

OPINION

Race relations change for better

When "Bull" Conner was turning police dogs on civil rights demonstrators and black children were being bombed to death in church, who could have thought that Birmingham, Ala., would ever elect a black mayor?

Yet that's what the city did recently. The new mayor will be Richard Arrington Jr., a sharecropper's son who became dean of a college. That isn't to say that Birmingham has put racial tension behind it.

But the election shows that Birmingham has come a long way in race relations and opportunity for blacks since the early 1960s when it was targeted for civil rights demonstrations by Martin Luther King Jr., because of its reputation as the most segregated big city in America.

Knoxville (Tenn.) News-Sentinel

Interest ceilings detrimental for all

The nation's small savers are losing billions of dollars in interest earnings each year because of a federal regulation dating from the 1930s. Banks and savings-and-loan associations, limited by law in the interest rates they can pay on passbook accounts, have also begun to suffer as money that they would normally attract from depositors seeks higher interest rates in other areas. That is not a healthy situation for depositors, lenders or borrowers.

The obvious remedy is to allow lending institutions to begin promptly to pay more competitive interest on smaller deposits. The Senate has acted to phase out the present low ceiling rates on passbook accounts — banks may pay 5 1/4 percent interest a year and S&Ls 5 1/2 percent — but under a wholly unrealistic timetable with regulation of rates not ending entirely until 1990.

Passbook-account interest rates ought to be deregulated — not in a decade's time, but immediately.

Los Angeles Times

Weather's all wrong

Indian summers are all right as weather goes, but heat waves, or more appropriately steam waves, in the middle of November are ridiculous.

Just when we have packed away all of our cool cotton clothes and aired out all our mothball-smelling wool sweaters, the weather pulls a fast one on us Texans and sends a wave of warm, sticky, disgusting air to plague us. Just when we think we have paid the last of those high electricity bills, the air conditioning has to be turned back on.

The holiday season should be filled with crisp, cool, dry weather, so you can build a fire and maintain the proper holiday atmosphere. There's nothing more inappropriate in these energy-conscious days than having to turn the air-conditioning down to 55 degrees so we can take those Thanksgiving pictures in front of a roaring fireplace.

the small society

by Brickman



THE BATTALION

USPS 045 360

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.

United Press International is entitled exclusively to the use for reproduction of all news dispatches credited to it. Rights of reproduction of all other matter herein reserved. Second-Class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.

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.

MEMBER

Texas Press Association
Southwest Journalism Congress

Editor Liz Newlin
Managing Editor Andy Williams
Asst. Managing Editor Dillard Stone

News Editors Karen Cornelison
and Michelle Burrows

Sports Editor Sean Petty
City Editor Roy Bragg
Campus Editor Keith Taylor
Focus Editors Beth Calhoun

Staff Writers Meril Edwards, Nancy Andersen, Louie Arthur, Richard Oliver, Mark Patterson, Carolyn Blosser, Kurt Allen, Debbie Nelson, Rhonda Watters

Photo Editor Lee Roy Leschper Jr.
Photographers Lynn Blanco, Sam Stroder, Ken Herrera
Cartoonist Doug Graham

VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

WEDNESDAY
NOVEMBER 21, 1979

DICK WEST *Instead of colors like 'Desert Mist' paint your garage with 'Smog Gray'*

By DICK WEST

WASHINGTON — I credit the latest catalog issued by Wretched Mess with being the first to recognize that what this country needs is a more relevant color chart.

Color charts prepared by paint companies are — God knows — poetic enough. They run heavily to tints like Desert Mist, White Fawn, Tawny Buff, Fantasy Yellow and — so help me — Kitten's Ear.

But for earthy types like myself, these colors seem a mite too ethereal. I simply have never felt comfortable going into a paint store and facing a choice of magentas, sepias, puce, mauves, cerises and the like.

If I am going to paint something, chances are it will be something pretty prosaic. A

garage door, perhaps, or a wrought iron railing.

Put a coat of Tawny Buff on a wrought iron railing and you surely will find yourself with an overwrought railing on your hands.

Wretched Mess, a publishing firm of sorts, apparently is aware that conventional color charts put many people's teeth on edge.

It has started advertising products in colors that relate to ordinary circumstances in our lives. In short, colors you can identify with, feel at home with and live with.

Two color names I admired in the recent catalog were Power Failure Black and Seedless Tomato Red.

Both are as contemporary as modern utility service and hybrid vegetable experiments. Yet they somehow impart a sense of

familiarity that puts you at ease while you are painting a garage door.

I would like to see an entire color chart drawn up with workaday, unassuming hues of that stripe.

If, for example, you didn't want your garage door quite as dark as Power Failure Black would leave it, you could go to a paint store and pick up a can of Oil Spill Umber.

Oil Spill Umber, as the name implies, would be the color derived from mixing petroleum and sea water. And thus it would have the virtue of reflecting the world we live in.

Moving up the spectrum, we would next encounter Smog Gray, surely a more meaningful color than, say, Cobblestone Gray, Mistletoe Gray or Sea Mist.

Blues, in particular, tend to have a pom-

pous ring — Royal Blue, Olympic Imperial Blue, Princess Blue and so on. I am thinking in terms of updating the content of the color chart with Prosaic Blue.

