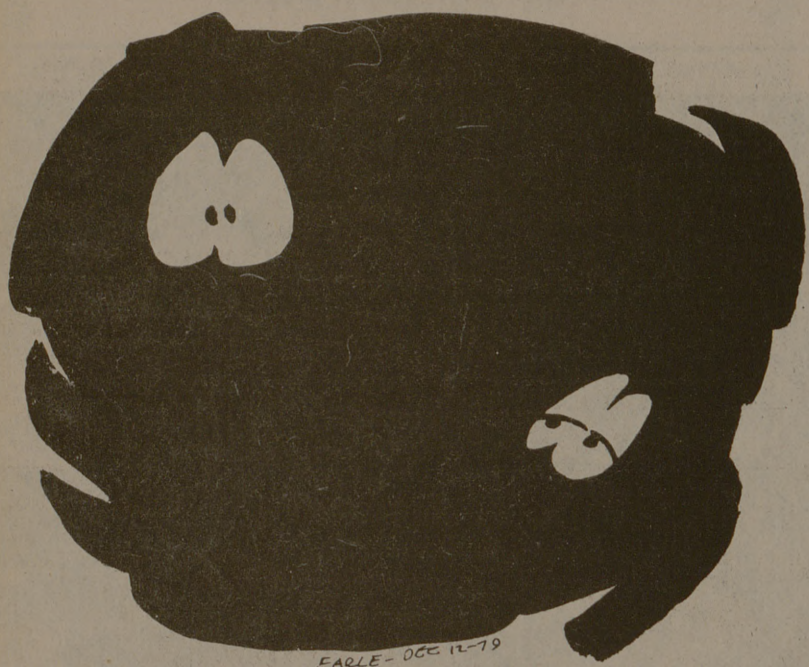


SLOUCH by Jim Earle



"I keep having this dream that a guy from the Registrar's Office pulls me out of line as I'm waiting to get my diploma!"

OPINION

Discrimination? Here at A&M? Yes

Texas A&M University is going to get nailed to the wall — for discrimination on account of sex. And well it should.

It's unfortunate it may take a court order to do it, but the tradition of excluding women from certain elite groups in the Corps of Cadets must change.

The Corps is discriminating against women. A&M challenges the lawsuit it's facing with two basic arguments.

One, the institution says the laws under which the suit was filed do not apply to A&M. In other words, A&M slips through under loopholes.

A&M also says — truthfully — that no women have applied to join the groups (except the Ross Volunteers), and none of the groups officially prohibit female members. A&M's reply is that women may join alternative organizations in the Corps, such as the Women's Drill Team.

But there is no alternative for women who can't join — or who are strongly discouraged from joining — the Aggie Band, the Ross Volunteers and Parsons' Mounted Cavalry.

Cadet Melanie Zentgraf applied last year to join the Ross Volunteers and was not accepted as a member. The Corps argues that since the RVs are selected by members of the outfit, Zentgraf had no right to expect to be chosen.

But it is obvious to anyone who has sampled RV opinion concerning women in the Corps that as long as that closed selection system exists, no woman will become an RV.

Women have been in the Corps since 1974, but only this semester were they allowed to wear senior boots.

While few may have applied to join the elite groups, the women should still have the option to do so — as well as the right to be seriously considered for membership. As long as they aren't, there will still be discrimination.

Traditions — such as enrolling no women at all — have changed before, and A&M has become stronger for it.

Besides tradition, what good reason is there to keep women out of these Corps organizations?

THE BATTALION

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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.

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VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

WEDNESDAY
DECEMBER 12, 1979

BRODER

Cutting states from federal funds gives Carter chance to play politics

By DAVID S. BRODER
WASHINGTON — Two kinds of headlines have dominated the news from Washington in recent weeks. One concerned a president supposedly preoccupied with the unending crisis of the Tehran hostages. The other concerned an administration purportedly using federal grants to reward the friends and punish the opponents of the same president's reelection effort.

Those two issues provide the political context for a scheduled meeting of a delegation of governors with Jimmy Carter this week. The meeting will focus on the issue of bypassing the states in federal-aid programs for the cities.

The session is part of the process of consultation Carter is going through before making his final decisions on the budget he sends Congress next month.

A year ago, in a similar session, the governors asked Carter to recommend removal of some of the categorical-program restraints which now impair the flexibility in state and local use of federal aid, and to

avoid the temptation to bypass the states in future grant-in-aid programs.

Their plea will be repeated this year, with special emphasis on the 1980 renewal of the general revenue-sharing program. Carter has said from his campaign days onward that he wants to eliminate the states from their one-third share of that \$7 billion a year distribution. The governors, understandably, think that is a rotten idea.

But they are not alone. The U.S. Conference of Mayors and the League of Cities, representing municipal governments, have both endorsed continuation of the present program. Their view is that any alteration in the distribution formula might jeopardize the political coalition supporting revenue-sharing.

There are also substantive reasons for keeping the states in the program. As Tom Cochran of the U.S. Conference of Mayors noted, "The studies show that at least 40 percent, and probably more, of the state share is passed on to the local governments."

