

The House fine tunes its rules

By ROBERT SHEPARD
United Press International

WASHINGTON — The election of House leaders and debates over chairmanships for wayward members got most of the attention during the recent Democratic caucus, but time also was spent fine tuning the rules under which the House will operate when the new Congress convenes in January.

Rule changes were a big topic for the majority Democrats just before the last Congress opened for business and even more so when the reform-minded class of 1974 came to town and demanded changes in the way things had been done for decades.

This year, however, the push for rule changes has eased the part because much of the needed reform has been accomplished.

A demonstration of the changing mood was seen in the Democrats' refusal to deny chairmanships to members who have been

reprimanded by the House or have been indicted — but not convicted — on criminal charges.

In a few cases the representatives felt some of the previous reforms went too far and turned out to be unworkable.

As one senior member commented, the reformers of two and four years ago felt "they were putting the old codgers in their place" but the changes did not always turn out to be improvements.

Another veteran, Rep. Phillip Burton, D-Calif., who aided the 1974 reform movement was not particularly distressed about the results of the latest caucus.

"In the main, I was pleased with the totality of the results," Burton said. "I feared significant regression and that did not take place. The new group demonstrated a significant level of political sophistication."

At least one member of the 1974 reform class was unhappy. "The mood of the

membership is disappointing to me," said Rep. Andrew Maguire D-N.J. "The secrecy — some of those we looked to for leadership in the past boxed us out on that."

The fact that all ethics reforms but one mild one failed "was a serious blow to the reform movement," he said.

Burton said some limits on committee responsibilities were good.

The last few sessions of Congress saw the proliferation of subcommittees, a change that was urged in order to let more members be chairmen and also to ensure a piece of the action for freshmen and junior members.

It turned out, however, that the members were being assigned to too many subcommittees — one to as many as 13 — and there was no way they could attend all the meetings. This year the Democratic caucus adopted a rule to limit service to just five subcommittees.

One of the amendments which was turned down would have barred chairmen of full committees from serving as chairman of subcommittees. That plan rankled even such liberals as Rep. Morris Udall D-Ariz., a committee chairman who recognized that the major life-and-death decisions on bills are usually made in subcommittees.

Another feature of this year's fine tuning — at least in the Democrats' view — was the move to take away some of the parliamentary weapons available to the minority Republicans.

Saying the Republicans had been "dilatatory" and misused the privilege in order to delay proceedings when they did not like the way things were going the Democrats decided to limit the number of roll call votes on several minor matters such as approval of the previous day's journal.

Getting hip to the great unknown

By DICK WEST

WASHINGTON — A thought for today: If Albert Einstein were still alive he would be nearly 100 years old.

The centennial of the great scientist's birth won't be legally observed until next March 14.

Humor

But the buildup already has started. Advance functions include a series of Smithsonian Institution lectures under the general heading of "Einstein's Century."

Probably the weightiest topic up for discussion at the Smithsonian is the question "Is the Universe Comprehensible?"

The gut reaction of most laymen would be "no."

The average layman has enough trouble comprehending Fort Lauderdale.

Every time man thinks he has the nature of the universe about figured out someone comes along and throws a monkey wrench into the machinery.

First Copernicus came along and messed up man's comprehension of the universe as a closed system with himself at the center.

Then right when man was getting adjusted to the idea of the universe as a constant entity without beginning or end along came Einstein with the theory that the whole thing was flying apart.

It was at this point that the average layman began to say "the heck with it" and turn his attention to other things such as recipes for candied fruits.

I would like to see one of the Smithso-

nian lecturers tackle the subject "Beyond Einstein: What's Next in the Universe Comprehensive Field?"

I mean why wear out the old bean trying to comprehend an expanding universe if it, too, shall pass?

My guess is that post-Einstein theoreticians will embrace the premise that the universe is expanding inwardly as well as outwardly. Consider what has happened in man's effort to identify the smallest component of matter.

Initially man believed the smallest thing existing in nature was the peanut. Then someone discovered molecules. Then atoms.

