

The Battalion

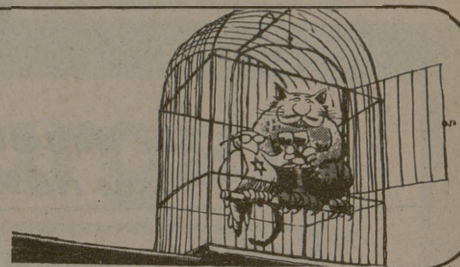
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Inside Today:

Mid-East peace talks on the conference agenda, p. 2
Who keeps peace in Kyle Field? p. 2
Ags host SW Louisiana Cajuns, p. 7



Bill for more federal judges gets House okay

United Press International
WASHINGTON — The House Judiciary Committee Wednesday approved a bill to enlarge the federal judiciary by 30 percent and allow President Carter to appoint more judges than any of his predecessors.

The bill would allow Carter to fill the proposed 110 new district and 35 new circuit court positions with Democrats after eight years of Republican rule. But the House added to the Senate-passed version an amendment calling on Carter to make selections on merit, not party.

Another amendment urged him to name qualified women, blacks, Hispanics and other minorities to the bench. This prompted Rep. William Cohen, R-Maine, to suggest Republicans are in even worse shape when it comes to getting judicial and prosecutive appointments from Carter.

Rep. Jack Brooks, D-Tex., the second-ranking Democrat on the committee, was one of the only two members to vote against the bill, charging the panel abdicated its duty to take politics out of the judiciary when it added more than 30 judgeships to the bill after it came out of a subcommittee.

"This is one of the best classic examples of logrolling," he told his colleagues. Since the Senate usually controls the nominations and confirms the nominees, he said, this would have been an excellent opportunity for the House to create judgeships on the basis of merit alone instead of just decorating this Christmas tree.

Brooks said, "If you write a book on how Congress legislates, you ought to have a chapter on this bill."

The sponsor of the merit amendment, Rep. Romano Mazzoli, D-Ky., conceded the president has disappointed me "by not following his campaign pledge to make appointments on a merit basis."

The proposal calls on the president to set guidelines for the nomination of judges on

merit, but allows him to ignore them by notifying the Senate in writing of his reason.

The amendment applies only to new appointees and their successors, not to sitting judges or their successors. Rep. Don Edwards, D-Calif., sponsor of the minority-appointment measure, said only 1 percent of federal judges are women and only 4 percent are blacks. He said his proposal is

not a matter of quotas or goals, but "it reminds the president he should consider sex and race" in naming judges.

The Senate version of the bill provides for three more district judges — it has nine positions the House doesn't have and the House has six positions the Senate doesn't.

It also provides for adding a new circuit court of appeals by splitting the huge 5th

circuit, stretching from Georgia westward through Texas, into two.

Attorney General Griffin Bell — a former justice in the circuit — and Senate Judiciary Committee chairman James Eastland of Mississippi want the division, but panel chairman Peter Rodino, D-N.J., ruled an amendment to adopt the Senate language non-germane because the House bill deals strictly with numbers of judges.

Court gives women right to sue spouse for damage

United Press International
AUSTIN — Since 1886, Texas wives had been forbidden by law to file damage suits against husbands who intentionally caused them physical harm.

But Wednesday the Texas Supreme Court abolished the legal doctrine, thus granting married women the right to sue or be sued without the joinder of the husband.

In the court's unanimous opinion in a case involving a Corpus Christi doctor convicted of negligent homicide in the shooting death of his wife, Justice Charles Barrow said the doctrine of interspousal tort immunity had unjustly worked against wives.

"We recognize fully the importance of the family unit in our society and that peace and tranquility in the home are endowed and inspired by higher authority than statutory enactments and court decisions," the court ruled.

"However, we do not believe that suits for willful or intentional torts would disrupt domestic tranquility. The peace and har-

mony of a home which has already been strained to the point where an intentional physical attack could take place will not further be impaired by allowing a suit to be brought to recover damages for the attack."

The new interpretation of the state law would apply only in cases involving injuries that occurred after March 1, 1971, the date Mrs. L. D. Bounds of Corpus Christi was shot to death.

Mrs. Bounds' children filed two suits against Dr. L. D. Bounds, one seeking

damages for the wrongful death of their mother and the other seeking to deny Bounds proceeds of an insurance policy on their mother's life.

The Supreme Court ruled the children could file the wrongful death action against Bounds under the new interpretation of the law. But the court sent the case back to the trial court for a new hearing because at the original trial the jury was not permitted to consider Bounds' claim he was acting in self defense at the time his wife was shot.

Farmers meet today to gain momentum

United Press International
IRVING — Farmers threatening to terminate the nation's food supply in 14 days say a mass rally this week will demonstrate to the government, and the public, that their strike plan is gaining momentum.

