

Viewpoint

The Battalion
Texas A&M University

Tuesday
December 13

Getting the short end of equality

When you say the word "equality" in this country today, you get the most pitiful looks. Here's a country built on this idealistic notion and although we've come far on its spirit, we shall never, never attain it.

Let's face it. Someone somewhere is going to be on the short end of the stick. It's an inherent working of our lawmaking process. We've got lawmakers from all over the country making laws for the whole country. It seems they follow a common thought process: what's good for my constituency is good for the country is dynamite for my re-election campaign.

So it is that regionalism is undoing the idealism behind equality in the United States. Here's one example.

Ever wonder who's in control in D.C.? This year Congress approved a special formula for dishing out federal funds to aid community development. Under that formula, effective in 1980, the amount of housing in an area before 1939 determines how much of the Fed's money that area will receive. From what you've read in your history books, guess what part of the country was more extensively developed prior to 1939?

A comparison shows that Newton, Mass., with 2.8 percent of its families living below the poverty level, will receive more than \$1.5 million more from the fund than last year under the new Community Development formula. By the same token, Brownsville, Texas, with 41 percent of its families living below the poverty level, will receive only \$.5 million more.

Evanston, Ill., will receive almost \$1.5 million more. It lists 3.6 percent of its families living below the poverty level. Laredo, Texas, on the other hand, will receive just over \$.5 million more. Almost 40 percent of its families live below the poverty level.

This federal funding is aimed at community development, which I gather to include the raising of living standards. From the looks of things, though, some



well-to-do northern cities are going to share equally in the funding of new civic centers, while some less fortunate cities elsewhere will also be sharing equally — in the construction of new soup kitchens. J.A.

'New look' in French fashion industry

By JACQUELINE GRAPIN
International Writers Service

PARIS — Not long ago, just as she was about to receive an award for being the best skilled worker in France, a dressmaker by the name of Christiane Droton sent a letter of protest to President Valery Giscard d'Estaing. After nearly three decades at her craft, Madame Droton complained, she was only earning the equivalent of \$125 per week.

That incident illustrates a significant change that has come over the French fashion industry in recent years. Its veteran seamstresses are poorly paid and even losing their jobs because the industry has switched from producing elegant garments to the business of selling almost everything else imaginable.

The great names in French fashion, like Saint-Laurent, Dior and Cardin no longer make their money as couturiers. In fact, their small output of elegant ladies wear is a losing proposition, mainly carried on so that they can get publicity from the fashion shows they organize in Paris twice a year.

Their profits, however, are largely derived from lending their famous names to manufacturers of merchandise ranging from ready-made clothes, belts, scarves, neckties, belts and other items for both

men and women to perfume, carpets, watches, glasses, pens and even chocolate. Saint-Laurent recently drew the line at putting its label on automobile tires.

Altogether, the 23 major Paris couturiers

are expected to gross more than \$1 billion this year, and their business is growing by an annual rate of 15 percent. French textile firms, in contrast, are in serious trouble.

Roughly 40 percent of the industry's

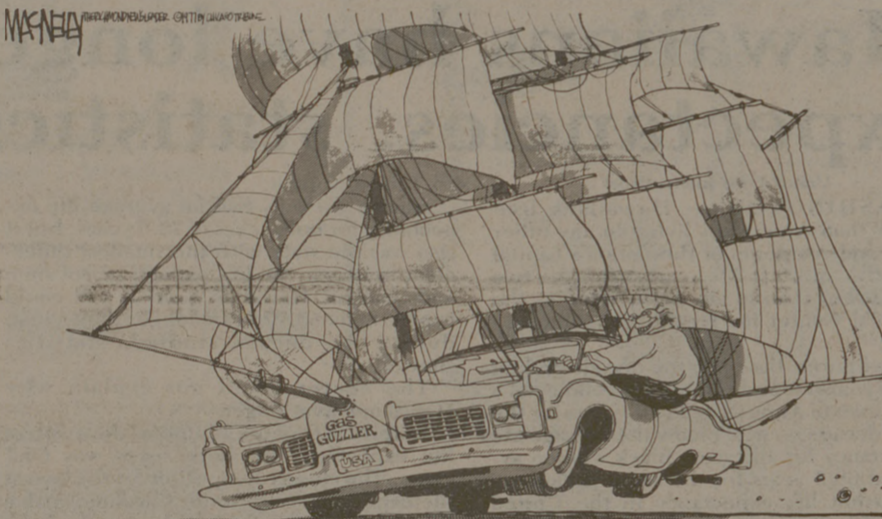
gross is derived from marketing perfume, a practice begun by Coco Chanel in 1923. The production of ready-to-wear clothes accounts for more than 30 percent while

