

# Viewpoint

The Battalion  
Texas A&M University

Monday  
October 3, 1977

## Keeping some green

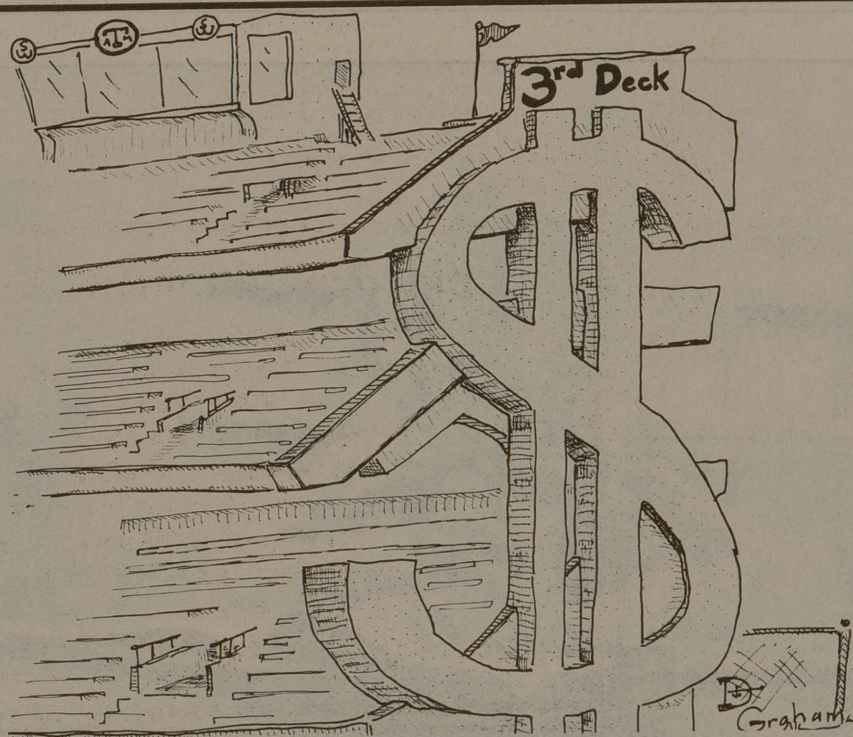
Construction packing more and more buildings into a shrinking Texas A&M campus has made grass and open space more and more inaccessible to students. But the University's board of regents took a step to correct that problem last week.

Hensel Park, the University's open recreation area between College and Texas Aves., has been something of a neglected stepchild for many years. The area has been open to anyone wanting to use it, for many years. But there has been little there for them to use, other than open grassy areas and stands of trees. A cabin to house students supervising the park was added two years ago and restrooms were completed last year. But there wasn't much else.

The regents approved the first of four phases in a \$265,000 renovation program to add more picnic areas, asphalt trails and roads, shelters, landscaping, lighting, earthwork to reduce noise and decorate fencing. It will make Hensel a truly nice place.

It's a relief to know that people still care about grass, and trees and nice places.

L.R.L.



## Bakke case: A question of rights

By DAVID S. BRODER

WASHINGTON — The Bakke case which will be argued before the Supreme Court later this month provides an important test not only of the legal issues of racial discrimination in college admissions, but also of the current attitude toward government efforts to achieve social justice.

The case has drawn a great deal of publicity. And the apparent record number of amicus briefs filed — 58 in all — indicates how many groups in the pluralistic American society feel a strong interest in the outcome.

At one level, the Bakke case presents an appealing human story which touches some fundamental American values. Allan Bakke, a Marine Corps veteran of Vietnam and an engineer, decided in his late 20s that he really wanted to be a doctor.

He made the efforts to take premedical courses even while holding his regular job, and in 1973 and 1974 applied for admission to a number of medical schools, including the University of California at Davis. Both times he was rejected at Davis (along with the other schools), even though Davis was simultaneously admitting minority applicants some with lower test scores and grade-point averages than Bakke.

He charged there was "reverse discrimination" against him as a white man. The California Supreme Court agreed that he had been the victim of an unconstitu-

tional "education quota system." Calling the Davis plan "a retreat in the struggle to assure that each man and woman shall be judged on the basis of merit alone," the state ordered Bakke admitted.

That is the case now before the Supreme Court. The Carter administration had filed a brief arguing, first, that the Davis medical school had a constitutional right to consider applicants' race in its admissions policy and, second, that Bakke's claim to admission cannot be judged fairly on the record of the case as it stands.

Because there was a good deal of semi-public pulling and hauling about the administration brief, there has been an understandable tendency to describe the final position as a political compromise.

