

# Viewpoint

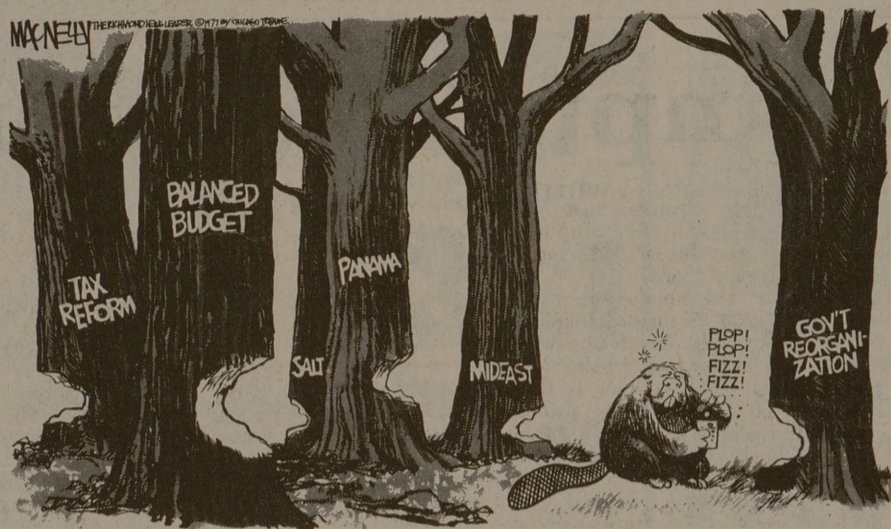
The Battalion  
Texas A&M University

Thursday  
October 13, 1977

## Aggie jokes, anyone?

Among the problem areas addressed by a Pentagon study of West Point—declining academic and football excellence, excessive hazing of freshmen and overemphasis on class rankings—we were especially interested in the concern expressed over the lack of humor. A sense of humor, of and by itself, is not going to improve academic performance or win wars. But a career officer who can appreciate the humorous aspects of life and, perhaps, smile at small human failings would, in our opinion, be a superior officer.

Armies, after all, depend upon humans who lack a guarantee of infallibility, and any change that would make the Point a little less dependent upon machine-like precision should make its graduates better able to function outside the academy. We have no recommendations as to how West Point can infuse humor into its curriculum, but we wish it success in its attempt.  
St. Louis Post-Dispatch



## Ralph Nader out to save sports fans

By DICK WEST  
United Press International  
WASHINGTON — The biggest sports thrill of 1977 thus far was not produced on the playing fields, courts or other areas of athletic endeavor.  
It was Ralph Nader's recent announcement that he is forming a new consumer organization to protect the interests of the fans.

### The Lighter Side

"The players have their organizations, the clubs have theirs and it's time the fans had their organizations," Nader declared in his best rally-around-the-flag manner.  
And sports buffs everywhere felt their

spines tingle.  
It has long been evident that fans have not been getting the recognition they deserve. Like interior linemen, most of what they do goes unnoticed. Take professional football, for example.

About the only way a fan can be sure of getting on television is to dart out on the field and tackle the referee, or display a big banner featuring a caricature of Howard Cosell.

I've seen fans of all-pro caliber sit through entire games without once getting a chance even to wave at the camera.

It's true that some television crews make use of portable cameras to pan over the crowd occasionally. But I've noticed that when they zoom in, almost invariably they zoom in on a pretty girl.

In other consumer campaigns, Nader has been fairly successful in eliminating sexism. That would be a good place for him to start in his new crusade. He should:

1) Negotiate with the networks for greater fan exposure, and 2) demand that the cameras be zoomed in without regard for sex, age or size of bosom.

One fan, a veteran season ticket holder, told me he was having increasing trouble getting psyched up for the games.

"Football, above all else, is an emotional game," he said. "If you go into the grandstands emotionally flat, chances are you won't kibitz up to your potential."

