

# VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION  
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

MONDAY  
FEBRUARY 13, 1978

## Resignations don't retire the issue

Once upon a time the simple issue was setting minimum grade requirements for student government officials. Now, because of some absurd misdirection, the student body president and a vice president have been pressured by the senate to resign before any minimum requirements have been established.

To some the resignations are proof that the senate has made progress, and that it has served justice. It has done neither.

The central issue continues to be minimum grade requirements for office. This issue has been at the core of student government action since the beginning of the semester and still no accepted minimum requirements have been determined. Instead a charged senate has called for and received the resignation of its executive officer. For what purpose? Robert Harvey's resignation, or the resignation of everyone in student government, isn't going to make the minimum grade requirement puzzle any clearer.

Commenting on his resignation, Harvey said,

"It seems like this is the only way to resolve the issue." On the contrary, it does nothing to resolve the issue.

Sometime in the future, after all the vacancies have been filled from the inevitable musical chairs, the senate will once again be confronted with the grade requirement problem. Harvey said, "It's in the interest of student government to move on and get something accomplished." The way this affair is being handled, the only thing student government is going to accomplish is installation of new officers. The real problem remains.

Student government has refused to dispatch the grade requirement issue, using it instead as a weapon in a political feud. A student body president has been pressured out of office for his grades and no one even knows what those grades have to be.

It's time student government quit mutilating this issue. There have to be rules before there can

be violations. If the senate ever comes up with an accepted set of rules and officers still come up short, then certainly resignations are in order. But not before.

We would urge Robert Harvey and Vicki Young to reconsider their decisions and not fuel the senate's false sense of accomplishment, and at the same time demand first things first. There is a time to call for resignations and a time to submit them. This is not that time.

It is time to simply decide on minimum grade requirements for student government office. A 2,000 cumulative GPR minimum is the most reasonable considering the amount of work required to perform well in office. But whatever is decided, it is not asking the senate too much to make that simple decision immediately.

Then, and only then, should there be any judging as to who is fit for office.

J.A.

## The nuclear edge needs sharpening

By H.E. MENDIETA

Since the end of the Second World War the international order has been shaped by the conflict between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. The development of nuclear weaponry in the same period has given this conflict an unusual character, i.e. U.S. policy in this period has been dominated by hyperactive fear of nuclear war. This fear has helped make defense spending unpopular and indirectly helped make Soviet policy more effective; paradoxically, it may also make nuclear war more likely.

The fear of nuclear weaponry is most apparent in the much abused concept of overkill. A common argument asks, why buy more weapons if we can destroy the Soviet Union several times over? There are two things wrong with this reasoning. First the questionable assumption that we can destroy the Soviet Union several times over is made, and secondly it ignores the fact that Soviet perceptions of our capabilities are as important, if not more important, than our actual capabilities.

Our current strategic program is based on the triad of manned bombers, ballistic missile submarines and land-based ballistic missile systems. Each of these systems faces the formidable task of penetrating Soviet defenses, defenses that have been improved to such a point that we may have trouble destroying the Soviet Union even once.

The priority they place on air defense is quite clear if one considers their defense system in relation to ours: 2,650 interceptor aircraft to our 532, 9,500 surface-to-air missiles to our 330. Granted, the Soviets face a greater threat from our bomber force than we do from theirs, but these figures are not useful in raw comparison but

### Readers' forum

as indicators of a) how seriously the Soviets take air defense and b) the trouble faced by our bomber force in penetrating Soviet defenses.

Our manned bomber, the B-52, was designed in the 50s. Consequently, it is at a heavy disadvantage when facing Soviet defenses designed in the early '70s. The current bomber force can carry 1,000 megatons, but it is unclear how much of that would actually reach the target. What is clear is that unless we modernize the bomber force, the day is approaching when we will be unable to deliver that 1,000 megatons.