the licensing operation, under which the names of designers are stamped on assorted goods, brings in close to 20 percent.

The shift from fashion designing to franchising is due in large measure to the spiraling costs of turning out elegant gowns and the dwindling number of customers able to afford them.

The declining number of rich clients has been matched, meanwhile, by a drop in the number of employees in the actual fashion trade from some 4500 ten years ago to barely more than 2000 today. Because of its various sidelines, however, the industry provides jobs for 35,000 people.

Nobody is predicting the emergence of Lanvin omelettes and Givenchy spark-plugs, produced under license by neighborhood entrepreneurs. The fear is valid, though, that franchises could get out of hand despite all the benefits they currently bring to the French economy. (Gravin writes on economic issues for *Le Monde*, the Paris daily.)



Letters to the editor

Vet school admissions 'unjust' to non-Texans

Editor: There is a great injustice being done to myself and others in my position. I am referring to the procedure used to select applicants for the College of Veterinary Medicine.

This procedure uses priority groups as the main way of weeding out applicants. There are three such priority groups. Priority group one, those considered first, consists of Texas state residents. Priority group two consist of residents of states without vet schools. Priority group three are those who reside in a state with a vet school other than Texas.

I am a member of priority group two, and as a member of this group I have very little chance of making vet school; the openings are almost always completely filled by priority group one. We are eternally second in line. This policy or a similar one is implemented at all vet schools across the nation. The end result of this is that an eminently qualified applicant may not even be considered should he be unfortunate enough to hail from a state devoid of vet schools. This is so even if he is vastly superior, in all means of evaluation, than the in-state applicants who were accepted! Can this practice, in any way, shape, or form, be construed to be a fair practice?

The reasons behind such discrimination, and it is surely nothing more than that, are very vague, and valid only to a point. One reason is that in state applicants are more likely to remain in the state after receiving their D.V.M. It is surely not rational for the state to trade off quality for quantity! This is exactly what is being done! And in reality, it is all that likely for a student who has spent up to seven years in graduate and undergraduate work in Texas to immediately upon graduation take off toward the state line? I suggest that seven-years makes one feel that the place is home. I believe that priority groups one and two, and indeed, even three, should be evaluated against each other on the basis of merit alone with no special consideration taken for "priority" groups.

Discrimination in relation to race, color, creed, sex, and national origin is unconstitutional. Why should discrimination on the basis of state residency be different? — David Nissman, '81
Future Veterinarian

Health center hurting

Editor: Texas A&M University's Health Center has definite drawbacks as far as health

services go. People often call the Beutel Health Center the "Quack Shack," because of its oddball business practices. In my opinion, the health center could use some reforms in order to better its services to A&M students.

For an example of its inefficiency, about two weeks ago I cut my hand on some glass at work. I went to the health center and signed in. The nurse, looking right at my blood-covered hand, said, "You'll have to take a seat and wait your turn." After twenty minutes of waiting, they called me into the treatment room. The registered nurse on duty said, "My, that is bleeding a little. I guess you could use some stitches." After soaking my hand, they moved me into the back of the clinic so the doctor could stitch me up.