And there is evidence that the pass-through process targets money more effectively, on areas of real need, than does direct federal aid to the cities. A National Science Foundation study of 20 years of grant-in-aid programs made by a pair of scholars from the University of Missouri-Kansas City, G. Ross Stephens and Gerald W. Olsen, concluded that "the states do a much better job of placing these funds with 'active' local governments than does direct federal-to-local formula allocation."

A newly issued study by the National Governors Association staff on aid to "distressed cities," found that, whatever "hardship index" is used, there is better targeting of resources when the states are used to channel the funds.

Pennsylvania Gov. Richard L. Thornburgh, one of the National Governors' Association officials scheduled to meet with Carter on Thursday (Dec. 13), drew the Iranian connection when he said, "With the increasing tempo of international concerns on the part of the federal government, it hardly seems necessary for

them to be reaching for responsibility at the local level, when the states have demonstrated their ability to judge their own needs of their localities with greater skills."

What Thornburgh, a Republican, says was that bypassing the states, by routing states entirely out of program revenue-sharing, does increase the risk of Carter and his agents to play election politics with federal grant cities.

The pending decision on the distribution of revenue-sharing thus becomes an index, not only of Carter's commitment to effective use of resources in a time of tight budgets, but also of his willingness to abandon some short-term political advantage in order to concentrate on the vital elements of his own job.

If good government is indeed the goal, then the governors should have sympathetic hearing from their federal leaguer.

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ANALYSIS

Politically organized homosexuals may be affecting political platforms

By PETER A. BROWN
United Press International

WASHINGTON — California Gov. Edmund G. Brown is courting the gay vote with unusual enthusiasm and if the move pays off politically, other candidates also may decide homosexuals are worth wooing.

Brown is running behind both President Carter and Sen. Edward Kennedy in the race for the Democratic presidential nomination. He is trying to build a coalition based on his fiscal conservatism and social liberalism.

Recently, he was the only major presidential candidate to appear at a gay disco bar for a fund-raiser to help a homosexual group. He is also the first governor ever to appoint an openly gay judge.

Behind the gay bar appearance is an apparent decision by Brown — who has stressed gay rights in his California campaigns — that it is politically profitable to go after the homosexual vote nationally.

In the past, gay rights has been a subject presidential candidates ran from, feeling that being friendly would cost more among voters horrified by gays than it would win from homosexuals.

But gays — like blacks, Jews, women, labor and virtually every other interest group — have begun organizing politically. And, at least on the local level they have had some successes.

In San Francisco — which has the nation's most visible gay population — Washington D.C., and other major cities, mayors have been elected in recent years in part because of gay support.

But the suspicion persists among politicians that any votes a candidate identified with gay rights gets in cities with big homosexual populations will be overshadowed by losses in more conservative areas.

Of particular importance in presidential campaigns is that Iowa, New Hampshire and Florida all hold early primaries or caucuses and have a good deal of influence in winnowing out the candidates.

Many candidates have felt the gay issue would not win them friends in those crucial states and Brown is the first to test that assumption.

Homosexual activists, who are trying to get gay rights planks in the Republican and Democratic platforms next year, say studies show about 10 percent of the population is gay.

They dispute the stereotype that homosexuals are more liberal politically because of sexual preference and say homosexuals register with the political parties in the same manner as the general population.

Republican strategists apparently believe that, however. While the Vote-USA fund-raiser at the disco last week attracted Carter and Kennedy aides, there was no GOP candidate or representative to be seen.

Although Brown says both Kennedy and Carter have come out for gay rights, he has gone further on the issue, pledging to point gays to federal jobs, issue an executive order banning discrimination against homosexuals in federal jobs and work on passage of national gay rights legislation.

LETTERS

Freshman says Taps vote indicates his class is not being represented

Editor:

This letter is written primarily for the Class of '83 and for the five freshman senators who voted in favor of the Silver Taps resolution.

From my understanding, it is the duty of elected officials to express, as best they can, the views of their constituency. We've given our senators the responsibility of representing our views and I see them as failures.

There can be no valid reason for the manner in which they voted. In Monday's Battalion Chris May, a freshman Senator, admitted that evidence was presented that showed our class was against the resolution, but the freshman senators voted five to two in favor of its passage.

Our seven senators should reevaluate their roles in a representative government. Regardless of the pressures on an individual involved in a role-call vote to "follow the crowd," it was not their call to follow the upperclassmen.

I'm not against the passage of the bill; that is not the issue. The issue is whether we are being represented.

The role-call vote is posted in the Student Government office and I will make use of it for the next election. I hope you will too.

— Rodney Paris, '83

Send cards to Iran

Editor:

Last Friday night on the Channel 3 (ABC/Houston) 10 p.m. newscast, the anchor man, Dave Ward, made a commentary on the hostages in Iran. He called on all Americans to give our hostages a Christmas by sending a card, letter, or package to them.

Mr. Ward gave the address:

An American Hostage
U.S. Embassy
Tehran, Iran

It takes a 31-cent international airmail stamp, but what better way to show our hostages in Iran that we care than to bring Christmas to them by way of a card or something.

I called the ABC Television Network in New York and they plan to run a similar

commentary on national network television. There are also announcements being made over radio.

I would like to challenge all Aggies to take a moment and send a card or letter. The true spirit of Christmas is that of giving — let's give our hostages a Christmas and show the people of Iran what America is all about.

— Bill Way

THOTZ

By Doug Graham