Our land-based missile system could also become vulnerable. Such public sources as "Aviation Week and Technology" regularly reveal Soviet advances in the technology necessary to destroy our spy satellites and jam our radars. These actions if successful would enable the Soviet Union to launch a first strike that could destroy our ballistic missiles on the

ground. Our third major strategic system, the ballistic missile submarines, are less vulnerable. Even so, Soviet technological advance will soon begin to plague our missile subs. Not only is there the problem of Soviet technological advances but without the backup of the other two portions of the triad the submarines cannot provide a credible deterrent. The submarine fleet can only deliver 377 megatons of explosive power, an amount the Soviets could conceivably decide they could absorb with acceptable amounts of damage.

Questions about what the Soviets could decide are at least as important as questions about our military capabilities. Given a breakthrough in technology that would make such a situation possible, would the Soviets accept the damage involved if they thought they would be subject to a retaliation of only, say, 500 megatons? They might well do so given their civil defense program, our lack of one and the fact that they suffered extensive casualties in World War II.

From this it seems that unless we modernize our bomber force (the B-1), start the development and deployment of a mobile missile system to avoid a preemptive Soviet attack (the MX program) and increase the deterrence capabilities of our submarine fleet (the Trident program), we will in fact be increasing the possibility of nuclear war. Unfortunately, this seems to be the choice of the Carter Administration.

The necessary programs have been either halted outright, as in the case of the B-1, or stalled.

This strategic mess is compounded by the inferiority of our conventional forces. This is the situation.

	U.S.	U.S.S.R.
Manpower	789,000	2,500,000
Tanks	10,100	40,000
Surface Ships	291	546
Artillery	6,000	15,000-20,000

Though a large amount of this force is directed against the Chinese, they still have plenty left over to outnumber us in most of the potential trouble spots around the globe. This lack of a credible deterrent allows a more aggressive Soviet Union. Since there is little reason to risk nuclear war over small Soviet provocations and since we have few other means of resisting such provocations, the Soviets have what is effectively a blank for minor provocations, provocations that provide significant Soviet advances when accumulated.

Certainly new strategic programs and a credible conventional weapons stance will cost money, money that we as taxpayers would like to keep ourselves. However as Ronald Reagan has said, "In what precious coin do we measure freedom?"

H.E. Mendieta is a junior political science and economics major. Opinions expressed in this column are the author's only and not necessarily those of this paper.

### Letters to the editor

Editor:

An Aggie from the class of '76, Howard W. Gaddis Jr., needs help. He and his wife recently had a child that was born with a congenital defect. The problem required surgery, and the hospital bill was thousands of dollars more than the Gaddis family could afford.

In response, the Texas A&M Bridge Club is holding a special benefit game at 7:15 p.m. on Feb. 22. Players will be asked to contribute one dollar (or more if they wish), and the entire proceeds will go to Mr. and Mrs. Gaddis to help pay their expenses.

The game will be held in room 212 of the MSC, and the winning pair will receive a special prize.

If you can play bridge, then this should be a fun and worthwhile evening. We also feel that other campus clubs could hold similar activities for this cause. For more information call Stuart Walker at 846-3849 or Henry Robin at 846-6772.

— James Knight, '79

### An answer?

Editor:

With the resignations of Student Body President Robert Harvey and Vice President of Student Services Vicki Young, the current crisis in student government has come to an end. However, what has been accomplished?

For the cynics among the student body, it is merely more "proof" that SG is a farce. Yet the cynic only views reality in as much as it will justify his opinion. For those individuals vehemently opposed to Mr. Harvey's administration, there are feelings of accomplishment. Neither resignation nor removal can ever be an "accomplishment". And for some, Robert and Vicki are martyrs struck down by their enemies. I should hope this has not been the case.

So what has been accomplished? Perhaps an answer, an answer to the question, "What are the minimum standards we expect from our elected officials?" A question that the student senate, Academic Council, and eventually the administration needs to address. Hopefully, this question will be answered.

Mr. Harvey and Ms. Young leave behind them many accomplishments which have served to make SG more efficient and more responsive to the students' needs. Student government has shown that it is capable of solving its internal problems without the necessity of administrative intervention. The system works, but a

heavy price has been paid to prove that point. There is no sense of victory.

