



VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

TUESDAY
DECEMBER 12, 1978



Aggies act uncouth

Editor's note: This editorial was originally run on Sept. 23, 1938.

"The Aggies are positively uncouth." This was a remark overheard in a show at Bryan after a particularly repulsive exhibition had been made by students of A. & M. The statement, condemning as it was, is all too often true.

Social customs, usually, are dictated by the behavior of groups high in social standing by the actions of individuals in these groups, and by popular opinion. Even the groups in the lower social strata attempt to imitate the actions of their more highly educated and supposedly socially superior countrymen.

Popular opinion, then, is a powerful factor in determining social correctness and in forming judgments of groups. By this line of reasoning it is logical to assume that college students enjoy a position not attained by the average citizen. That is, they have the privilege of helping to form social customs while conforming to those previously set and accepted.

Aggies, because of their gregarious nature, sometimes do not conform to ac-

cepted standards and by failing to do so cannot measure as high on the social scale as university students should.

A notable example of nonconformity in Aggies is the rowdiness many of them display in neighboring theaters. Undoubtedly most of this is caused by freshmen and some by well-meaning, but unthoughtful, upperclassmen. But such behavior is inexcusable even in those groups. Level-headed upperclassmen could put an end to rowdiness and unnecessary noise in theaters by a simple explanation of the importance of proper behavior. If such an explanation were not sufficient, then perhaps more forceful means could be employed.

Attitudes formed by visitors observing a few Aggie rowdies detracts from the glory of going to A. & M. and is highly detrimental to the school and its former students.

We do not advocate stilted mannerisms — they might tend to destroy self-expressiveness — but surely no Aggie likes to be spoken of as being uncouth, ill-mannered.

The point, then, is: Behave as you have been taught and as you know is right!

Congress will sorely miss Bill Steiger

By DAVID S. BRODER
WASHINGTON — It is cliché in the political reporting business that every one of us carries around in his head a list of stories he would have given his eye teeth to have written. Some are scoops on which you were beaten. Some are exposes for which you wish you could claim credit.

But most uncomfortably remembered stories are those where you might have said — but did not — that somebody is doing a helluva job in public office. Bill Steiger had done that kind of job ever since he came to the House of Representatives in 1966 as a 28-year-old freshman Republican from Oshkosh, Wis. He died this week, after a heart attack, at the wasteful age of 40. The sense of personal loss I share with his other friends and admirers is compounded by the regret that this column was not written earlier.

Not for Bill Steiger's sake, but for the greater credibility it might have had with the young people for whom he had a very special concern. They are awfully cynical about politics and politicians these days.

They don't ask about the Bill Steigers of this world — and for a good reason. We haven't told them nearly as much about them. And we should have.

Bill Steiger was a kid of 13 when he learned he had diabetes. He survived as long as he did by administering two shots of insulin a day. Despite the handicap, he was unstinting in the energy he poured into politics and public office. By the time he was an undergraduate at the University of Wisconsin, his friend and classmate, John Bibby, recalls, "Bill had done so much in campus politics and state and national Young Republican politics, that our professors discussed things with him as they would with a political pro."

He graduated in June of 1960 and the following November was elected to the State Assembly. There, he became a leading proponent of a state open-housing law that was finally passed in his third term. It was a strange issue for a man from a district which then included only 189 non-whites, but Steiger was never a parochial politician.

In 1966, he ran against an incumbent Democratic congressman who had opposed federal open-housing laws and tried to make that an issue against Steiger. The voters were wiser than the opponent thought, and gave Steiger the first of his seven House victories.

During his House service, Republicans were always in a minority. In that situation, it is easy and tempting to vote against every program that is not desired by the dominant interests in your district.

Steiger did not do that. He took the far harder course of searching out ways to shape basic legislation and push national policy in directions he thought it should go. In doing so he became, as his Wisconsin Democratic colleague, Rep. David R. Obey (a legislator of comparable quality), said, "the Republican who was the most effective bridge between the parties in Congress."

Working with Sen. Harrison A. (Pete) Williams, Jr. (D-N.J.), he devised the

compromise that permitted passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) in 1970. Working with Sen. Spark Matsunaga (D-Hawaii), he succeeded in 1971 in legislating the end of the draft and the start of the volunteer Army. Working with then-Sen. Walter F. Mondale (D-Minn.), he was instrumental in gaining passage of the program providing legal services to the poor.