I've noticed the fans this year seem slower to react to the big plays. Their timing is badly off. Once, for instance, they continued to cheer for a big gain that

ended in a fumble.

In years past, a perfectly timed groan would have welled up from the crowd even before the fumble was recovered by the other team.

One expects such inconsistency at college games, where the fans are younger and more mistake-prone. But by the time they become professional fans, they ought to have developed workman-like efficiency.

About a third of the season already is over and some fans are just now rounding into top condition. Unless Nader can do something to improve their lot, the situation will continue to deteriorate.

Eventually, it could reach the point where the fans have a losing season even when the home team wins.

### Letters to the editor

## Local check requirements too strict

Editor:  
I am appalled by the hassle that local stores give students when they go to write a check for merchandise purchased. I do realize that there is quite a large sum of money lost each month from insufficient checks, but that does not compensate for the rudeness the check writer must withstand.

I am a non-resident student at Texas A&M; therefore, I have an out-of-state driver's license and car. When attempting to write a check at a local store, my check was refused on the basis that I did not have a Texas driver's license. I do have an account at a prominent local bank, a Texas A&M I.D. card, and a bank card from my hometown bank. These previous items were of no value to the store clerk. When I questioned the requirements for writing a check and explained my position as a resident, I was given an uncivil explanation which had no substantial reasoning.

If a student gets this much hassle for a check, it seems worthless to have a checking account. I can understand local merchants having certain standards for purchases by check but these standards must not exceed the point of offending its customers.  
—Gwendolyn Sue Gates '81

### PE not clear

Editor:  
Now that the Physical Education department is going to convert its grading system to pass-fail, isn't it about time the department clarifies the P.E. requirements for non-P.E. majors?

It seems as though the department is pushing "Concepts" as a requirement for graduation. However, last year when signing up for a physical education course, I was told I could wait a semester before I would have to take "Concepts". When I signed up again for a P.E. course, there was no mention of the required "Concepts". I consulted my advisor and was told as long as I had four semesters of P.E., I would be meeting the graduation requirements. This came as good news to me, because I personally find sport-oriented classes more valuable than lectures on health. I know there are many students with the same sentiments and we would appreciate a clarification directly from the Physical Education department.  
—Callier Luther '80

### Batt sports praise

Editor:  
When it comes to college football I am a real enthusiast! I am very glad to see the Battalion devoting up to two pages to football, as well as the other sports here on campus. I am disappointed, however, that it is not keeping up with the results of the SWC games. Most of all, I am annoyed by the fact that the Battalion gives little or no notice as to how the top twenty teams have fared after a week of major contests. What point can there be to telling us that Texas A&M has been outscored in one game, if all the major northern college teams are undefeated?

It is evident that you are doing your very best to show an avid support for the football team and I can willfully accept

that. But I find it a necessary job to inform us as to how our rivals are doing.

The sportswriters in the Battalion are some of the best in the State, and I am sure they realize their importance to the success of the paper. They should also realize that they are being a little too biased by writing only about the Aggies. I would like to commend you for the article in the October 3 issue of the Battalion which included the scores of every SWC game played the preceding weekend. I sincerely hope to see more articles like that in the near future.  
—Donald Tiemann  
Class of '81

### Cruelty shocking

Editor:  
It is my belief that both the United States and Texas A&M University were founded on the ideal of freedom, and the protection of this freedom is and always will be the utmost objective. We think and act freely, and we readily assert to others the need for this freedom.

Monday I was walking down Houston St. towards Northgate, I cut the corner at Houston St. and University Drive and noticed a large blue-black bird on the grass about ten yards from the sidewalk. What I saw was deeply depressing. This bird no longer had the freedom that his so-called "superior beings" so readily argue, fight and die for. He was lying on his back with his disordered wings lying haphazardly over his stiff body. His outstretched legs were bound closely together with a white postage cord wrapped twice and tied tightly. He was dead.

