

Viewpoint

The Battalion
Texas A&M University

Tuesday
January 24, 1978

This is no way to run an airline

The grade deficiency problem that now plagues student senate is hanging like a brooding cloud. There really should be no reason for it, and we hope the senate will take appropriate action at the earliest possible date to make sure that in the future the unpleasant duty of checking grades and removing the unqualified from office may be carried out without undue embarrassment and hostility.

As it now stands, the senate's constitution does not state whose responsibility it is to check senators' and student government officials' grades for qualification for office. Past procedures for checking GPR's has set a shaky precedent at best. As they say in the business, this is no way to run an airline.

The current procedure of policing scholastic qualifications leaves too much to chance. Since the constitution does not specifically require grades to be checked, the possibility exists for political pressure to quietly quash any investigation into grade deficiency. And even when an investigation is opened, as would be expected of such a body as the senate, too much red tape is involved to make the process quick and efficient.

Under the current constitution it is difficult, if not impossible, for the student electorate to keep tabs on the qualifications of its elected officials and those officials' appointees. Privacy laws, coupled with the present constitution, work against the electorate's right to know.

But the constitution also hinders members of the senate. Scholastically deficient senators and officers hardly can be blamed if they do not report themselves, if, as some members of the senate have pointed out, the constitution does not clearly state what makes a senator or senate official ineligible for office.



We hope the necessary steps are taken to amend the constitution to include an efficient grade-check policy, one that will allow the necessary policing of student government to be undertaken without the rumor, disparagement and longevity now marring the current procedure. J.A.

Another run through the canal

By STEPHEN SHINER
and EUNICE MAHLER

We would like to praise Mr. Weaver's journalistic skill in his recent (Jan. 20) editorial on the present Panama Canal Treaty now in debate. His article contained the numerous facts and views to which we have all been exposed and are well enough aware of ever since Ronald Reagan discovered the Canal in his bid for the presidency in 1976.

If one were to dissect Mr. Weaver's article carefully to have we, who have lived both within the Canal Zone and the Republic of Panama, one would wonder about various points. For example, in one part of the article, a reference was made to the Shaw vs. Wilson case. Just what was the Shaw vs. Wilson case? If it was about the treaty, was Panama represented, or were we repeating past errors as when no Panamanian representative was present at the making of the original treaty of 1903? The U.S. representative at that conference, Secretary of State John Jay, remarked that the treaty was "vastly advantageous to the United States, and, we must confess, not so advantageous to Panama."

If the Panama Canal is sovereign U.S. territory, then why does the original treaty

state that the United States has a legal right to remain in the Canal Zone as "if it were the sovereign of the territory," instead of "as sovereign"? Is the 1903 treaty really "quite clear in meaning" as Mr. Weaver stated?

The past stated editorial also makes a note for the "benevolent theft" by which Panama was so-called well paid for the strip of ground on which the Canal was built. Is a "benevolent theft" any morally better than a "plain theft"? Is it any less a ripoff when a thief steals your car but

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leaves your spare on the curb? Also, about that \$50 million a year going to Gen. Omar Torrijos, will the check be made out to Torrijos himself, or rather to the Republic of Panama?

Mr. Weaver also makes note that "Freedom House, the respected organization which ranks countries on the basis of human rights," ranks Panama on the same scale as the Soviet Union and even lower than Cuba. Instead of confining the consensus to a few countries, we would like to know the worldwide rank of the Soviet Union and Cuba. This statement is like saying that it's zero degrees outside, but

failing to mention whether Fahrenheit or Centigrade.

One of the biggest topics for debate in reference to the Canal is the possibility of the lessening of the security of the U.S. if the Canal were not turned over to the Republic of Panama. Nationalistic feeling is so strong in Panama, that if the Canal were not turned over by the new treaty, then surely the people of Panama would think of taking the issue into their own hands and resort to guerrilla warfare which would be quite costly to us since the Panamanians would have the advantage of fighting within their own country. This would also prove costly to all who use the Canal since damage to the Canal would surely be an end result. If the Canal gates were to be bombed, for example, thus causing the lake to drain which feeds the Canal, then a minimum of ten to fifteen years would be required to have it again fill to capacity.

The Jan. 20 article also stated that Gen. Torrijos has broken the present treaty eleven times in the past ten years, yet no details were given. This is but another example of Mr. Weaver's playing on the public's emotions without really giving any details. Are we to deal in facts, or broad abstractions such as that used by Mr. Rea-

gan with his campaign quote of, "We bought it, we paid for it, we built it and we are going to keep it."

Has not the human factor been left out of all negotiations and debates. The Panamanian people have a narrow strip of land cutting across "their" country which is controlled by a "foreign" country. While we all think of the "American pride" at stake in keeping the Canal, what about the "Panamanian Pride" in their getting a piece of their own land back?

Are the facts so hazy that many of our nation's top decision makers are having to go to Panama and see first-hand the situation as it really exists? What is changing the minds of such men as: Senate Majority Leader Robert Byrd of West Virginia, Minority Leader Howard Baker, Barry Goldwater, Senator Hayakawa of California, and also Lloyd Benson, Democrat from Texas? Are they some of the same questions which we have raised in this article?

