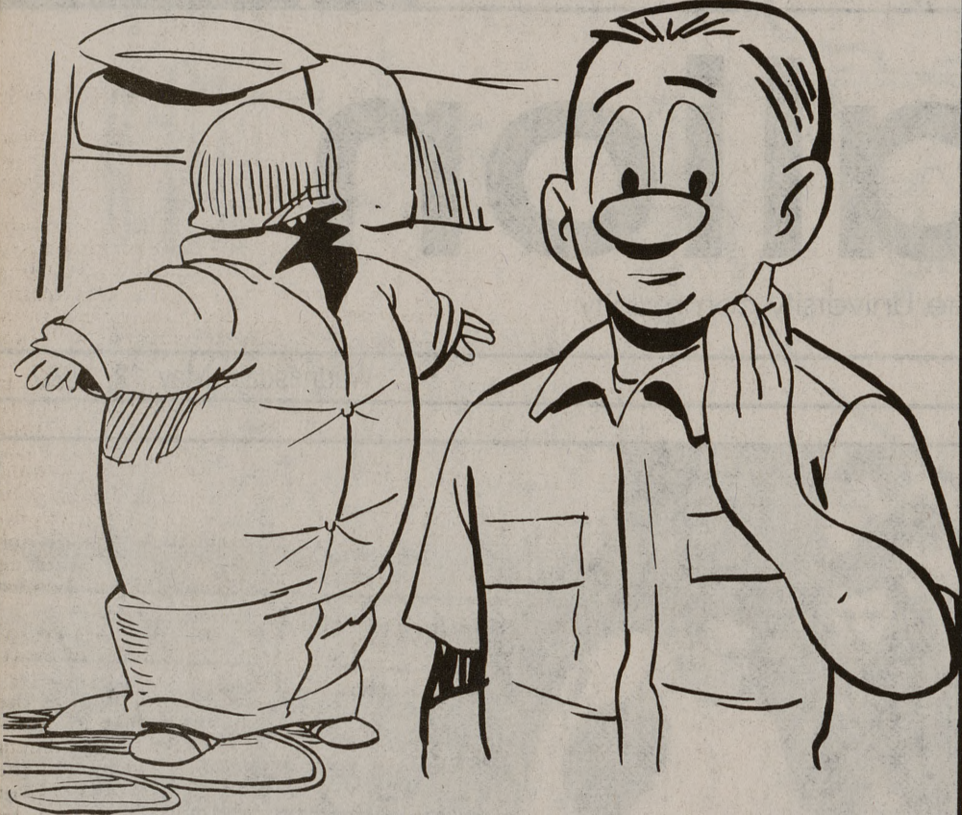


## Slouch By Jim Earle



"Have you seen my electric fan?"

## Police out of step with today's society

Criminals aren't the only people who ought to be afraid of the police. In today's Battalion, we have two articles about statements by policemen; one is a spokesman for the Dallas police department and the other is the chief of the Los Angeles police.

The Dallas officer said that, since homosexual behavior is against the law, gays do not deserve the same considera-



tion other minorities receive, and that gays who are robbed and beaten are "just asking for it."

The Los Angeles police chief said he thought blacks might be more endangered by chokeholds than "normal people." By that, he apparently means non-blacks.

These men are sworn to enforce the law for the protection of all citizens, gay or straight, white or black or brown. And their attitudes are ominous, not only for gays and blacks, but for everyone.

Yes, homosexual acts are illegal in Texas. But until a homosexual is convicted of that crime, he is innocent. That applies to everyone, gay as well as straight.

And even if a homosexual is convicted, the conviction does not excuse crimes against him nor does it excuse police indifference to those crimes.

If the police can turn away from violence against someone who is, or is thought to be, a criminal, where does the logic end?

If I smoke marijuana, can the police allow my murder?

If I write a hot check, can a policeman stand by as I'm mugged?

If I run a red light, can the police look the other way as I am beaten?

Turning a blind eye to crimes against gays is the worst sort of Klan mentality: it allows thugs to prey on someone simply because the police disapprove of them.

The statement from Police Chief Daryl Gates is just as offensive. He defends the chokehold, a move police have found very useful in subduing people they arrest. It's so successful, in fact, that a few people — all black — have died.

Instead of deciding that the maneuver might be too dangerous, Gates thinks that, well, maybe blacks just aren't built to handle the strain like us normal folks.

If I were black, I'd think twice about living in a city whose police chief is more willing to think I'm inferior than to reconsider a police tactic. Would Gates' reasoning have been the same had the dead all been white?

The police, by and large, are decent people straining to do a difficult job in spite of citizen indifference and inadequate means. On the whole, they perform admirably, and without the sacrifice they make, I doubt we'd survive a week.

That does not mean they are perfect. Indeed, the job they do sometimes gives them an "us vs. them" mentality that can lead to astonishing excesses.