Was that a free man's expression? Even if it were only the spiteful action of a child, what does this tell us of his teachers? Have they forgotten to teach the child that the

privilege of freedom demands humanity? I know such cruelty is not representative of either this country or this university. But the thought that even one person could be so cruel to anything thoroughly disgusts and shocks me.  
—Tim Raven

### No second class Ags

Editor:  
Poor Virginia Harwood! Her letter, which appeared in Tuesday's Battalion and put down Sororities and Fraternities, only proved how small-minded she is. I cannot honestly believe she had the gall to sign her name to that piece of junk.

If she were a real Ag, she would not put down other Ags. Why not put down the Marching Band, or the Zepheid Variable club? In a sense they are much like Sororities and Fraternities. They all share a common bond.

I see Sororities and Fraternities as just another way to prove how spirited and close Aggies really are.

Virginia — nobody at A&M can possibly be second class!  
—Gail E. Smila '80

### Ticket limit needed

Editor:  
The situation for the distribution of football tickets for our out-of-town games, in my opinion, should be changed. By allowing each person who waits in line to receive ten tickets, some who really want the tickets are unable to get them. This also allows people to buy ten tickets while only needing two or four, and to sell the rest for triple the price.

In dropping the limit, groups can still

obtain their tickets together by sending two people out to get them. Limiting each person to four tickets would allow many more people who camp out to receive tickets.

The situation is a difficult one to resolve, as there will never be enough tickets for everyone. I believe that reducing the ticket limit to four would better the situation and allow a fairer chance for all.  
—Laine Cummings

### Taking sides

Editor:  
This letter is just to let off a lot of steam. I just got through talking with a guy on his way back to "his side of campus." From that comment you might have guessed that I live on the South-side in the Common's dorms. After exchanging the usual friendly how-are-you — what's-going-on comments, I asked him where he was going. Back to "his side." I answered with a mildly teasing "Excuse me, thinking he was just joking. He apparently was not. The conversation continued with the following comments: 1) everyone is a snob over there. 2) South-side girls always "flush" their mixers by not showing up. 3) only rich kids live over here — "what kind of people would pay that much for a dorm anyway," and 4) we (North-side) know what goes on with the guys and girls living so close. Aside from being personally insulted, the above remarks are absolutely ridiculous. Why? 1) North-side friends visit the South-side as much as we visit them. Face it — everyone's busy and it's not like living next door. 2) Girls' attendance (or lack of) may be owing to a lack of publicity rather than a purposeful scheme of "let's blow their party." By the way it's usually our party (together) with the girls' dorm paying the agreed percentage. 3) South-side dorms are still cheaper and more convenient than off-campus housing. 4) Finally, that is a new rumor on me. When is this conflict going to die? I'm tired of hearing "Oh, you're from Mosher." We are all Aggies, aren't we? I set my priorities on that and not where someone lives.  
—Charlene Ward '80

### Peace & Quiet?

Editor:  
Trying to find a relatively quiet place to study in the library is not very conducive to learning.

The past several times I have been to the library I have had to play a musical-chairs like game because of incessant chatter in neighboring carrels or extensive conversation carrying over from in front of the elevators, where students seem to congregate for the purpose of socializing.

Besides the verbal distractions, other noisy activities such as eating (Cheetos or apples naturally) or cleaning out a spiral notebook are annoying when trying to study.

These habits are disturbing to say the least when attempting to absorb Political Science. The library has a lounge adequate for snacking and relaxing, while our campus offers a student center geared for student get-togethers. Let's use our facilities in the way they are supposed to be used.  
—Michelle Scudder '80



UNTIL YOU GET YOUR CALCULATOR FIXED, I THINK 12 PLUS 5 IS 17!