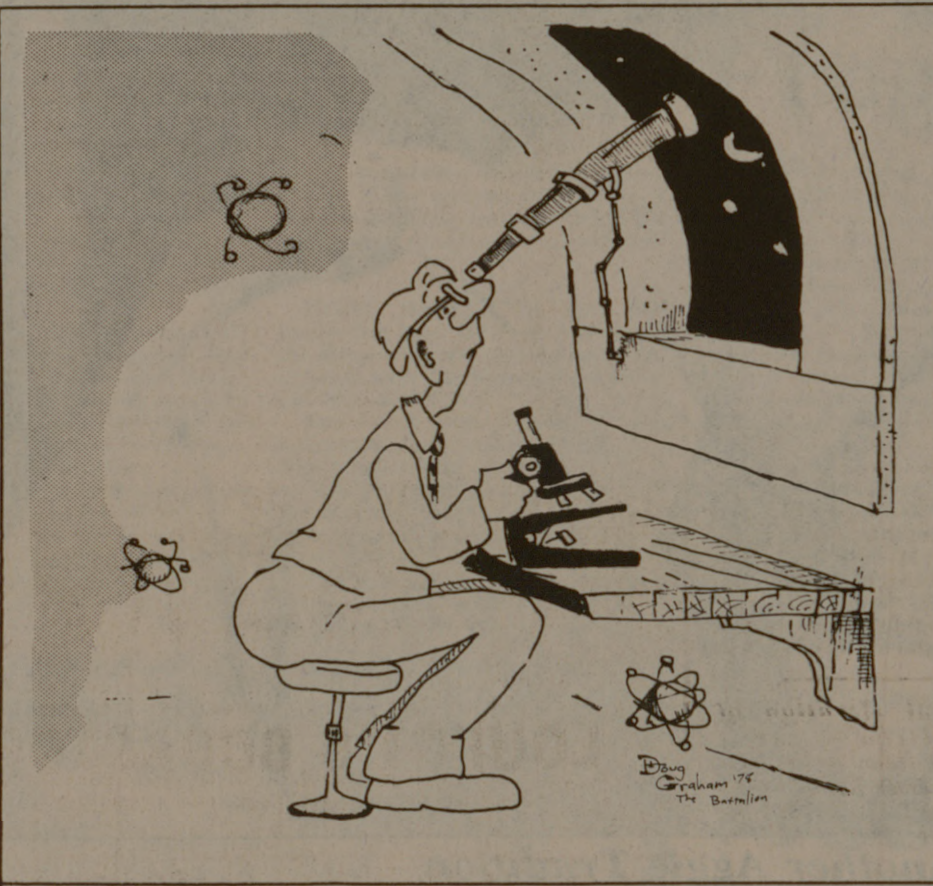
Once the atom was split man found a whole passel of sub-nuclear particles: neutrons, pions, muons and the like. And somewhere down there lurks the elusive quark.

At the moment the quark is still in the hypothetical stage. But eventually they will catch one and crack it open and find even smaller elements.

What this suggests to a layman is that the universe "down there" is receding into nothingness as rapidly as the universe "out there." In other words, infinity works both ways.

Lacking Einstein's mathematical genius, I am unable to reduce this hypothesis to an algebraic formula.

But if on the occasion of Einstein's 100th birthday the Smithsonian presents a series of lectures postulating that outer space and inner space actually are the same thing, remember you saw it here first.



TOP OF THE NEWS CAMPUS

KAMU auction volunteers sought

Volunteers to work in promotion, production, solicitation and business and financial positions are still needed for the first KAMU auction, planned for April 1-3, 1979. The purpose of the auction will be to sell items or services that have been donated and apply the revenues from those sales to the operation of KAMU, Texas A&M University's educational and public broadcasting station. KAMU must raise at least \$29,500 by Aug. 31, 1979, in order for the FM portion of the station to remain on the air. To date, nearly \$18,000 has been raised through individual donations, pledge weeks and a variety of benefit performances. Last week's (Dec. 3-9) Pledge Week yielded \$1,421 for KAMU from 58 pledges and donations. Anyone interested in helping with the auction should contact Jean Herbert-Wiesenburg at the station, 845-5611.