A spokesman for the American Agriculture movement said Wednesday, farmers from Washington state already were arriving at Texas Stadium — the home of the Dallas Cowboys professional football team for the rally today and Friday.

He said organizers were expecting at least 1,000 farmers and ranchers to attend.

"We've been getting reports they're coming from Colorado, Oklahoma, south-western Arkansas, Austin and Kansas," said Colorado strike organizer Keith Thomas. "We don't know how many or anything but logistics wise, we could handle up to 1,000."

"We expect farmers and ranchers from all over the United States. A lot of them will be just key people from the movement but some are sending contingencies of 20 and some as many as 200."

Thomas said the rally, which will feature more than 60 country-western performers from noon to midnight Thursday and Friday, is being held to raise public support for the protest called to put pressure on the federal government for 100 percent parity for farm products.

"I personally made sure I told all the key leaders in United States about the rally," Thomas said. "We thought it would be appropriate right now and we needed some point in time to get all the key people together to map our strategy from Dec. 2 until the strike date at midnight Dec. 13."

Thomas said the American Agriculture movement, which began nine weeks ago in Colorado Springs, Colo., has grown to more than 1.5 million supporters. He said while Congress may not meet before Dec. 14 to vote on 100 percent parity — the price for farm goods that he said would bring producers a fair rate of return — both President Carter and the secretary of agriculture could grant the parity before then.

Senate wants new ticket policy

By LIZ NEULIN
Battalion Staff
Tickets for away football games may be given in lots of six instead of 10 next year if the Texas A&M Athletic Department follows the recommendation passed by the Student Senate Wednesday night.

"Scalping" football tickets may be legal

Dorm students to be polled about laundry

Dorm residents are scheduled to be polled today on an on-campus laundry service and possible options to that service, including installation of washers and dryers.

The eight-question poll, developed by the Student Government committee for student services, will ask if residents favor washers and dryers in dorms and how much they would be willing to pay for them. It will be distributed through residence hall advisers, and Corps unit commanders. Other questions on the poll include laundry service options such as combinations of clothes allowed, as well as a possible increase in price, says Vicki Young, vice president for student services.

Results from the survey should be ready next week, Young says.

Briscoe ensures exchange policy

United Press International
AUSTIN — Gov. Dolph Briscoe has signed a proclamation guaranteeing Texas will participate in the United States-Mexico prisoner exchange treaty, saying he hopes it will help in the rehabilitation of criminals.

Under the terms of the agreement at least 12 Mexican Nationals imprisoned in Texas Department of Corrections will be transferred to prisons in their native country.

The prisoner exchange program was established under terms of the U.S. - Mexico Prisoner Exchange Treaty signed earlier this month by President Carter.

Briscoe said he also hoped the program would improve U.S. - Mexico relations and establish closer cooperation between the nations' law enforcement activities.

Briscoe said he would review the cases of each offender individually and consider all factors to determine if the transfer would contribute to the prisoner's social rehabilitation.

Coordinating Board begins study on present system of Q-dropping

By DONNA SCHLABACH
Students may soon have less time to Q-drop classes. The current Texas A&M University policy, which allows students to drop courses without record, as late as eight weeks into the semester, may be revised.

One reason for the proposed change is that the Coordinating Board, Texas College and University System, has begun studies to determine how many students actually finish the courses they are enrolled in on the twelfth class day, says Edwin Cooper, dean of admissions and records.

The coordinating board presently provides funds to A&M and other state universities based on the total number of student credit hours on the twelfth class day enrollment.

Cooper said Wednesday that if the board decided to change its funding base from the twelfth class day to the last class day, A&M

would lose a substantial amount of money in funding.

Dr. William Webb, deputy commissioner of the coordinating board and head of funding, said the board is not considering a change in funding procedure.

"We are just interested in collecting data from the universities that will tell us how many students are finishing the courses they are enrolled in on the twelfth day," Webb said.

Cooper said he will appoint a subcommittee of the Academic Operations Committee (A.O.C.) this week to study the Q-drop policy. He said the subcommittee will be comprised of students, faculty members, and selected A.O.C. members.

The purpose of the committee will be to look at the Q-drop system from the student, faculty, and staff viewpoints, and then present its findings to Cooper.

The Q-drop benefits students in that



Battalion photo by Ken Herrera

Taking shape

Originally an aluminum skeleton, the Memorial Student Center Christmas tree dons its traditional garb. Mary Kay Luther, head of the MSC Council Christmas tree committee, said the frame for the tree was made in a machine shop on campus last year. Noble Fir tree branches were shipped from Oregon and tied to the skeleton to form the 20-foot tree.

they can drop courses through the week after mid-term grade reports, regardless of what grade they have, without being penalized. The symbol "Q" is assigned in lieu of a grade and is not computed in students' grade point ratios.