Stephen Shiner is a senior environmental science major. Eunice Mahler is a senior agricultural engineering major. Opinions expressed in this column are the authors' only and do not necessarily represent those of this paper.

The sun didn't set soon enough

By DAVID BOGGAN
Battalion Staff

The citizens of Texas have been made the victims of a gross injustice.

Last week, the Sunset Advisory Commission, charged with the duty of reviewing and recommending abolishment of nonessential state agencies, deemed four agencies unnecessary to the state's proper functioning: The Pink Bollworm Commission, the Burial Association Rate Commis-

The Lighter Side

sion, the Pest Advisory Commission and the Texas Stonewall Jackson Memorial Board.

What the hell are these Sunset people trying to do? Don't they realize how much sentiment Texans attach to the various

agencies of the state, some of which have been on the yellowed pages of the Texas books for decades?

Naturally the Sunset Commission tried to keep a low profile on their recommendations. But the taxpayers of Texas have a right to know that Stonewall Jackson may not receive as much recognition in the future as he has in the past. It is also probable that the state will witness a rise in the number of uncommissioned pink bollworms.

Another question: Doesn't the Sunset Commission see that if their recommendations are followed and these agencies are abolished by the Legislature there will be agency employees out of jobs? These employees will have to go out and look for work. And how many openings are there for people who advise pests?

One solution to this problem might be to create some new state agencies. Here are a

few suggestions:

The Farm Implement Environmental Protection Agency. Every farmer knows how much fuel it takes for his tractor to plow a 20-acre field. But with their increasing travel on the state's thoroughfares, farmers need to know what kind of gas mileage they can expect from their machines on the road. The FIEPA would establish fuel ratings for tractors in both city and highway conditions, and list their findings on all 1978 farm implements.

The Bevo Chip Sanitation Commission. With all of this famous steer's by-product products on the market, the BCSC assures Texas consumers that they are getting the highest quality dung possible. The commission would also assure that all of this particular Austin export, be it in jewelry, framed or bronzed, would contain this warning: "Mascot manure may be hazardous to your health."

The Texas Pipeline Commission. This commission would be established to research the feasibility of constructing a giant pipeline across the state. This pipeline would start in College Station and carry excess rain water to the West Texas plains. There the water could be used to irrigate crops for the farmers to plow under.

The Texas Anson Jones Memorial Board. Even without his memorial board, Stonewall Jackson will probably be remembered, but what of Anson Jones. How many Texans remember him? Probably very few, which is as good a reason as any to create a state agency.

Those Sunset people also had some question as to the necessity of the staff of the Texas Navy. They plan to review the Navy in 1991. The next thing you know someone will doubt the merits of the Kansas Coast Guard.

Letters to the editor

Mud-slinging not part of campaign strategy

Editor: We are writing in response to an editorial printed in the Battalion Wednesday, Jan. 18, entitled "Teague's retirement expected, but sad." We found several statements with which we take exception.

Mr. Cawley stated that Chet Edwards has participated in "mud slinging." We have been associated with the Edwards campaign from its inception, and to the best of our knowledge Mr. Edwards has never participated in "mud slinging." He is stressing a positive campaign and abhors this type of campaign tactic.

Mr. Edwards served Congressman Teague as a legislative aid for over three years and developed only the utmost respect for him. In the same regard, he has maintained a courteous and considerate attitude toward his opponents.

While the "mud slinging" type of statement is easily made, in the future we would hope more documentation be provided before such rumor is printed. Mr. Cawley's editorial reflects poorly on the candidates of this race and on the Battalion. Mr. Edwards and other candidates would gladly provide information to enlighten both the students and faculty of Texas A&M concerning this race. We hope that the Battalion will take better advantage of this information in the future.

—Fred Sutherland, Kathy Dugat

Editor's note: The Battalion apologizes for the reference to "mud-slinging," realizing the differences in political opinion need not be expressed "maliciously." In the future, any use of the word "mud-slinging" will be qualified by example.

Setting priorities

Editor: It is my opinion that Joe Reagan's reply to the question of the yell leaders being absent at the women's basketball game against Southwest Texas State last Thursday night doesn't seem possible.

Being a senior mechanical engineering major, I can understand having homework at the end of the first week of school; however, I did find a little free time for some recreation. And, I'm confident that the yell leaders had homework of their own, but I must point out that as elected representatives of the student body they are expected to attend the athletic events as leaders of the Twelfth Man.

Granted, I see how it would not be possible for any of the yell leaders to stay for the entire game, but perhaps if only one yell leader attended the first half and another yell leader the second half, they might have to stay at most one hour. All things considered, one hour away from the books would do little harm to study habits and the Twelfth Man would make its presence known at both men's and women's basketball games. I'm sure all the yell leaders would be the first to say that the Twelfth Man is crucial to the team's desire to win.

I would like to join Coach Bender in thanking the students who lead the yells during the game for there never has nor ever will be a time when the Twelfth Man does not participate in athletic events 100 percent.

