

Corps

Why join the Corps?

Editor:

In response to Mr. Bannon's letter to the editor:

Why am I in the Corps of Cadets? For openers, I will concede that I initially joined the Corps because I am a pure bred Aggie (third generation — both sides). But why did I stay in?

Let me begin by asking if you realize that a healthy percentage of the Corps is not in pursuit of a military contract. They must join, and remain in the Corps, for some other reason. What? Discipline, leadership, camaraderie, accomplishment — some things not available in other aspects of college life.

The Corps provides young men with the chance to grow through learning to deal with, as well as how to distribute, discipline in hopes of learning leadership traits. The Corps of Cadets is often called a "leadership laboratory" allowing its members to develop their leadership potential. It also (perhaps most importantly) allows them to make their mistakes here where they can be fixed, instead of on the job where they can have lasting effects. Major corporations recognize this, and you should too. Admittedly, we fail sometimes, and some of our members never do grow up. And that's a shame because they reflect poorly upon the rest of us.

Your next question: Why am I going into the military? You're not going to like this: you and other pacifists do not live in reality. War is a dirty side of life, but for the sake of defending our country some of us are willing to give up our lives for its preservation. I'm not going to get off on some patriotic kick because I'm sure you've heard it all before and really don't care.

Isn't it odd how people in the military, despite all of society's disrespect, not to mention the merely adequate salary, still continue to serve their country and even feel good about it? What is interesting, and really hacks me off is that these soldiers go out into a war environment, in defense of your country, and get killed or wounded just to have persons such as yourself ridicule them and spit upon their graves. Or even worse, to just ignore or forget about them.

Last, I offer a poem in response to yours: God and the soldier, all men adore In times of trouble, but never before But when the trouble is over, And the wrongs have been righted, God is forgotten, And the soldier is slighted.

John Teague
Dorm 2

Freedom as cause

Editor:

I have what I believe Mr. Bannon was looking for in his Feb. 15 article.

Mr. Bannon, I am an American citizen. Millions of people in this world long to speak those words ... Why? Because this is a place where men and women live under the aegis of liberty and justice as practiced by a form of government which was designed to protect individual rights.

Though the institution may be imperfect at best, it is nevertheless the most hopeful aspirant to perfection yet devised in the history of man. We hold the liberty and justice reserved to each individual as our standard of perfection, not a comfortable level of income, and not an historical hack's idea of a perfect collective society.

It is for the appreciation of the great value of this government and way of life, then, that I joined the Corps of Cadets over four years ago. Mr. Bannon, violence and force are a fact of existence in

today's world. Our country must survive in this world if individuals are to have even the option of a healthy criticism of or constructive input into their government. I certainly do not claim that this government has never involved itself in conflicts which were unjust. But I emphatically point out that this government is correctable by and answerable to its citizens when that happens.

Finally, and most important is how the individual soldier lives with the possibility of dying or killing for his country or cause. Mr. Bannon, as a free man this possibility by its very nature repulses me, but it is not as repulsive as is the possibility that by failing to do so, I will yield to an aggressing power which holds no value in human life or reason. Using the words of Voltaire: "I may disagree with what you say, but I shall defend to the death your right to say it." This is why I joined the Corps.

Frank Knickerbocker
306 Redmund

Corps produces officers

Editor:

This letter is in response to Mr. Bannon's letter to the editor in The Battalion Feb. 15. I feel almost personally guilty that you are so immensely ignorant. Your questions asking if the members of the Corps are willing to die in service, kill on the word of their superiors and live with themselves afterwards are silly.

