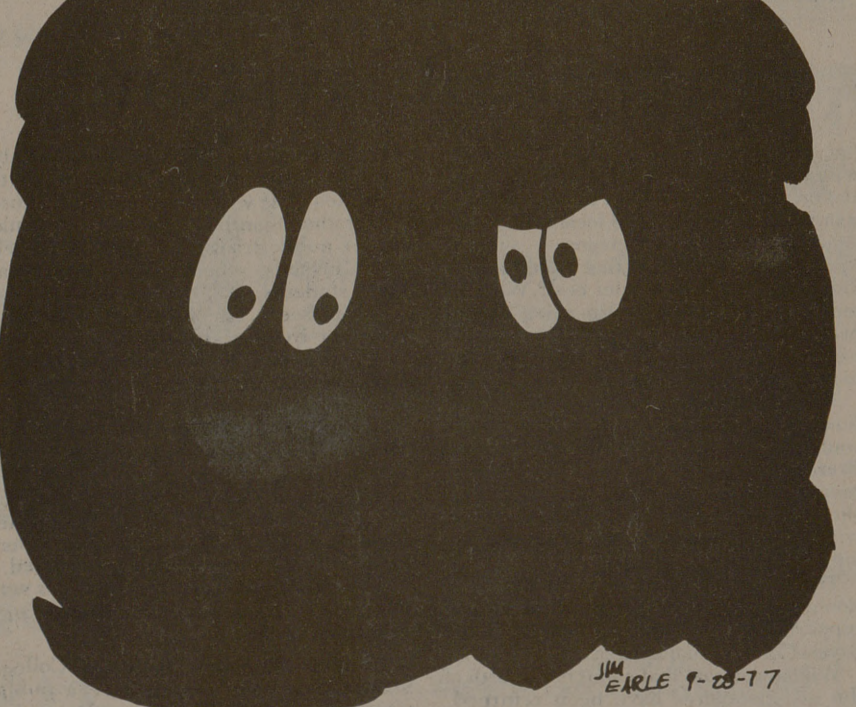
Editor:

It seems a so called, ecologically minded university such as Texas A&M would be intent to conserve resources by recycling manufactured goods. So why are coke machines allowed on campus that dispense disposable glass bottles which could be recycled, yet are tossed in the trash never to be used again? The solution to the problem is to use aluminum cans which are easily recyclable.

—Christopher J. Glaeser '80

Slouch

by Jim Earle



"OF COURSE I DIDN'T CHECK THE LIGHT SWITCHES! WHEN YOU SAID THAT WE HAD A POWER FAILURE, I THOUGHT YOU HAD!"

Top of the News

Campus

Installation board plan due

Friday is the last day to pay the second installment board payment of the Fall semester. Those on the seven-day board plan owe \$143.65. Payment for the five-day plan totals \$128. Payment may be made either at the Fiscal Office, Richard Coke Building, or at the Cashiers Office in the main lobby of Rudder Center.

Freshman, off-campus elections

Freshman elections for all offices, including five senate positions and Off-Campus Student Association representative elections are scheduled for Oct. 27 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Filing for freshman and off-campus positions opens at 8 a.m., Oct. 12 and closes at 3 p.m., Oct. 19. Further information may be obtained from the Student Government office, room 216 in the Memorial Student Center.

State

Capitol fall takes man's life

An Austin mental patient died Monday from injuries received in a plunge from the third story mezzanine of the Texas Capitol. Glen Dave Knox, a 24-year-old patient of the Austin State Hospital, died at Breckenridge Hospital three hours after the 40 foot fall. Only moments before Knox fell, security officers had been called to investigate a "strange looking man" wandering aimlessly about the upper floors of the building. Capitol security police were not able to determine if Knox had jumped. One witness said he fell accidentally but two others said he climbed over the waist-high railing.

Davis murder trial continues

Testimony in the Cullen Davis murder trial continued Tuesday in Amarillo as a Fort Worth police detective told the court that he found a loaded .357 caliber pistol on the floor of Stan Farr's car on Aug. 4, 1976. Farr, 31, was shot to death after midnight of the previous day. He was sharing the home of the defendant's estranged wife, Priscilla, when he was killed. Defense attorneys argued that fear of a former business associate, Horace Copeland, not fear of Davis, prompted Farr to carry the weapon. Copeland was killed at a Fort Worth apartment house a year after Farr's death.

Nation

Commission reports on benzene

A recent study from the staff of the Consumer Product Safety Commission says that consumers who inhale benzene vapors while using paint strippers around the house may be exposed to much stronger doses of the suspected cancer causing agent than are allowed in factories. The commission is considering a ban on household uses of the chemical and paint stripper manufacturers are phasing it out. From 288,000 to 576,000 adults probably are exposed to benzene vapors each year from paint strippers.

Panel urges West Point changes

An Army panel, formed in the aftermath of last year's cheating scandal at West Point, recommended Tuesday in Washington the naming of an advisory committee, including civilians, to help formulate policy for the military academy. The panel's report included recommendations such as a lesser penalty than dismissal for an honor code violation. The group said lying should be redefined to no longer include such things as hiding whiskey in hair tonic bottles or covering a window with a blanket while studying after lights out.

World

Swiss debate euthanasia

Conservative Switzerland is involved in a national debate on euthanasia, with an increasing number of people demanding the legalization of mercy killing in cases where patients are considered incurable. Voters in the Swiss state of Zurich recently voted in favor of a non-binding referendum. Mercy killing became an important issue in Zurich early in the year when the director of a large hospital was suspended on charges of having permitted passive euthanasia—allowing incurable patients to die instead of using artificial means to keep them alive. The doctor was later reinstated.

Weather

Partly cloudy and hot today and tomorrow. High both days mid 90s and low tonight mid 70s. No rain is expected.

The Battalion

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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.

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