After another waiting period, the doctor comes in and starts shooting novocain into my cut. While doing so, he says, "Just water, just water." Instead of ignoring him, I asked him what he was putting in my wound. He stops dead in his tracks to pick up the bottle and read the contents to me. I asked, but with a bleeding hand, I hadn't expected him to stop what he was doing.

And speaking of business practices, what kind of business do they think they run — a beauty parlor? I came in one day to get the stitches out. I arrived at the health center at 4:15 and got in to see the nurse at 4:35. At that time, she informed me that the health center closed at 5:00 and that I should have come in between 8:00 and 3:30.

I might take this time to mention that after a week and a half of coming in every day to have my hand checked and the bandage changed, they chose this time to tell

me that my hand was not healing properly because I was allergic to the stitches.

In my opinion, the Beutel Health Center needs to change its methods of receiving students, caring for students and diagnosing their illnesses. With appointments, the student could come and get the attention they needed without a rushed atmosphere. I believe with a more knowledgeable and educated staff, the care and diagnoses that students receive would, without doubt, improve. — Melanie Shaw, '80

Ags need manners

Editor: The overwhelming lack of manners and couch of the students of Texas A&M University is making itself more apparent with each event on the campus.

The Firefall concert would have been bearable if it had not been for the group of people sitting around me. They talked and laughed incessantly throughout the concert. The person sitting next to me politely asked them to lower their voices. At this, they became much rowdier and made it necessary for those interested in seeing and listening to the concert to find other seats.

The following day at the A&M - U. of H. football game, I again was surrounded by rude people. It is my understanding that only Seniors are allowed to stand on the seats of Kyle Field. The section in which I was standing was not the Senior section, yet the people on the rows in front of me insisted on standing on the seats. This, of course, hampered the vision of all those people standing behind them.

No more 'no names'

A recent increase in letters to the Battalion's editor has been accompanied by an apparent increase in modesty or desire for anonymity. Many of those letters have been accompanied by only initials or by requests that the author's name not be printed.

The Battalion accepts letters to the editor as an open forum for reader opinions, gripes, questions or almost anything else a reader might want to say. But readers who want to say something must be willing to stand behind what they say. That includes signing their letters.

So in the future letters to the editor will be printed with the full name of the author, and his classification if he is a student. Only in extreme cases will a letter be printed without the author's name. In such a case the author must specify with the letter why his name should not be printed.

As always, letters to the editor must include the author's full name, address and phone number, plus his classification if he is a student.

We want to keep on hearing from you — but we want our readers to know who they're hearing from, too.

In both of these instances, I find that the A&M students are becoming very rude and insensitive to the feelings of others. I understand that they paid for the right to be both in G. Rollie White and Kyle Field, but I, too, paid for the same right. If they have no respect for themselves, then they should at least have respect for those around them. These people should think more about what they are doing, therefore reducing the problems they cause. — Della Gonzalez, '81

Still disagreement

Editor: In response to your action concerning our letter of December 7, it must be said that your headline — "They Shoot Students — Don't They?" — was highly uncalled for. Nowhere in our letter did we say that we were directly shot at; in fact, we specifically stated: "this is not to suggest that he fired directly at us." As you stated in the editor's note to Stan Teague (December 7), it is the newspaper's job "only to report what is said." Your headline condones sensationalism and is amateur to the extreme.

As to the officer accused of firing his weapon, anyone might guess that he would deny such an allegation. As to Chief Luther's brilliant theory on the firecracker/gunshot, what could be more inane? To insinuate that we mistook a firecracker for a gunshot is totally absurd — especially after the warning: "Halt or I'll shoot!" Moreover, while in custody at the police station, that they would accuse us of yelling the same, and then of lighting firecrackers (while on the run, no less) to make good our escape/threat stretches the imagination to new dimensions. We laugh now as we did then!

There is little more to write concerning all this; we see no need to repeatedly defend what we know to be true. Our original objective was, and still is, to correct the erroneous editor's note (December 2). We repeat: an officer of the campus police force did draw and fire his weapon. We substantiate this. We were there, not Chief Luther.

