

'Trashy' tradition no good for A&M's image

It's heartwarming to see so many people benefitting from The Battalion.

But it would be nicer if they were reading the paper, not holding it up and creating severe litter problems at basketball games in G. Rollie White Coliseum.

This "tradition" of holding up newspapers while the other team's lineup is announced is one that hopefully will die a sudden death. Unfortunately, it's been going on since the Arkansas game last season.

It doesn't seem like very good sportsmanship on the face of it; in fact, it's just plain rude. And when the papers are tossed down to the floor, it's surely no big thrill for the people who have to clean up the mess afterwards.

Besides, it costs a lot of money. Almost 3,000 papers (that's a third of a ton of newsprint) were taken from their regular distribution points the day of the University of Houston game. The circulation department spent Tuesday answering calls about the lack of Battalions available on Monday. There's no charge for The Battalion, but it does cost money to print.

This paper ritual isn't going unnoticed either. The caption under front-page pictures in *The Eagle* from Monday night's game said this "mass indifference and massive mess have become a regular feature of home basketball games."

Texas A&M's reputation already has become a little trashy of late. This latest tradition doesn't help clean it up any.



Home basketball game fans have developed a new "tradition" of holding up newspapers, followed by throwing them on the floor.

Slouch By Jim Earle

"As a matter of fact, I haven't had much time to study. I've been very busy getting my study schedule worked up!"

Reader's Forum

Democracy is hope for Middle East

Editor:

This missive is in reply to Nabil Al-Khowaiter's pompous yet factually inaccurate letter. I have sat silently by while one Arab student after another has written into *The Battalion* lambasting and chastising the nation of Israel, absolving in the process the Arab states' oil-avarice hands. If one decides to go on the "official" record as an advocate for a particular cause (i.e. Palestinian statehood), then let him/her refute the role of a demagogue and base the merits of their case on the facts as they are universally understood and accepted.

A case in point is Mr. Khowaiter's denouement, which stated that Israel is indirectly responsible (or will someday be responsible) for the deaths of thousands of American youth in some far-off land. Balderdash! Menachem Begin, Moshe Dayan and other past and present illustrious Israeli heads of state have made it emphatically clear that nobody, but nobody, will ever fight Israel's battles for her. Translated into language that even Mr. Khowaiter can fathom, that means that no American soldier will ever, I repeat ever, have to enter a battle on Israel's behalf.

Another point of contention that I must dissect for proper evaluation by *The Battalion's* constituents, is Mr. Khowaiter's assertion that Israel's military su-

periority (aided and abetted by the "underground railroad" between Washington and Tel Aviv) is her chief and most potent weapon in her war for survival against her Arab adversaries. Israel's superiority, however, is not of the hardware type, in the form of caches of weapons, but of the cerebral type, a far more formidable device than man has or ever will devise.

It also appears incongruous to me when the Arabs call for "sanctions" against territory acquired by Israel when the territory would have remained in Arab hands had they not started four wars predicated on the cardinal tenet of "pushing Israel into the Mediterranean Sea."

Lastly, I feel it superfluous to enumerate and elucidate on the vast pressures that Arab P.A.C.s (political action com-

mittees) exert on Capitol Hill. For the Western and Third worlds are joining, Mr. Khowaiter, to seriously question, to use your own words, whether the U.S. government can ever cast the yoke of Arab control on its domestic as well as foreign policies.

In closing, Israel, not the Arab, is the bastion of democracy in the Middle East. It is just such a democracy, in the U.S., that enables you to voice your opinion and acquire your education without fear of recriminations, sovereign and oppressive government.

Can the aforementioned statement also be proclaimed in the Arab world?

March

Building Trusthouse Forte in U.S.

by LeRoy Pope

United Press International

NEW YORK — A young businessman who is being mentioned as the best matrimonial catch in Britain now that Prince Charles is married has come to America to invest a sizable chunk of his family's millions.

Rocco Forte is launching a program to build or buy up to 50 hotels in American cities in five years. That could mean outlays of well over \$1 billion.

Much of the financing would be raised in North America but the investment of the family company, Trusthouse Forte, would be significant.

Trusthouse Forte, built by Rocco's father, Lord Charles Forte, is the biggest hotel, restaurant, resort and catering combine in the world. It owns or operates 830 hotels, including some of the world's most famous — the George V in Paris and Grosvenor House and the Hyde Park in London among them. In addition, it has 3,000 restaurants and numerous other businesses.

Although it owns the Westbury in New York, the Plaza in Philadelphia, the Plaza of the Americas in Dallas, and the Travelodge chain of some 530 motels, headquartered in San Diego, it has kept a rather low profile in the United States.

Now, however, it is starting to move

into the American market aggressively and exploit the company image for the first time on the western side of the Atlantic.

Rocco Forte said new hotels will be built at an average cost of perhaps \$30 million in the faster growing American cities, especially in the Sunbelt. Others will be bought and remodeled. He said he would like more hotels in New York.

Trusthouse Forte's global operations cover all price ranges, but Forte said the new American program will emphasize prestige hotels with a definite European ambience. He is confident the program will move right along despite the current recession.

As Lord Forte's only son and a handsome young man, Rocco Forte inevitably began to be talked of as perhaps the most eligible bachelor in the kingdom after Prince Charles married. In his early thirties, he already is deputy chief executive of Trusthouse Forte. The family stock interest in the huge empire is about 20 per cent.

"That isn't nearly enough to assure my succession," Rocco said. "I've got to earn it if I get there."

He has an ingenuous explanation for his continuing bachelorhood: "Everytime I seem seriously interested in a girl, my sisters discover reasons why I

shouldn't propose," he said with a straight face.

The five sisters all are younger than he. "Otherwise I wouldn't have survived," he quipped.

Although they are third generation British subjects, the Fortes are pure Italian and Rocco has a Latin charm.

He was educated at Oxford and was on the varsity fencing team. He no longer fences but goes in for hunting, fishing, golf and windsurfing.

Young Forte worked in the family hotels and restaurants on his vacations during his school years. On his first job, he shattered a big tray of plates. The manager knew who he was but docked him just the same. "That taught me something," he said.

When he got out of Oxford he considered entering Harvard Business School. "I probably should have," he said. "The only way to get equivalent financial training in England was to become a chartered accountant. I did that and had the most boring three years in my life at it."

Lord Forte, who now is 73, has no intention of retiring soon, his son said. Raised in Scotland, Lord Forte began his business career dishing out ice cream at a seaside summer resort on the west coast of England.

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START ECONOMIZING, SHIRLEY -

I GOT A RAISE THAT PUT US IN A HIGHER BRACKET -

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