— Jim Connor, '79  
Attorney for the Plaintiff,  
TAMU Student Body vs. Robert Harvey,  
et. al.

### GPR okay

Editor:

Having been intimately involved in the situation concerning qualifications for holding office that affronted the student government recently, I would take this time for a short comment. I have depleted all my ammunition, argued all my points to their extent, and tried to resolve the situation as best I could in representing the student body of Texas A&M. My thoughts are addressed to my fellow Aggies and are focused upon one main point. I ponder the removal (a rose by any other name would smell as sweet) of two members of student government for scholastic deficiency when their overall grade point ratio is well above the school average. Perhaps if we force Congressmen out of office for allowing their checking accounts to fall below \$10,000.00 we may maintain these values and legalities. I shall cogitate upon this matter for a long, long time. I hope others will do likewise. To those Senators not in attendance at the last Senate meeting (excepting those with excuses), Highway 6 runs both ways.

— Austin Sterling, '76

### Standing spirit

Editor:

It is time to stand up for Aggie basketball. Aggies have never been known as fair-weather fans, but this year may be different. It is a lean year for Shelby and Company, but every team has rebuilding periods. With three inexperienced freshman and two players coming off probation playing the majority of the game, who can expect A&M to bring down All-American powerhouses such as Arkansas?

Metcalf's power team has shown us that they can compete with the toughest. Statistics and win/loss columns don't show the intense competitiveness or future brightness of this talented squad.

However, the dwindling attendance shows the lack of enthusiasm for the team. For example, the students at the game who come only to watch the game, not cheer their team on, win or lose. Worse yet, some choose to keep others from showing their spirit. To whom it may con-

cern: we back the Aggies all the way and will continue to. If standing up at midcourt disturbs your seated view, go home and watch the filmed highlights. Or sit in another more sedate section. But please let those who do care cheer their team on.

At the Arkansas game in particular, things got considerably out of hand. Throwing Battalions, paper cups and cokes because someone is standing and yelling for the Aggies is not that "Aggie spirit" we all seem so proud of. At an A&M football

game, even a suggestion of dissent is met with violent retort. The only difference in the two sports is the type of game played.

The main point is that an Aggie team is competing and we should be behind them. We won't ask someone else to stand if they don't wish to, so please let others continue to support A&M sports the way they see fit.

— Brian, Vroom, '80,  
Kevin Juergen, '81

### Slouch

by Jim Earle



"I DON'T KNOW HOW HE GOT 'EM THAT HIGH, BUT I'D LIKE TO MEET HIM, OR HER!"

## TOP OF THE NEWS

### CAMPUS

#### Scholarship deadline nearing

The deadline for "Spring Awards Scholarships" has been set for March 1, 1978. These applications can be obtained in room 310 of the YMCA Building. Any submitted at the Student Financial Office after 5 p.m. on this date will not be accepted, said R. M. Logan, director-secretary of the Scholarship Committee.

### STATE

#### Former press aide dies

A former press aide to Lyndon Johnson, William Brammer, was apparently killed from an overdose of drugs, authorities said Monday. Brammer, 45, author of the political novel, "The Gay Place," died at 5:45 p.m. Saturday a few minutes after a friend found him lying in bed gasping for breath. "Everything at the autopsy suggested it was an overdose of something," said Dr. Robert Bucklin, Travis County medical examiner.

#### Farm strike claimed media event

Former Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz said the current farm strike is a media event, has little serious support and will end when it comes time to plant crops this Spring. Butz was in San Antonio Monday to address the Golf Superintendents of America on the subject, "I Don't Want to Live in a No-Growth Society." He blamed the current plight of farmers on a no-growth policy of the Carter administration and said the current Department of Agriculture was controlled by consumer advocates and the Carter energy policy was dictated by environmentalists.