It certainly is that. Its clear goal is to prevent a Supreme Court decision so sweeping that it could undercut dozens of other government and private affirmative action plans. At the same time, it is designed to avoid putting the administration's support behind a rigid quota system, which the President has declared personally repugnant and which massive majorities of white voters resent.

But what strikes this reporter is that the administration brief is not only politically shrewd and balanced but equitable and reasonable on a commonsense basis.

First of all, the record show pretty clearly that there is no clinically objective

method of deciding who should get into Davis or the nation's other medical schools. There are far too many applicants for any precise balancing or competing claims.

For its regular admissions program, Davis requires a C-plus grade average and also weighs test scores, recommendations, and the comments of personal interviewers. But there is no written standard for admission; university officials concede the judgments are to some extent subjective.

All but 16 of the 100 places in each entering class are filled that way. The other 16 are filled through a special admissions program for disadvantaged (minority) applicants. There, the criteria are apparently lower, and the applicants are judged against each other — not against the regular applicants. But the dean of the Davis medical school has testified that whether the students come through the regular or special admissions process, all are "fully qualified for admission and will, in the opinion of the admissions committee, contribute to the school and profession."

Considering that barely two of every 100 doctors in America are black and that black communities are notoriously disadvantaged in their medical services, there is a strong case for encouraging more black and other minority doctors.

Second, it seems quite commonsense for the government to assert that "race

may be pertinent to admissions because it gives information that will be helpful in understanding the meaning of the credentials that an applicant presents. A grade-point of 2.6 produced by a minority applicant may indicate every bit as much potential to be a physician as a 3.0 average by a white applicant. That's because the minority applicant has demonstrated not only the ability to succeed in obtaining grades, but also the determination and ability to overcome non-academic hurdles."

That principle is the main point the Carter administration wants to defend, and it is worth defending. But what about Bakke, who surely overcame some hurdles of his own? What the government says is that his claim to be a victim of reverse discrimination cannot be judged on the record as it now stands. No court has yet determined if Bakke would have admitted to Davis were all applicants, black and white, competing in a single pool. That question, the government says, ought to be determined when more of the facts are on the record.

That is not a satisfactory answer for Bakke or for those who strongly oppose anything that smacks of quotas. But it makes the case in the right direction on a case that clearly requires a balancing of competing rights, rather than a declaratory rejection of one side or the other.

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## Top of the News

### Campus

#### Buses to operate Tuesday

Shuttle buses will operate Tuesday even though classes will be dismissed to allow students and faculty to attend the inauguration of Dr. Jarvis E. Miller as the 18th president of Texas A&M. Dean Edwin H. Cooper, chairman of the inaugural committee, said the shuttle bus service will be on 30-minute intervals, with inbound runs starting at 7:10 a.m. and the last bus leaving the campus at 6:40 p.m. In another inauguration-related item, Dean Cooper requested that all faculty members who have rented regalia through the Texas A&M Bookstore pick up their orders today to avoid last minute problems Tuesday morning when out-of-town guests will be picking up their orders. The regalia may be obtained any time during the bookstore's regular working hours today.

#### Off-campus group to hold elections

The Off-Campus Student Association will be holding elections to select representatives from the Bryan-College Station Community to serve on its Representative Council. The candidate may file in Room 216 of the MSC-Student Programs Office between Oct. 13 and 19.

### State

#### Solution may treat glaucoma

A solution of one of the major chemical constituents of marijuana dripped into the eyes of laboratory rabbits reduces interocular pressure and could prove to be a treatment for glaucoma in humans, said Dr. Keith Green in Dallas Sunday. The Georgia research scientist said he found the substance, Delta-9 THC, reduced pressure within the eye when dropped topically into the eyes of lab rabbits. He hesitated to predict the results of doing the same thing to human beings.

#### NASA shuts down instruments

Johnson Space Center scientists shut down instruments that have transmitted scientific data to earth since being left on the moon by Apollo astronauts as long as eight years ago. Dr. Gary Latham pushed the last buttons in Houston and said to associates watching, "You have seen the end of an era." NASA said the experimental equipment, placed on the moon during Apollo missions 12, 14, 15, 16 and 17, was shut down because of " dwindling power reserves at the station and budgetary limitations here on Earth."

#### Couple marries in bomber

Gilbert Dominguez and Corla Mae Rose were married in the hold of a refurbished B-17 flying at an altitude of 1,000 feet Saturday. "I'm crazy," laughed Dominguez, 48, a maintenance member of the Confederate Air Force. "I spent so much time working on the thing and flying in it it just seemed like the right thing to do." Miss Rose, 44, said, "I think it's a great idea. My friends couldn't believe it. They just said 'whaaaat?'" Justice of the Peace Sherwood Brown said it was a first for him but "people always want to get married in strange places." There was an escort of replica Japanese fighters.