— Mike Zilich
— Brian Perry
— Tom Henry
— Mike Kirby

Editor's note: You and Chief Luther seem to disagree. We've traced down what information we can find on the incident and will have to leave it at that.

Top of the News Campus

Student holiday parking set

Students who plan to leave their vehicles on campus during the holiday period are requested to park them in PA-9 (located off Old Main Drive). Bicycles that are left on campus should be locked and secured; bicycles may be stored in dormitory room for this purpose. University Police will have personnel on duty at all times during the semester break.

Leadership seminar reminder

Students who plan to hold leadership positions in recognized student organizations next semester or next year are invited to apply to attend a series of leadership seminars which will be offered during the spring semester. The program is designed to give students insight into the administrative management of Texas A&M University and to meet various administrators. The seminars will meet every Thursday from 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. The seminars are non-credit and require no outside assignments. Interested students should apply at the Student Activities Office, 845-1134. The program will be limited to 25 students.

Miller approves trial shuttle bus

President Jarvis Miller officially approved trial operation of an on-campus shuttle bus system for next semester. All students, faculty and staff will be able to ride the buses at no charge. Routes will follow the perimeter of campus and serve the west campus and School of Veterinary Medicine. Operation of the \$60,000 system is set to begin Jan. 16, the first day of class. Student service fees will pay 75 percent of the cost, and profits from the Memorial Student Center Bookstore will pay 25 percent.

Miller on TV show Sunday

Texas A&M University President Jarvis E. Miller will take part Sunday, in KTRK-TV's "Issues and Answers," show. The 30-minute program will be shown initially at noon and replayed just prior to station sign-off. Miller discusses a variety of questions, dealing with Texas A&M and higher education in general, posed earlier for the taped show by Dave Ward, Channel 13 anchorman, and Allen Pengelly, producer for the station's 10 p.m. Eyewitness News.

Bike parking for a quarter

The Texas A&M University Student Government is offering to store bikes in the pistol range under Kyle Field for 25 cents during the semester break. The bikes will be under lock, key and the supervision of University Police. Student Government workers will store bikes from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday at the range. Bikes may be picked up Jan. 16, the first day of class.

Local

Building codes to be considered

The College Station City Council will review and consider proposed building code amendments in a special meeting Wednesday at 7 p.m. Presentation and discussion of proposed capital improvements is also on the agenda.

School choirs present concert

The annual Christmas Concert featuring choirs from grades 6 through 12 will be presented at 7:30 p.m. today at the A&M Consolidated High School Auditorium. The program will be under the direction of high school choir director James Matheny and Ellen McGee, middle school choir director.

State

Gas firms face \$1 billion refunds

In Austin, the Texas Railroad Commission voted 2-1 Monday to order LoVaca Gathering Co. and Coastal States Gas Producing Co. to refund more than \$1 billion to customers and to fulfill long term contracts to supply low cost natural gas to South Texas cities. Commissioner Jim Langdon complained the decision in the longstanding natural gas rate will bankrupt the companies and jeopardize natural gas supplies for millions of Texans. "The effect on the economic loss of almost all of South and Central Texas is almost a horror story," Langdon said. The commission ordered the present LoVaca rates to continue until expected court suits challenging the refunds and lower rates can be settled. Commissioner Jon Newton, however, said the supply of natural gas for LoVaca's customers is not in danger.

Nation

Investigators search hotel rubble

Investigators searched through the icy remains of the fire-blackened Wenonah Park Hotel in Bay City Michigan Monday, discovering the charred bodies of four more victims — but not the cause of the blaze that killed them. The grim search raised the death toll to nine in the fire that razed the four-story combination hotel-apartment, a 70-year-old downtown landmark which officials said did not meet current fire safety codes.

Weather

Mostly cloudy and mild today turning clear and cooler tonight. Winds out of the South at 10-15 mph changing to Northwest later tonight. The high today mid-70's and the low tonight upper 40's. The high on Wednesday in the low 70's. 60 percent chance of rain today, decreasing to 30 percent tonight.

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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