Steiger was a reformer who understood the importance of knowing the rules. He was an "institutional man," devoted to both the House and to the Republican Party. His respect for those institutions made him willing to work for long hours against great odds to improve their functioning.

In the early 1970s, he took on the thankless assignment of chairing the party rules committee mandated to open the doors of the GOP to greater participation by minorities, women and youths — an effort which only now is beginning to bear fruit. In the mid-1970s he fought, unavailingly, for an overhaul of the House's antiquated committee structure.

This year, after eight years of prodding and pushing, he finally got the Congress to provide a more honest account of its own proceedings, by identifying in Congressional Record those prepared speeches which were not actually delivered by the members.

As his reputation inside Congress grew, so did the opportunities to cash in by accepting lucrative outside job offers. Another friend, Rep. Barber M. Conable, Jr. (R-N.Y.), recalls that Steiger turned down one industrial foundation post that would have doubled his congressional salary and provided financial security for his wife and young son.

Instead, he stayed at his work. In leading the successful fight this year for reduction in capital-gains taxes, over the opposition of President Carter and the Democratic congressional leadership, he won acclaim from financial circles that had managed to overlook his earlier constructive work in the social policy area.

"Stupendous Steiger," the Wall Street Journal called him, and he accepted the joshing of his conservative colleagues about his new fame with the same smiling equanimity with which he had endured their earlier jibes about being the author of the business-hated OSHA legislation. Methodically, as always, Steiger used his new role as a sought-after speaker on the national GOP fund-raising circuit as a way to mobilize support for his next major goal: the nomination and election of his friend George Bush to the presidency.

Steiger was a man of exceptional talent, integrity and drive; one who, in the words of his grieving Democratic friend, David Obey, "in the 20 years since we started debating on the steps of the Wisconsin Student Union, I never knew to take a cheap shot."

But there are more than a few Bill Steigers in politics. It would honor his memory if we occasionally wrote about them — before they die.

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Mess hall music monotony

Editor's note: This letter originally was printed in The Battalion on Oct. 18, 1948.

Editor, The Battalion:

Ever so often, when we throw caution to the wind and eat at the mess hall, we meet, with much disgust, the same situation which as present the last time we ate there. For simplicity we'll call it "M. M." which means "Music Monotony."

MM, as any fool knows, is nothing new to the mess halls. In fact there is some dispute as to whether MM is or is not the oldest tradition on the campus. Actually, it seems like a form of hazing which one must endure while slobbering over his tasty tidbits.

The other day we were seated in Sbis, munching on our rice packed pepper and Johnson grass and suet,

when the enchanting voice of Vaughn "Matinee-tee-for-two I was there where were you" Munroe came dripping over our table. Not only once a day for the last year have we heard this record, but sometimes the incredible frequency of once a meal. Three other "Bossy" Munroe records followed in succession.

It's enough to turn a normal man's stomach to a pH of 8.2. It's not because of the fact that we detest Munroe, but to have the same person vibrating his tonsils at us, every meal, day after day, is enough to give one stomach ulcers.

Why is it that the mess halls can't get some new records? This seems to be the moolest of all moot questions.

—J.B. Doak, '49
C. Hays
C. Copenhaver, '51



Letters to the Editor

Icy dribblers in G. Rollie

Editor: This weekend I happened to be in the vicinity of G. Rollie and being an avid follower of both basketball teams, I thought that I would watch a few minutes of the men's varsity practice, as well as escape the cold weather for a while.

I'm sure that any Aggie who had been to one of this year's basketball games will admit that we have two championship calibre teams, as the men hold a 5-1 record and the women boast a 9-2 record. I wonder, though, how they can be expected to play their best when they have to practice inside a cold gymnasium. It was hard to tell if I had left the cold weather outside or not. It was evident by the play of the team that they also were not comfortable and I'm sure it was not by Coach Metcalf's choosing that his players had to practice under such conditions.