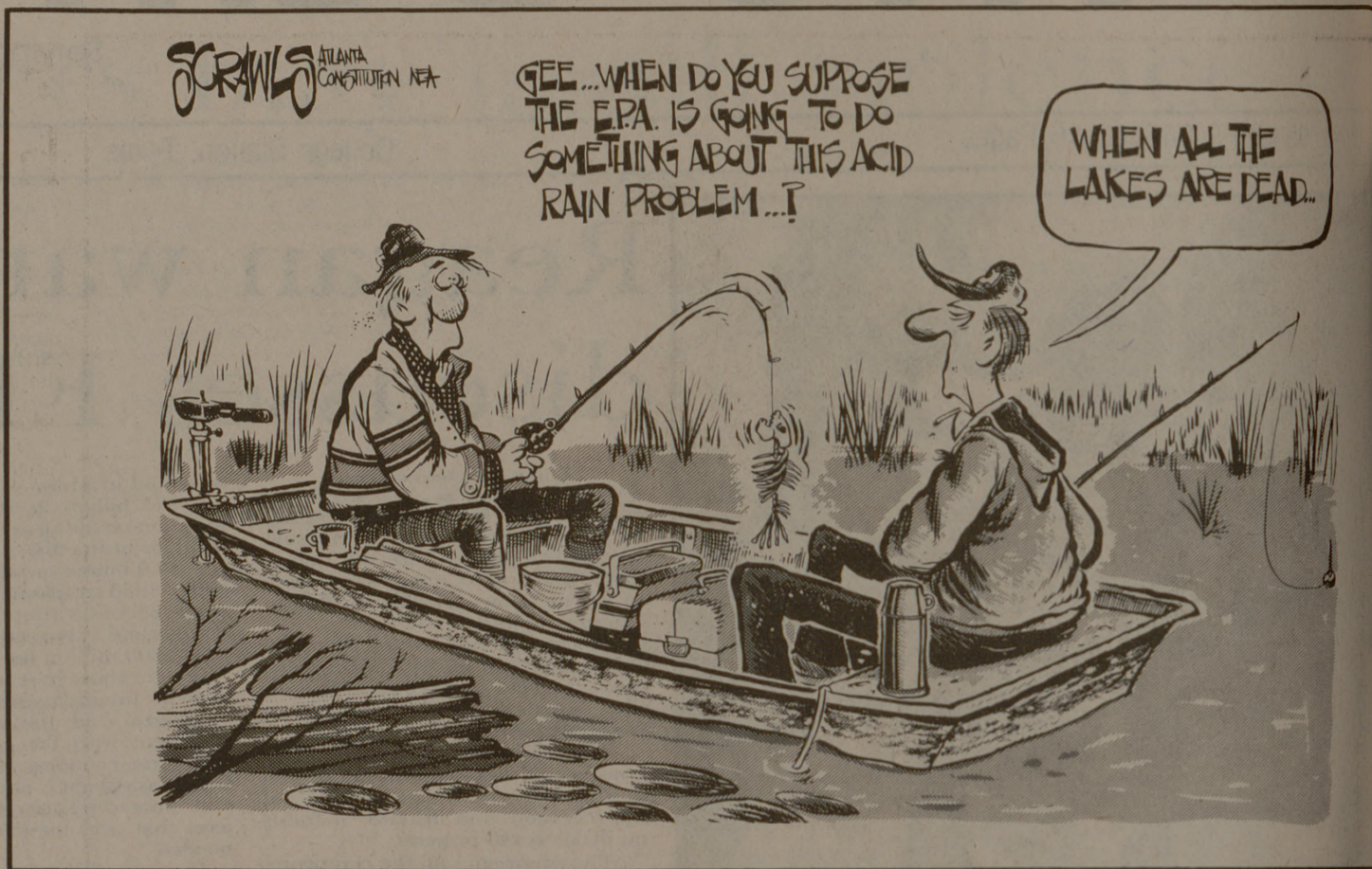
Questions such as that should be directed to people in the military. The Corps of Cadets has many diversified facets, all having nothing to do with killing people. These facets include discipline, responsibility, time management and most importantly in my opinion comradeship.

I challenge you to ask a cadet who

plans to take a contract with the military and ask him if he WANTS to go to war and kill people. I challenge you furthermore to go to the Trigon and talk to any of the officers and ask them why they are in the military.

The Corps of Cadets is here to produce officers to give our country a degree of military preparedness to cope with any aggression against the United States or our allies. These officers enter the military service to defend our country and to keep peace. I'm sure they would tell you that killing is the last thing that they want. War is not pretty but, FREEDOM sure is.

Tim Smyer '85
John Zylks '85



Letters: Preparing for defense

Editor:

This is in reply to Elizabeth Smith's letter that appeared in The Battalion on Feb. 14. I am a junior in the Corps of Cadets and have been singing these songs, properly called jodies, for three years. These jodies were made to toughen an individual to the horrors of war so that if we ever get into a combat situation we can have some semblance of control.