Cooper said other problems with the present Q-drop system include classroom scheduling. He said scheduling problems double when students Q-drop courses.

"Most people don't realize it, but there are less than 200 lecture rooms on the A&M campus. When you're trying to put 29,000 students into 200 rooms, it can be pretty difficult."

Cooper said many classrooms that are filled to capacity at the beginning of the semester become half empty by the end of the semester due to students Q-dropping. Thus, a reduction in Q-drops could mean that fewer classroom seats would be wasted.

"From my own standpoint, I can see

both sides of the Q-drop argument," Cooper said. "At this point, I don't have any preference for or against changing the present policy. I will wait until the A.O.C. subcommittee presents its report to me."

The A.O.C. is comprised of the assistant and associate deans of each college and the coordinators of various university programs. A.O.C. members differ in their views on the Q-drop situation.

One member, P.C. Limbacher, associate dean for student affairs in the College of Education, said there are two philosophical approaches that can be taken in regard to the Q-drop policy.

One approach, he said, is that Q-drop is a device to prevent students from failing courses. Limbacher said that if this is the intended goal of Q-drop, students should be allowed to Q-drop until the day before final exams.

He said the other approach is that Q-drop is a device designed to prevent students from being stuck in classes for which they were not adequately prepared. Limbacher said this was the original purpose of allowing students to Q-drop. With this approach as the goal, he said, he thinks students should not be allowed to Q-drop after the twelfth class day.

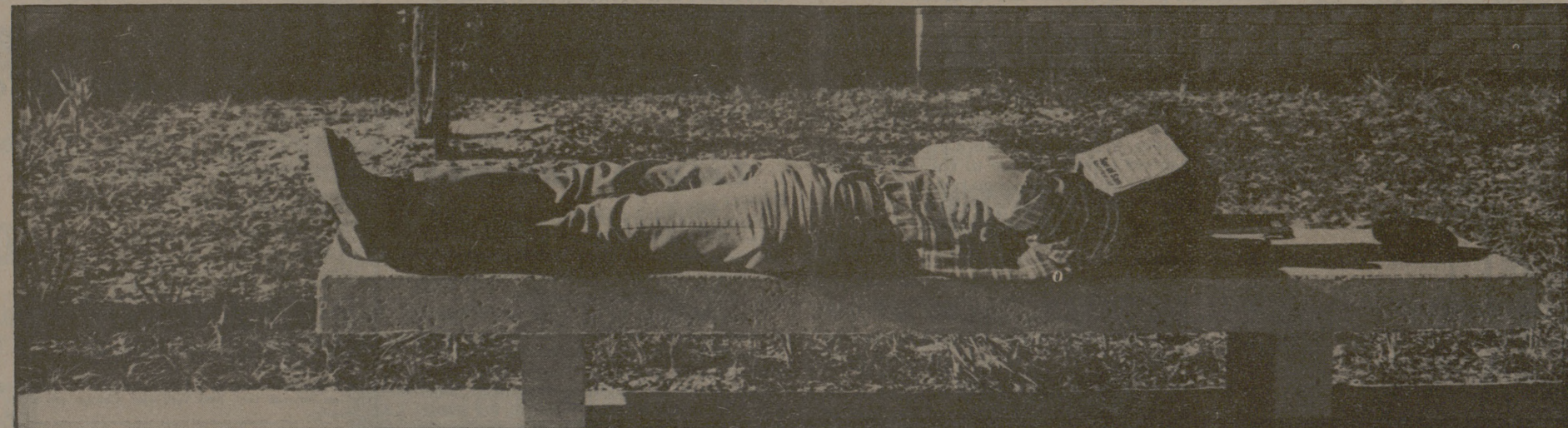
"The key to the latter approach is improved advising so that students wouldn't be in the position of being unprepared for classes," Limbacher said. He said he favors this approach.

A.O.C. member Ned Walton, assistant dean of engineering, said he thinks the present Q-drop policy is much too liberal.

"It's a bad habit that many students get into," he said. "It (Q-dropping) costs the students and taxpayers a lot of money and I think it's a needless waste of money."

Walton said he is in favor of moving the Q-drop date to an earlier point in the semester.

"We are a quality institution and Q-drops contribute to grade inflation and all sorts of undesirable things," he said. Students are getting higher



His head cushioned by a textbook and his eyes covered by a copy of Reader's Digest, Steve Davis takes a snooze outside the Harrington

Osmosis?

Center Wednesday. Davis is a freshman general studies major.

Battalion photo by Roland Ramirez

(See Board, page 5)