#### Crash kills basketball officials

The bodies of two Southwest Conference basketball officials were pulled from the wreckage of their light plane Monday just a few miles from their planned destination. The Civil Air Patrol said the orange Cessna 177 carrying officials Bill Horlen of San Antonio and Jerry Neeley of San Marcos was found earlier in the day near Wimberly, about 15 miles from San Marcos. After officiating a game Friday night at Edinburg between Pan American and Denver University, the two men left McAllen for San Marcos but never arrived. The CAP said Neeley was piloting the aircraft.

### NATION

#### Police search for strangler

The special "stocking strangler" police task force is investigating the murder of a sixth elderly woman whose slaying bears significant similarities to five other victims. Coroner J. Donald Kilgore said Sunday night Mrs. Mildred Borom, 78, was found in her nightclothes in a hallway of her small home. She had been dead since sometime Saturday. Kilgore said — indicating the killer may have struck twice in one day. Early Saturday, Mrs. Schwob, 74, was attacked by an intruder who tried to strangle her. She tripped an alarm, alerting the special patrol that has roamed the retirement area where the murders took place in recent months, and the intruder fled.

#### Heavy snow halts search

A heavy snow postponed the search for 12 persons missing in the mountain hamlet of Hidden Springs at the Angeles National Forest Monday in California. The small resort community was destroyed by a flash flood last Friday. The body of only one woman was recovered before snow fell. "There's a foot and a half of new snow at Mill Creek Summit," a sheriff's spokesman said. "That's very close to Hidden Springs. It's too wet and there's too much snow to search today." Also missing in the forest are eight members of a ski patrol. "This morning an emergency services detail, one helicopter and members of the Sierra Madre and Montrose Search and Rescue Team are en route to look for them," deputy Carl Riegert said.

### WORLD

#### 'Somebody up there likes me'

Dave White, one of seven survivors of the crash of a Pacific Western Airlines Boeing 737 that killed 41 persons, says he is alive only because "somebody up there must like me." An airline spokesman said Sunday the twin jet carrying 43 passengers and five crew members crashed and burned while trying to land in a snowstorm at Cranbrook, 350 miles east of Vancouver. "The pilot was attempting to abort his landing and crashed to avoid hitting a snowplow on the runway. That was our first report and it was confirmed later by witnesses who saw the crash from the ground," the spokesman said. White, 20, a physical education student, was one of six passengers who survived the crash. He walked away from the wreckage unhurt except for a pulled abdominal muscle. "All I can think of now is that I was lucky," said White, who boarded at Calgary and sat in the rear of the plane.

### WEATHER

Increasing cloudiness today. Mostly cloudy tonight, overcast Wednesday turning cooler with a chance of showers. High today low 60s, low tonight upper 40s. High tomorrow upper 40s. Winds from the north at 10-15 mph with 50 percent chance of rain tonight & tomorrow.

## THE BATTALION

Opinions expressed in *The Battalion* are those of the editor or of the writer of the article and are not necessarily those of the University administration or the Board of Regents. *The Battalion* is a non-profit, self-supporting enterprise operated by students as a university and community newspaper. Editorial policy is determined by the editor.

### LETTERS POLICY

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. Address correspondence to Letters to the Editor, *The Battalion*, Room 216, Reed McDonald Building, College Station, Texas 77843.

Represented nationally by National Educational Advertising Services, Inc., New York City, Chicago and Los Angeles.

The *Battalion* is published Monday through Friday from September through May except during exam and holiday periods and the summer, when it is published on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Mail subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester, \$33.25 per school year, \$35.00 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request. Address: *The Battalion*, Room 216, Reed McDonald Building, College Station, Texas 77843.

### MEMBER

Southwest Journalism Congress

Editor: ...  
Managing Editor: ...  
Sports Editor: ...  
News Editor: ...  
Assistant Managing Editor: ...  
City Editor: ...  
Campus Editor: ...  
Reporters: ...  
Mark Patterson, Lee Boy Leshgort, ...  
Patge Beasley, Bob ...  
Cartoonist: ...

Student Publications Board: Bob G. Rogers, Chair; Joe Arredondo; Dr. Gary Haller; Dr. John W. ...  
Phillips, Rebel Rice, Director of Student Publications; Donald C. Johnson.