With the help of God we will never have to live out these things we sing about. No one I have ever met in the Corps loves death and destruction and no one desires to kill another human being, but if the time ever comes when we have to defend this country we'll be ready. You say "we desire to be given the chance to murder someone," but this is an outright lie. We are taught that murder is to kill with no justification, but to kill someone in combat is protection — protection of our lives, our men's lives, and the ideals of freedom. I don't believe America will ever provoke a war, but if we are drawn into a war to fight against Communist aggression I will have no second thoughts about killing. I love this country and the freedoms I enjoy and no enemy to this country is ever going to change that.

Another thing I would like to clear up is the notion that since we are pro-military, we are also pro-war. If it wasn't for our military strength as a deterrent to war, the people of this nation would all be eating borsch and drinking cheap vodka. If people would stop and think about what they're saying they would realize that a lot of the assumptions they make about the corp are wrong. I'm not a war-monger or a "killing machine" and my mind is not warped. I am an American and damn proud of it!

Darrel Thorner '84

Editor's Note: This letter was accompanied by 24 other signatures.

Lost ring

Editor:

Help! I lost a pearl ring either at the Polo fields or on the walk outside of Krueger Sunday evening. The ring was very dear to me and I'd appreciate it if anyone finds it to call me at 260-0697. P.S. There will be a reward.

Laurie Mabry

Watch found

Editor:

I found a woman's watch in the parking lot by the band dorm. If it's yours, call me at 260-2876, identify it and it's yours.

Lee Henderson

Thanks

Editor:

On behalf of the Legislative Study Group (LSG) and myself, I would like to express our thanks for the articles run in last week's Battalion. It was reassuring to have such a good job done on reporting a subject as complex as the Permanent University Fund (PUF). The LSG has worked hard researching and collecting information to inform and represent the students of Texas A&M. We are appreciative of the work done by Kelley Smith (reporter) and the Battalion staff for working so hard to report this information accurately. I hope that you will print this letter of affirmation, you deserve it.

Fred P. Billings III
Administrative Director '84,
LSG

Let's get it together

Editor:

As a human being I came, devoid of my whiteness, joining with others of common form and mind. I came not to hear the "black" man Dick Gregory speak, but to listen to the person Dick Gregory relate his experience, his impressions, and his life. When I sought through the method, through the "comedy" that clouded at times the unaware, a message of what each individual must do to begin a positive change in our world clearly pierced through. We must cleanse our minds, our bodies, and our spirits of the impurities within whether they be fear or hatred. We must tune-in to the god-force within ourselves; and we must see ourselves as individuals of worth and identity, separating our minds from the limiting transformations society demands.

The front page Battalion article of Feb. 10 concerning Mr. Gregory, demonstrated the ease with which the system can quell the essence of a man's character. The article played with Gregory's words as society can play with a person's mind, distorting the image so that only the expected is seen. Throughout his talk, Gregory continuously returned to the challenge "How Long? ... How Long?"

How long will it be until we listen? Through his words, Dick Gregory was trying to challenge our thought, trying to make us search inside for the answer is there alone. Through this search we can all begin to be the person Gregory commented on as the real champion — "... the man who has risen to the crest of life's highest purpose — singular and complete devotion to serving one's fellow man." Two thousand years ago those words were also said by one whose life and teachings challenge us daily. Yet still today the message has yet to be lived by

the world united as a common bond. When are we "folks" going to get act together?

Facts distorted

Editor:

The headline in Wednesday's edition, "A&M second in rapes, burglary for fall 1982" was an enhancement, actually a distortion, of the facts allowed. A more objective, though admittedly more boring, title would have been "Crime figures for seven schools announced." Consider the facts contained in the article.

First, only seven schools in Texas included in the statistics, with no mention of school size or any other factors which might permit legitimate comparison of the schools. Second, of the four categories of crime reported, A&M was second in only one category (robbery). UT had 89, A&M had 56, Tech had 45, etc. In the rape category, UT reported 10, while A&M and Rice each reported 1. Does this make A&M a leader in rape? Common sense is sufficient (ie. statistics course is required) to see that this is not representative of the facts. In other two categories, A&M was a third.

In perspective, the distorted headline may not seem inappropriate, since all the Battalion is a laboratory for training journalists, and we all expect media to jazz things up a little to get attention. Otherwise why would we have the "news"-breaks interrupting the evening movie to remind us of the murders, strikes, and scandals coming 10 p.m.

Mark Coughlin

Slouch By Jim Earle



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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 and 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.

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