### Nation

#### Byrd sees filibuster end

Senators fighting to keep price ceilings on natural gas seemed to be losing ground in their two-week filibuster Saturday and Democratic Leader Robert Byrd said the Senate might quash the filibuster by Tuesday or so. "I think they will have had a bellyful of it" by Tuesday, Byrd told reporters as the Senate, forced into weekend session, droned through a sixth straight day of delaying amendments on the gas issue. By Saturday, indications were those favoring deregulation of natural gas prices were overhauling the price control side, and it seemed likely they would eventually force — and win — a vote on their deregulation bill in the Senate.

#### New Orleans strike criticized

An International Longshoreman's Association official Sunday said workers in the New Orleans port, the nation's second largest, were hurting themselves by expanding a limited ILA strike into a general strike. Members of ILA locals 1418 and 1419, which serve the port of New Orleans, have stopped movement of all cargo into and out of the city since the strike began Saturday. In all other ports around the country, only containerized and certain barge ships are affected.

### World

#### Rebels occupy radio station

Rebel soldiers occupied the government radio station in Bangladesh and reported a revolution in progress, the Japanese Foreign Ministry said Sunday. A Foreign Ministry spokesman said reports from Dacca told of rifle and machine gun fire for two hours in the Bangladesh capital and "confused troop movements." The spokesman expressed fears that undisciplined soldiers may come near a hijacked Japan Air Lines jetliner at Dacca airport and complicate negotiations with the hijackers.

### Weather

Partly cloudy and mild today and tomorrow. Winds will be out of the Northeast 8-14 mph today and out of the East 8-12 mph tomorrow. High both days low 90s and low tonight 61. No rain is in the forecast.

## 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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## The silent majority discovers T-shirts

By DICK WEST

WASHINGTON — Amos Seersocket and I were walking along Pennsylvania Avenue about a half-block from the White House. Suddenly he grabbed my arm.

"Looky there!" he cried. "Can you believe that? There's some kook in front of the White House wearing a T-shirt with no lettering or pictures on the chest."

"At first I couldn't believe it. I didn't know they made anything like that," I exclaimed. "Where do you suppose he got it?"

"He must have had it custom-made," Amos speculated. "Let's stop and ask him."

The guy told us about a trendy little place he had run across in Georgetown.

"You buy a conventional T-shirt, see, with a beer can or a rock group or some kind of obscenity stenciled on it. Then you take it to this place and they have a special process that removes the graphics."

"It's expensive, but worth it for the sensation it causes. This is the third time I've been stopped this morning."

Seersocket shook his head wonderingly. "Blank T-shirts," he mused. "What will they think of next?"

"It's a novelty all right," I replied, "but I would think you would have to be sort of an extrovert to wear one on the street."

"I mean, I can see getting one to wear to kicky little parties or places where you're among avant-garde friends. But I wouldn't wanna be out in public with everyone staring at me."

Later on, I mentioned what we had seen to Mable Upperfloss, a local fashion coordinator, and she told me blank T-shirts already were a big fad on the West Coast.

"I understand it originated in England," she said. "You can order the T-shirts from London without any illustrations whatsoever. That saves you the trouble of having the graffiti obliterated."

I said, "What's behind it? What's the point of wearing a T-shirt that doesn't advertise, promote, praise or protest anything?"

"The point is that there's a growing tendency toward non-involvement," Mable explained.

"However, many people feel guilty about not participating in commercial endeavors, political causes, sociological rebellions, religious schisms, ideological struggles, philosophical movements and the like."

"Blank T-shirts provide them with a way to express non-involvement without hurting anyone. It's simply a harmless manifestation of passivity."

Maybe so, but I fear the drift away from T-shirt activism may lead to other displays of apathy. Can you, for example, picture a world without bumper stickers?

Sounds unreal, sure. Yet if the blank T-shirt catches on nationally, who is to say blank bumpers won't become the next big craze?

With bad feelings surfacing now between fraternity/non-fraternity, corp/non-corp/women's corp, GSSO/straight; I can't help but think maybe some of my northern stereotyping has rubbed off on y'all.

Regardless of our own personal alliances, we are all Aggies. In Chicago that word is synonymous with "tremendously loyal, disgustingly proud and steeped in tradition."

TAMU's traditions are definitely part of what makes A&M special, but it's the pride in each other and the loyalty to the school we are known for crosscountry.