Scholarship honors Teagues

U.S. Rep. and Mrs. Olin E. Teague have been honored with the establishment of a President's Endowed Scholarship at Texas A&M University, the latest in a series of honors bestowed on Teague, class of '32, by the University. Texas A&M President Jarvis E. Miller said the scholarship is the most prestigious offered by the University and will be presented to an outstanding entering freshman as the main source of financial support for his or her undergraduate education. Funds for establishment of the Olin and Freddie Teague President's Endowed Scholarship came primarily from support intended for a Teague appreciation dinner and science symposium Sept. 16, but both events were canceled.

NATION

Gulf collision injures one

Coast Guard spokesman Bob Baeton said the 110-foot research vessel Lady Lee sustained a hole below the waterline Monday night in a collision with an unidentified 1,000-foot tanker about 85 miles south of Cameron, La. One of six crewmen, identified only as Bobby Denson, age and home town unknown, was injured and moved to a Cameron hospital. "We have no identity on the tanker," Baeton said. "It's heading would put it in Corpus Christi or somewhere on the south Texas coast. Corpus is the only port that can handle a vessel that size."

Pops' Pop 'fair' after brain surgery

It will be several days before doctors know how whether famed Boston Pops conductor Arthur Fiedler will make a complete recovery from brain surgery to correct a difficulty in his mobility. The 83-year-old maestro was listed in "fair" condition Tuesday at Tufts New England Medical Center where he underwent a one-hour operation Monday night in his second admission to the hospital in two weeks. The first admission was for "exhaustion." The mustachioed conductor has never considered retirement though periodic bouts with pneumonia and exhaustion have forced him to curtail his schedule in the last few years. Fiedler has canceled his traditional holiday appearances and Assistant Pops Conductor Harry Ellis Dickson will replace him.

Concorde jet lands in Denver

The supersonic Concorde jetliner, despite some complaints by Denver city councilmen, landed at Stapleton International Airport Tuesday as part of a Braniff International Airlines promotion for European flights. Several councilmen said the demonstration flight violated a 1977 resolution opposing all supersonic flights to Stapleton, but Monday night the city council decided not to block the Concorde's landing. Councilman Bill Roberts said the administration of Mayor Bill McNichols approved the flight without consulting the council. A resolution asking Braniff to cancel the demonstration flight was killed on a 6-5 vote.

New Mexico intervenes in gas suit

New Mexico Attorney General Toney Anaya Tuesday filed a motion to intervene in a suit by Texas, Oklahoma and Louisiana against the recently passed federal Natural Gas Policy Act. In challenging the federal act Anaya argued that it deprived him of his responsibility "to protect and conserve the state's natural resources" and interferes with the state's right to regulate intrastate commerce. Anaya also alleged that the federal act will reduce the supply of gas in New Mexico and cause price increases to state consumers. The federal act seeks to control the price of intrastate as well as interstate gas. Anaya said the gas-producing states who have filed suit against the law contend only the states have the right to regulate intrastate prices.

WORLD

Arabs discuss oil price increase

The eight-member Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries met Tuesday in the tiny Arab state of Abu Dhabi to discuss how much oil prices should be raised in preparation for the full-scale Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries meeting that starts in Abu Dhabi Saturday, and that will formally decide the pricing issue. The Arab ministers also were expected to consider demands by Arab nations for a bigger share of the oil refining industry — now owned largely by non-Arab corporations.

THE BATTALION

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Letters to the editor should not exceed 200 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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Letters to the Editor

Christian beliefs don't exclude evolution

Editor: I wish to respond to comments made by Dr. Bert Thompson in the article entitled "Creation versus evolution" (Battalion, Dec. 8). Why must the two be mutually exclusive? I was raised a Christian and consider myself one by personal choice. I am also a geology graduate student who plans a career in paleontology (the study of fossils) and I see no conflict between creation and evolution.

I feel that Thompson by his comment — "a scientist once said that evolution is atheism and I couldn't agree more. It is impossible to find God in evolution" — arbitrarily judges and condemns myself and others who believe in both and I resent it.

I really don't see what possible difference it could make to an infinite God whether he created the world in seven 24-hour days, seven years, or seven billion years by our time scale. Yes, evolutionists propose that organic life evolved from non-

living matter but that need not conflict with God's creation of man and woman.