I realize that basketball has never been as popular with the students of TAMU as football, but it seems that at least the Athletic Dept. would show a bit more concern for their athletes. It is neither in the best interest of the player's health or his ability to play in a cold gym. Maybe when Coach Metcalf goes recruiting in the future he cannot boast of a new 16,000 arena, but he can at least tell the recruit that G. Rollie is heated.

—Don Jeffers, '80

More than a dorm

Editor: In response to Friday's letter to the editor, I feel more information is needed concerning programmed residence halls.

On-campus students at Texas A&M University live in recognized student organizations defined as residence halls. These halls differ from the dormitories of other universities by being more than a place to sleep; they serve as a center for students' educational, social, and recreational growth. A university is responsible for turning out more than encyclopedias to deal with real-life situations, and the residence hall is one aspect of college life that attempts to offer the opportunity for responsibility, self-government, and cooperation among residents in a democratic society.

Hall council members, as elected representatives of their peers, plan more than parties and programs. They are responsible for informing residents of university policies and functions, initiating quiz files and hall improvements, and representing on-campus students' needs to the university. They also try to foster a friendly living environment among residents.

In order to provide these benefits, a 66 percent majority of residents may vote to program their hall and establish an activity fee. The reason for requiring the fee is economically simple: A collective number of people pooling their \$5 or \$7.50 per semester will, in the long run, provide more activities individually. And just as each organization must require their members to pay the same dues to belong, the halls cannot justify allowing a few to be exempted. The benefits, for the most part, cannot be limited to only the people who belong.

Those students who feel that their hall is not meeting their needs should speak up as the women did in Friday's Battalion. However, the best opportunity for changing your hall is to get involved in its decisions or at least to voice your ideas in your council.

If you still cannot trust your representatives and do not choose to run for office yourself, you may petition for another vote which is generally held only when someone complains. The

residents then vote again for programmed or non-programmed status which is decided by a 66 percent majority.

Each student is expected to live up to his responsibilities as they are decided democratically or to move to a non-programmed hall or off-campus. With the long waiting lines for programmed halls, you should have no trouble finding someone to trade with you.

—Lynne Andrus, '79
President
Residence Hall Association

Bad bowl bid

Editor: I don't know how many tickets A&M will receive for the Hall of Fame Bowl Game, but I think you guys should send them all back! After your lackluster performance against U.T., you don't deserve a bowl game. It's quite obvious that even a new coach, a new offensive formation, and even new uniforms could not stop the Longhorns.

It is also obvious that this so called bowl game, that you will attempt to play in, is not a major bowl such as the Cotton Bowl where the University of Houston is going. So why don't you just stay home and not be embarrassed one more time. Give it up A&M! Send those tickets back now!

—Jay Hollowell
The University of Houston

'Twas the night before finals

'Twas the night before finals and all thru the dorm, everyone was studying, even Laurie. All the calculators were hung by their adaptors with care, in hopes that a charge soon would be there.

The students were seated, all snug at their desks, studying heartily for their big major tests.

You with your Physics, I with my Quantitative Analysis, we settled our brains for a long hard night.

When out in the hall there arose such a clatter, I sprang from my desk to see what was the matter. I told the noise-makers out in the hall, "Shhhh!!! Some people are trying to study, you-all!"

Back to my desk and my books I then went, full of determination and good intent. But what to my wandering eyes should appear, but my pillow, blanket, and bed, so inviting, so near.

And the little bag monster, so sneaky and quick, I knew in a moment, from studying I'd be sick. And more rapid than eagles, his temptations did come, as he shouted "Forget integrals, formulas, and do something fun!"

And on to my bed my body soon flew, with my books, calculator, and adaptor too! (For osmosis' sake.)

The alarm went off and I arose with a bound, and though wide awake, I was still sleeping sound. I spoke not a word, but went straight to my work, to finish my term paper to turn into the jerk.

I glanced at my watch and feeling very dumb, I ran out the door saying "1.5, here I come!"

And though you may think this is only a rhyme, it will all come true if I don't quit wasting time.