The police, like the military, are under civilian control for a very good reason: police cannot be trusted to make law any more than soldiers can be trusted to know when and where to fight. Only people who can stand back from the fray have the perspective to make that kind of judgment.

Policemen, like soldiers, are often dangerously out of step with the rest of society and blinded by notions of law and morality better suited to a battlefield than to a free country.

The two statements today prove that.

## Commencement — a real trip

A problem became apparent at graduation ceremonies last weekend. It's one of those problems that may not have a solution, but it deserves consideration.

Steep stairs in G. Rollie White Coliseum present quite an obstacle to visiting family and friends.

Students know how ridiculously steep the stairs are in good old Jollie Rollie. They grumble and groan about having to exert effort to walk up the stairs to a high perch in the stands to see a basketball game.

However, students are basically young, semi-agile people.

The people who attend graduation ceremonies are not always so young and agile. Grandma, Grandpa, Great-aunt Mary and the whole gang want to come see their grandchild or relative graduate. A college graduation is a big thrill for many people, especially since lots of grandparents may never have attended college themselves.

But, these wonderful, supportive and proud relatives who are getting on in years may have a problem in getting to see the loved one graduate.

People who have difficulty moving around are just about devastated when they see the steepness of those coliseum stairs.

At the Saturday morning commencement, one older lady needed someone to support her on both sides while she attempted to lift her legs high enough to reach the next stair.



It was painful just to watch her. At times, she almost needed assistance to pick up her foot high enough to reach the next stair.

Of course, by this time there were no seats left on the first few rows. She had to go almost to the top of the stands to find a seat.

And it wasn't just older people who had problems with the stairs.

Graduation, for most people, is a dress-up affair. It sometimes looks like a fashion show. And, many women were wearing high heels of the narrow spike variety.

I saw two women who had trouble walking down the stairs because their spike heels left little space on which to balance during the precarious descent.

Granted, maybe wearing spike heels is asking for trouble at any event. But, graduation is a dignified, formal affair.

Two women in their twenties had to

stop halfway up the stairs to catch their breath. These were two seemingly ordinary women. Imagine, then, what stairs do to someone with limited movement.

Even young children had problems with the stairs, mainly because their feet were bigger than they were. And carrying a small child up those stairs is hazardous for those who carry them. It is to let children try it on their own.

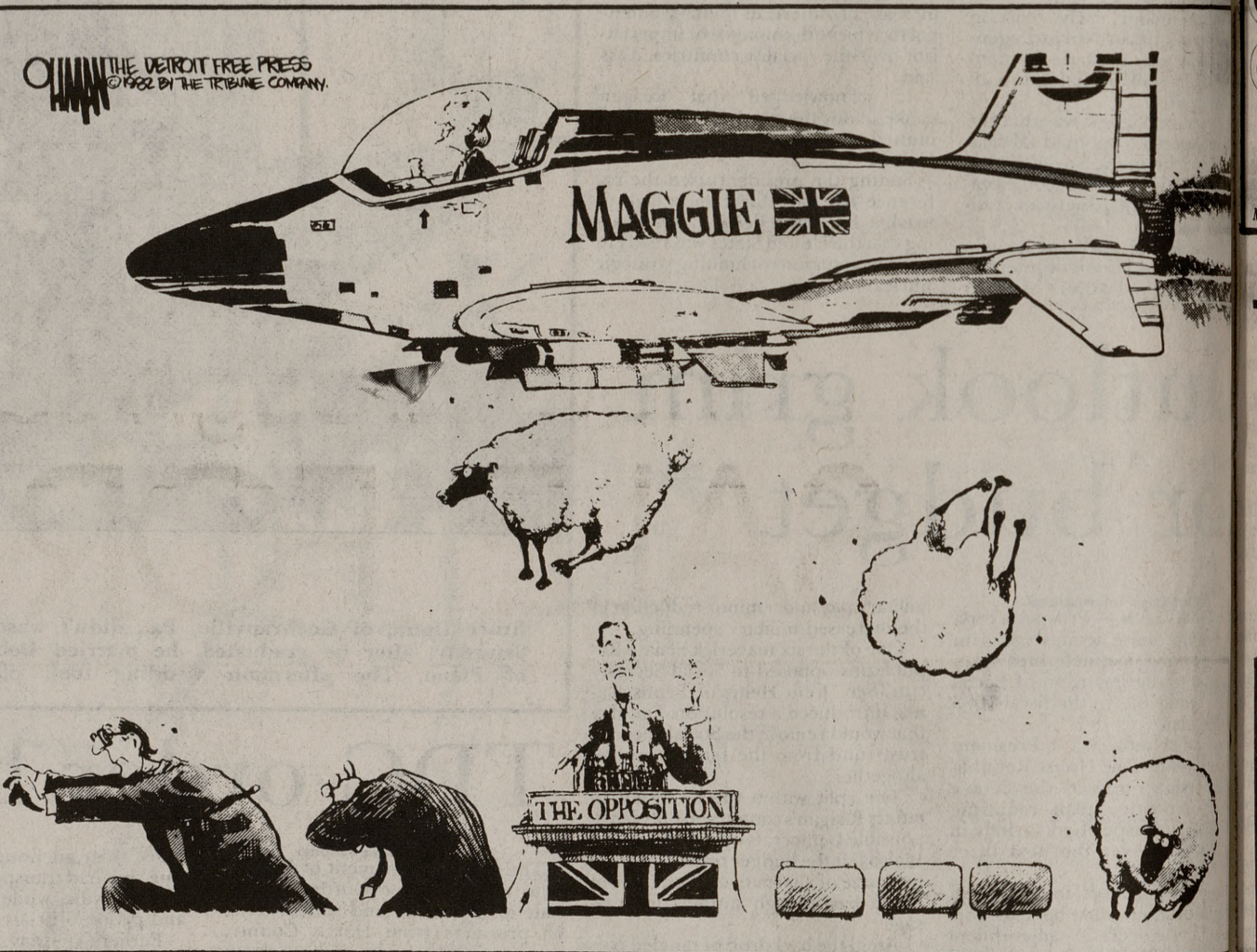
People sitting around me expressed concern about the steepness of the stairs. One man sitting behind me wondered aloud if there was any possible way administrators to set aside space for handicapped or semi-crippled visitors.