I mean, the blue material has become so common we might as well formalize the term.

Nuclear waste, I am told, is a problem so it wouldn't be true-to-life. Radioactive Russett or Three Mile Amber on the new chart. I would, er, welcome a dash of Uranium Blue, Asbestos Fiber Drab.

Finally, I would like to see a chart offer Crabgrass Green. By my outdoor chairs and tables could for the first time have lawn that matched my lawn.

MAGNELLY MERCHAMONT NEWS LEASER © 1979 BY CHICAGO TRIBUNE



READER'S FORUM

By SUSAN CLAYTON

Take 30 seconds to think about what will probably happen to the majority of Christmas gifts you'll be spending money on and giving this year. Will their final resting place be in the oblivion of a closet shelf or in the back of a drawer or in a trashcan?

Every year you hear about how Christmas has lost its meaning. You see more people getting less excited about the event, maybe even treating it as an unavoidable pain, like finals.

But who says you can't do anything about the slow loss of this beautiful holiday but be swept along, until you're one of the unex-

cited and bothered? By making a few exchanges you can help to weaken the commercialism that's largely responsible for the strangulation of Christmas (and at the same time do yourself some favors by not spending as much of that hard-to-come-by money, and by not having to fight crowds at shopping malls).

Time and creativity are precious: time because it's so scarce (there never seems to be enough of it, right?) and creativity because it's a spark of the human spirit. When either one or both are involved in a gift, the gift gains in value of a very different kind. Though bread or cookies that you've baked

Creative Christmas gift-giving weakens holiday commercialism

and given to someone may be gone by the next day, what you've done and actually given has more meaning than an electric knife or a tie that sits on a shelf for a few years until it finally goes to Goodwill. Simple Christmas cards you've made, and more important, in which you've written more than just your signature, carry so much more feeling than those expensive cards with the silly verses inside.

And if you're sincerely empty of time and creativity, you can buy gifts thoughtfully. You can pretend to be that person you're giving a gift to for five minutes and come up with something they would really gain from. Books, for example: from cookbooks

to how-to books to philosophy, they can make it possible for them to do things they wouldn't otherwise do — tickets to a concert or a movie they're wanting to see.

By exchanging what's involved — thoughtfulness, time, and creativity instead of money, by more of yourself and less of money, preserving what Christmas is really about. And possibly you're starting a tradition. Events, maybe two out of all the people give gifts to will like your style so next year they'll leave the East route behind, helping to bring even more of the human in us into the

LETTERS *Traffic citations, bike lanes make bike safety at OU more sane*

Editor:

I would like to make several comments in response to your recent news article on bicycles on our campus.

Here at A&M I travel by car and by foot. Thus I encounter the problems of mixing with the bicycle as a motorist and as a pedestrian. However, at the University of Oklahoma I rode a bicycle regularly for over three years. I put over a thousand miles a year on the bicycle and rode up to four and one-half miles in one way trips.

As a cyclist there I encountered all of the problems involved in trying to mix with auto and pedestrian traffic. Bicycle riding was much more widespread there than it is here. Yet, it was much more disciplined and, in my opinion, safer.

The cause of this difference in safety and discipline at the two schools might come from two sources.

First, instructions have been given to bicycle riders that they may mix freely with the auto traffic. Because of these instructions, we find bicyclists in the middle of left turn lanes, for example. This causes a problem because bicycles and autos accelerate at him when the light turns green. Motorists obviously become irritated at the bicyclist in this situation. In my view, bicyclists must be confined to lanes where the traffic flow is more uniform. This brings up another situation; there were more bicycle lanes in Norman, Okla., than there are here.

Another significant difference in the situations at U. of Oklahoma and Texas A&M is that the traffic officers at OU did, in fact, stop bicyclists and issue citations for running stop signs and riding on sidewalks, among other things. When one is on a

bicycle, he hates to lose his momentum and stop at a stop sign. However, that is preferable to either receiving a ticket or running into the side of a car that turns in front of you after it has stopped at the stop sign.

Thus the solution appears to reduce itself to one which demands clearly defined, correct, and enforced rules. Without rules and enforcement, the battle of bicyclists vs. motorists and pedestrians will continue to draw casualties.

I personally feel that the situation here is completely out of hand and extremely dangerous.

— Don E. Bray
Associate Professor Department of Mechanical Engineering

Common courtesy

Editor:

As a bike rider I have observed the debate over whether to ban bicycles with some interest. I agree there is a problem. I further agree the problem is largely due to the ill-considerate haste of some bike riders.

I suggest, however, that banning bikes from campus is a response engendered more by anger and a bureaucratic mentality than by rational thought. Bikes are clean, quiet, efficient and easily parked. They are cheap to purchase and to maintain; for many students they represent the

only feasible means of transportation.

An alternative approach, which I thought will show to be tenable, is for students of A&M to advocate the creation and maintenance of bike trails.

These trails should be built not only on campus throughout College Station. System bike trails have been successfully built in number of university towns.

In the short run, we must appear greater courtesy on the part of bicyclists. That is, of course, unless we choose to adopt the suggestions of one of our bike riders and relieve the congestion by banning the Corps from campus during daylight hours.

— J.P. L...

Graduate

THOTZ

By Doug Graham