Granted, they can't ignore their studies, but perhaps if something could be ar-

ranged so one yell leader attended games the Twelfth Man would function as it was meant to do — urge the team onto victory by a show of student support.

So, come on yell leaders! Get together and work something out. The Twelfth Man needs your leadership!

—D.W. Posey, '78

Slouch

by Jim Earle



"I'M NOT SURE, BUT I THINK I KNOW WHY YOU'VE BEEN HAVING TROUBLE WITH YOUR GRADES!"

Top of the News Campus

Women leaders workshop planned

A Women's Leadership Workshop will be sponsored by the Student Activities Office. Emphasis will be on the value of leadership experiences now and later in life, exploration of what deters women from seeking leadership positions, women leaders in history, and assertive and leadership skills. The workshop will meet on five consecutive Monday evenings from 6:30 to 8 beginning Feb. 6. Those interested should sign up in MSC 221 by next Tuesday.

American Humanics begins workshop

The American Humanics Association begins its spring seminar and workshop series Tuesday, Jan. 24. The seminar concerns "Marriage, Family and Youth Agency Career." It starts at 6 p.m. in MSC 205.

State

Torres jury selection begins

Jury selection began in Houston Monday in the trial of four policemen charged with federal civil rights violations in the beating and drowning of a Mexican-American prisoner. Terry Denon, Stephen Orlando, Louis Kinney and Joseph Jamish are charged with felony civil rights violation in the death of Joe Campos Torres. U.S. District Judge Ross Sterling said the jury would be sequestered for the length of the trial. Defense lawyer Mike Ramsey predicted jury selection will take a minimum of one week. The federal grand jury named a fifth officer fired in the incident, Glenn Brinkmeyer, as an indicted co-conspirator. He pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor civil rights violation in exchange for cooperating with the prosecution.

Yarbrough jury selection ordered

District Judge Mace Thurman refused Monday to dismiss a perjury indictment against former Texas Supreme Court Associate Justice Donald Yarbrough. He ordered jury selection to begin in Austin. Prosecutors indicated they will press the perjury charge accusing Yarbrough of lying to the Travis County grand jury. The prosecution is expected to contend Yarbrough lied when he told the grand jury he did not meet with former associate John Rothkopf at an Austin motel last May. Tapes of conversations between the two allegedly made at that meeting by a secret recording device concealed on Rothkopf, are expected to be used as evidence against Yarbrough. The former associate justice said he will plead innocent to the charge.

Nation

Train spill causes evacuation

Eight cars of a Chessie System train derailed near Baden, Va., Monday, spilling some 20,000 gallons of a toxic chemical and causing the evacuation of about 100 persons from their homes. Chessie officials said extreme cold weather apparently prevented the chemical epichlorohyden from vaporizing. But residents living downwind of the accident were ordered from their homes as a precautionary measure. Officials also were concerned that the chemical might soak into the ground and contaminate the water in nearby Point Pleasant. As a precautionary measure the city's water plant was temporarily shut down. There were no injuries in the derailment and officials said they were searching for a cause.

Troopers battle UMW strikers

Alabama state troopers Monday battled striking United Mine Workers at Mentone, Ala. Using tear gas, they dispersed about 500 miners armed with shotguns, ax handles and sticks. In another development, UMW President Arnold Miller and Vice President Sam Church revealed the soft coal industry's latest offer would "virtually do away with" all pension benefits for 80,000 miners who retired before 1976. The union reportedly has been seeking a \$2.80 raise and a cost-of-living increase pegged to the consumer price index.

NYC in need of snow equipment

New York City begged private contractors for additional snow removal equipment Monday as sunny skies and mild temperatures brought on a slow thaw. Most of the city's main thoroughfares were passable but one official called New York's side streets a "disaster" area. Mayor Edward Koch pleaded Sunday with millions of commuters to use public transportation and leave their cars at home during Monday's rush hour. The emergency measures were continued Monday to facilitate clearing the streets. The Sanitation Department, hampered by broken-down equipment, pleaded with private contractors to rent the city snow plows and dump trucks. The cost of the storm for the private sector reached into the millions because of lost business, collapsed roofs and homes, which suffered damage due to power outages.

Kodak violates antitrust laws

The giant Eastman Kodak Co. has been found guilty of monopolizing the nation's amateur photography business in what a defense attorney said was an unprecedented anti-trust trial by a U.S. District Court jury. Kodak was found guilty of violating federal antitrust laws in a \$300 million civil suit by a comparatively small competitor, Berkey Photo Inc. of New York. John Doar, Kodak's chief lawyer, said the firm would appeal. Damages against the firm, headquartered in Rochester, N.Y., will be set during another jury trial that is scheduled to begin Feb. 21. Kodak was found guilty of monopolizing the amateur markets, but the jury did not find the firm was involved in an unlawful conspiracy to monopolize.

Weather

Widespread fog and cloudy skies. High today in the low-50's, low tonight in the mid-30's. High tomorrow near 50. 50 percent chance of rain today, tonight, and tomorrow. Winds out of E-SE at 8-12 mph, becoming northerly at 10-15 mph late this afternoon.

The Battalion

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