That might not be possible because someone would have to decide who served the space over.

Maybe space could be reserved for students could pick up passes to the reserved area for relatives who have a paired movement. But, this would create a problem as to who needs space more.

Solutions to the problem may be difficult to reach, but something needs to be done.

And, if administrators decide to consider finding a solution to the problem of accessibility in the coliseum, they should consider it in the proposed events center. This is one problem that could be solved before it arises.



## Letters: Summer job warning

**Editor:**

Once again, it is summer — a time most of us use to get away from school to work or play. For those who work during the summer, the prospect of employment may appear slimmer this year than in previous years. Yes, there are some standard summer-type jobs available in students' hometowns, and some people may even get to work temporarily for a company which will hire them after they finish school. There are some jobs, however, that can appear to be better than any other at first but can be terribly misleading.

One of these involves working for an out-of-state company by selling door-to-door, also out-of-state. Quite a few people I know have attempted this with different results — some made money hand-over-fist, some made money but didn't like the way they did it, and some lost a lot of money. Obviously, a job like this involves a lot of risk which can not be covered over by a flashy, memorized recruitment pitch.

Maybe I shouldn't even be writing this — maybe I should mind my own business and let people get talked into something like this, but it bothers me. From what I've been told by students who worked or tried to work this way, it takes a lot more than guts to follow the demanding work schedule which is expected. There are just some things which can not be taught in a one-week training course. Door-to-door salesmanship requires aggressiveness and the ability to think and speak quickly, traits which should already be developed within the person. Without a fast mind, the salesman is at a distinct disadvantage — he will not be able to

convince a customer fast enough to buy something which he might not really need.

Like I said earlier, this is a risky job — some people will succeed and some will not. To take a risk without being able to afford the loss is utter folly, but there is probably nothing that can be said to those who are determined to try the job out and who stand to lose a lot if they are not successful. To those who are as yet undecided, all I can say is to consider all options carefully because regardless of what someone may, salesmanship, like any other activity, is not for everyone.

Roy Gunn '82

The Residence Hall Association forms the largest group of organized students at Texas A&M University.

Stacy Co  
RHA president

## Bad behavior at review

**Editor:**

This past Saturday I attended Final Review as I have each year since coming to Texas A&M. Although I have yet become an Aggie parent, I was given many examples of what not to be when you do become one. The rudeness and outright selfishness exhibited by many friends and family members last Saturday is not a part of the Aggie spirit, and so many of their sons and daughters exemplify.

Being a non-reg, I cannot honestly say that I know how much Final Review means to the members of the Corps (especially the graduating seniors), but I do know that it is a very special occasion which deserves much more respect from the spectators than was shown last Saturday. It's a shame that more of us could not have enjoyed Final Review a little more because of the inexcusable behavior of many.

To the Corps I would like to say that there are many of us in the non-reg population that do care and are grateful to you for the fine image of Aggieland that you project in your many endeavors. Give 'em Hell class of '83!

Steve Trolinger '83  
213 Astor

**The Battalion**

USPS 045 360

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Texas Press Association  
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The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Communications.  
Questions or comments concerning any editorial matter should be directed to the editor.

**Letters Policy**

Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length, and are subject to being cut if they are longer. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length, but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must also be signed, show the address and phone number of the writer.

Columns and guest editorials are also welcome, and are not subject to the same length constraints as letters. Address all inquiries and correspondence to: Editor, The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843, or phone (713) 845-2611.

The Battalion is published daily during Texas A&M's fall and spring semesters, except for holiday and examination periods. Mail subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester, \$33.25 per school year and \$35 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request.

Our address: The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald Building, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843.

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