If Aggies show so little respect for other Aggies' philosophies, theologies and organizational preferences through ridicule or rejection in the name of preserving tradition; we have begun to destroy the most basic and well known traditions we have on this campus.

Aggie Loyalty and Pride. Only a 2 per cent Aggie would expect another to see things his way or go to Austin and only a 2 per center would call a whole organization "ignorant and ridiculously conservative."

By maintaining respect for fellow students and putting traditions and what this school is all about in proper perspective, we will continue to have those qualities which put us apart from the rest.

We're the best damn school there is — and that's tradition.

—D. S. Ayers '79

### ... Even at Taps

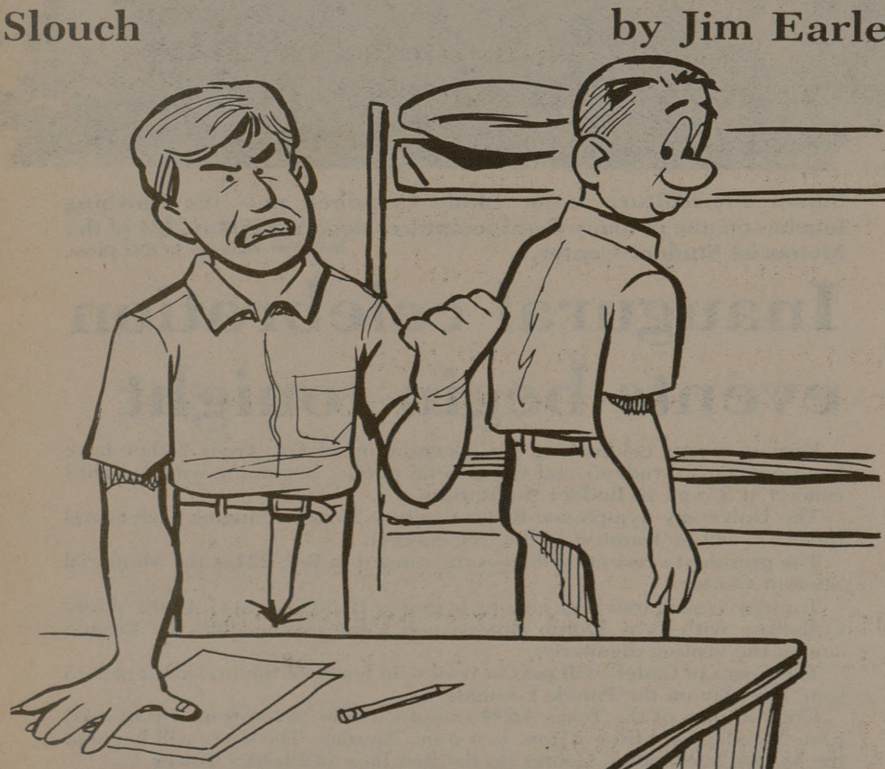
Editor: I just finished reading the letter concerning Silver Taps in the Sept. 29 *Battalion* from Misses McDonald and Newberry. I felt as if I had just received a slap

in the face, as I'm sure many other Ags did. I did not attend the recent Silver Taps ceremony. I had a lot of work that evening and I did not know any of those honored. This is not to say that I do not believe in or respect the idea behind Silver Taps. I have attended the ceremony several times and have left with precious and longlasting memories. Even if I do not attend the ceremony itself, I take a few moments during the day to pay respect in my heart to these loyal Aggies, as I'm sure many others do.

But let's be realistic for a moment. One could not possibly expect to get 30,000 people in the confined area immediately around the courtyard. People would be backed up to the Coke Building and wouldn't be able to see or hear any of the ceremony. Even if it was possible, who would want that many people? I certainly wouldn't. It's much more important to me that the ceremony be attended by those who knew the honoree(s) and wish to pay their respects. The fact that a ceremony is attended by 2,000 or 200 does not make the difference between devotion and thoughtlessness.

I certainly agree with the authors in their criticism of those who attend the ceremony without the proper attitude. Their rudeness is magnified thousandfold when contrasted with the hushed respect of others present. This type of behavior is not to be tolerated if the idea behind Silver Taps is revered. I do not feel like a "non-Aggie" nor do I like to be criticized because my idea of the proper way to observe a fellow Aggie's death differs from those of Misses McDonald and Newberry. I think the authors could learn a little about respect for fellow students themselves.

—Cindy Hornstein '80



"I've gotten so upset while writing this 'Letter to the Editor' that I think I'll forego th' letter and deal with him personally instead!"

by Jim Earle