Original lyrics by Clement Clark Moore

Finals week revision 1978:
Marie Courand, '81
Janice Ellett, '81
Venita McCollon, '82

TOP OF THE NEWS STATE

Estranged LBJ brother dies

Sam Houston Johnson, younger brother of the late President Lyndon B. Johnson, died Monday in Austin of lung cancer. He was 64. The little known Johnson brother lived at the White House during most of Johnson's presidency. He liked to describe himself as a sort of "closet adviser" to the chief executive, but insiders said the president kept his younger brother around to keep an eye on him. Sam Houston's fondness for drink caused frequent clashes with his older brother. Crippled after he broke his leg and developed osteomyelitis in 1957, Sam Houston retired on a federal disability pension and was inactive for most of the later 25 years of his life. Johnson and the late president became estranged after Sam Houston published a bluntly worded book, "My Brother Lyndon," in 1969. He declared bankruptcy in 1973. Twice married and divorced, he had two children.

NATION

Jonestown victims reach Frisco

With no family or clergy members present, the first three bodies of victims of the Jonestown ritual murder-suicide arrived home Sunday at San Francisco International Airport. Two of the bodies were identified as the remains of Ronald James and James Oliver Shak-Michele. The third body, which arrived later, was not identified. Airline officials said relatives of the two men would play the freight expenses of about \$270 for each coffin. An airline spokesman said he was not known when more bodies would arrive. The bodies were among the first group of nine released Saturday from Dover Air Force Base. The body of cult leader Jim Jones has not yet been released. A federal grand jury probe into the Jonestown deaths focusing on the assassination of Rep. Leo J. Ryan, D-Calif., resumes in San Francisco Wednesday.

Price hike not motive, Shell says

The Shell Oil Co. denied Monday it is holding back gasoline supplies to increase prices and told Congress the rationing plan imposed two weeks ago on its dealers should provide adequate supplies this month. Shell Vice President J.H. DeNike, backed by testimony from Deputy Energy Secretary John O'Leary, blamed the shortage on a combination of good autumn driving weather, "outdated" federal price regulations and an unexpected demand for higher octane unleaded gasoline. O'Leary also blamed the Environmental Protection Agency clean air rules for keeping supplies of unleaded gasoline down. DeNike said there should be enough gasoline in December to "keep customer inconvenience to a minimum." He foresaw no lineups at gas stations in the immediate future, but said there may be other individual company shortages like Shell's and that drivers need to conserve gasoline.

WORLD

Violent protests abound in Iran

An estimated two million demonstrators Monday marched through Tehran, the capital of Iran, to the beat of tom-toms, shaking their fists and screaming "Death to the shah" and "Yankee go home," and millions more poured onto the streets of a dozen towns across the nation pulling down statues of the shah and setting fires. Five demonstrators were killed when hundreds of protesters stormed the SAVAK secret police headquarters in Isfahan; fire was set to the downtown Hyatt Hotel Sunday night in Mashad; a policeman shot and killed his commanding officer in the southern town of Dezful Monday after he had been ordered to fire on unruly demonstrators. Marchers in Tehran punctuated their chants with clashes of cymbals and the beat of 1,000 tom-toms. The cymbals and drums are traditionally part of the Ashura religious celebration and are used to beat time for faithful Muslims whipping themselves with chains. This year religious leaders ordered the self-flagellation ceremonies to give way to political protest.

John Paul wants Holy Land visit

Pope John Paul II, ready to travel to Mexico next month to open the Third Latin American Bishops Conference at Puebla, also hopes to retrace Paul VI's steps to the Holy Land in 1979. The Polish pope said Sunday his greatest wish was to visit the Holy Land and "climb the Heights of Mount Sinai." The only pontiff who has traveled to the Holy Land was Paul VI in 1964. Although John Paul said he could not pursue his wish for the moment, Vatican observers speculated his emotional 20-minute speech during the traditional noon papal blessing was meant to set in motion a papal visit to the Holy Land sometime in 1979. Egyptian President Anwar Sadat invited John Paul to visit Mount Sinai once it was back in Egypt's hand, but the pope never specifically commented on Sadat's October message.

WEATHER

Mostly sunny with a high of 50 and a low tonight of 30. Winds will be variable at 5-10 mph with no chance of precipitation. Outlook for the rest of the week will be cooler on Wednesday with a cold front moving in from the north, fair and cold, warmer on Friday.

THE BATTALION

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 Tuesday through Thursday.

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.

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