Our ability to reason, dream, speculate, have faith and even to question, our "soul" if you wish, is what sets us apart from the rest of the biological kingdom. It is that which is "in the image of God," it just happens to be housed in a physical body that is a product of organic evolution.

—Janet Nufer, '77, '79

Where's patriotism?

Editor: Since writing a rather derogatory letter to the editor in early November, I have caught a great deal of static from both students and professors alike. In that letter I unsavably lumped Arabs and Iranians together into one group as one people. I stand corrected.

I'd like to take this opportunity to apologize for my error. I should have

known that Iranians don't support "such happy-go-lucky fraternities like the PLO." NO. They like to burn down U.S. embassies instead!

How long are Americans expected to take insults like this? I happen to be 100 percent patriotic. I own a copy of Tex Ritter's record "The Americans." I am a history student and I even saw some positive factors coming out of the Vietnam war! Surely there must be more of these Americans around here. Too bad they apparently won't be found in the State Department.

If I sound like a hot-head, I'm sorry. Perhaps I should, as should those who think as I do, write to the government and ask them to protect our countrymen and our country's overseas interests. With the obvious disinterest in their own heritage these days, American patriotism seems to be a lost art.

But having seen a V.A. hospital, Arlington Cemetery, Saratoga, Valley Forge and "Old Ironsides," I can't help feeling upset. So please, anyone who reads this letter, contact your representatives in government and we, as one voice, could tell them, "I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take it anymore."

—Ron Bucchi, '81

Tasteless quadding

Editor: I would like to question a particular practice some male students use in quadding. This past Monday night, Dec. 11, I saw a group of male students holding their quad victim with legs stretched apart, rubbing his crotch against a tree in front of Moses Hall, and then again in the Keathley-Moses quad. Some of my male friends assure me that this is just a display, not an actual event.

Whether it is merely a vulgar display of traditional "quadding fun," or an action which incurs inhumane treatment, it still turns the convention of quadding into a warped sort of sadistic humor.

It is surprising to find that so-called mature and well-educated males show such a lack of taste in what they consider fun and what they think others enjoy seeing.

—Ellen Eidelbach, '81

Spirit, an Aggie duty

Editor: Regarding Jim Rogers' article in "Reader's Forum" on Dec. 11:

Mr. Rogers stated that Mike Mosley "has a right to be here." Of course he has the right to be here; no one is disputing that

fact. But Mosley also has the responsibilities of being an Aggie, and one of those responsibilities is that of keeping the Aggie spirit alive.

I think Mike Mosley has an added responsibility in that he is "on show." This may appear to be unfair, but I feel Mosley made a choice to be "on show" when he accepted a position on the football team.

I will grant you, Mr. Rogers, that some of the responses to Mike Mosley's actions were less than tactful. But while you see them as negative spirit, I perceive them as positive spirit. The Aggie spirit is founded in unity and I believe that the majority of the letters concerning Mosley are evidence of this unity.

I am sorry that you "don't have the heart to be an Aggie," Mr. Rogers, because you are missing out on the experience of a lifetime.

—Molly Mayo, '82

More dorm ideas

Editor: After reading Lynne Andrus' letter in Tuesday's Battalion, I must say that I have changed my mind. I had always been against programmed dorm fees, since I viewed them as an unjustified limitation of my personal freedom. But no more! Lynne's letter explained all the great advantages of the fee, so now I'm all in favor of it.

It's such a good idea, in fact, that I'd like to see the fee increased to about \$10,000 a year. This is less than it would cost to join an exclusive country club or a religious cult, and allow the dorms to have more and better activities. An enterprising dorm council with this much money could do much better than parties with cheap beer at the Q-huts. Some possibilities include:

- Reassembling the Beatles
- Buying the dorm from the University
- Spring vacation in the Riviera for the entire dorm and its dates

We don't have to stop here, either! Since our dorms are governed democratically, we could vote to legalize heroin, usurp parking privileges in the staff lots, have good food in Sbsa, etc.

Only a two-percenter T-sip would be against such wonderful progressive ideas. I hope that other on-campus students will work with me toward these goals. After all, college is a preparation for life. People are going to get ripped in life, so they might as well be prepared for it.

—Thomas L. George, Jr., '79