## Top of the News

### Campus Coleman murder trial set

The trial of capital murder suspect Walter Joe Coleman has been scheduled to begin March 27, 1978. Coleman is accused of the January 12 robbery and shooting of Larry T. Baugh. Baugh was a graduate student and English lecturer at TAMU. The announcement was made Wednesday by 85th District Judge W. C. Davis. The delay is due to a full court schedule. Neither the defense attorneys nor the district attorney had asked for the delay. Judge Davis said a motion to restrict press coverage at the trial was still being held under advisement. Coleman, who had his bail lowered from \$20,000 to \$15,000 during an October 6 hearing, is being held in the Brazos County jail.

### State

### Bexar county food stamps drop

For the first time in three years, monthly sales of food stamps in Bexar County have fallen below \$4 million, according to the regional administrator of the Texas Department of Human Resources, Raymond G. Cheves said the number of households issued food stamps decreased approximately 2,500 from a year ago to a total of 35,056 in September. He said the stamps amounted to \$3.9 million in comparison to \$4.7 million issued in September, 1976. Cheves credited the decrease in food stamp use to a gradual, steady upswing in the economy and his department's stringent investigation of the food stamp fraud.

### Nation

### Carter signs ailing cities grant

President Carter, calling areas of urban blight "a disgrace to our great country," Wednesday signed legislation that authorizes \$14.7 billion in grants to ailing cities, especially in the Northeast and Midwest.

Carter said it was "a very happy" occasion for him because such fiscal relief is urgently needed for large aging urban centers. The bill's allocations are spaced over a three-year period for fiscally pressed communities.

"There are some devastated areas where American citizens live that are a disgrace to our great country," Carter said in an outdoor ceremony.

### Enterprise makes perfect landing

Enterprise, America's space truck of the future, underwent its toughest test yet in California Wednesday, plunging in a steep powerless glide from more than 20,000 feet to a perfect desert landing in little more than two minutes.

The delta-winged craft dropped swiftly on a more than 22 degree glide path to a touchdown 2 minutes and 40 seconds after it blasted free from the Boeing 747 mothership that carried it aloft.

### Rest ordered for FBI designate

Federal Bureau of Investigation director-designate Frank M. Johnson's personal physician said Wednesday time and rest should remedy the small hernia that forced postponement of Johnson's confirmation hearings this week.

Dr. J. J. Kirschenfeld said an "inguinal hernia" found in Johnson's left groin will not require surgery, unless there is persistent swelling or pain. "You usually do nothing...time will take care of it," he said.

Kirschenfeld also ordered Johnson to bed for several days before he resumes a rehabilitation program for surgery performed in August to repair a weakened artery in his abdomen.

### World

### Israel agrees to peace talks

Israel agreed to go to a renewed Middle East peace conference at Geneva on the basis of a joint U.S.-Israeli "working paper" and challenged Arab nations to follow suit in Jerusalem Wednesday. The paper was drafted in a marathon six-hour meeting of President Carter, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan last week in New York. Although the provisions are secret, it is believed to call for Israel to negotiate with a single Arab delegation at Geneva consisting of Palestinian representatives, but no members of the Palestine Liberation Organization. The Arab nations have refused to go to Geneva without the PLO and their acceptance of the U.S.-Israeli document was far from assured.

### North Yemen's leader assassinated

In London Wednesday, unknown assailants assassinated North Yemen's moderate leader, Lt. Col. Ibrahim Mohammed el Hamadi, who led the strategic Red Sea nation toward improved relations with Saudi Arabia. The ruling Command Council that was headed by Hamadi said "criminal rancorous murderers" had slain both the 34-year-old president and his brother, Lt. Col. Abdullah Mohammed el Hamadi, a top military official. The Council announced a new chairman, Lt. Col. Ahmad al Ghashmi, to "fill the vacuum" left by the slaying of the country's "great martyr."

### Weather

Clear and mild today and tomorrow with variable winds at 5 mph. High both days near 80. Low tonight low 40s. No rain.

## 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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