

opinion

Student committee a praiseworthy step

A door was opened for student representation in the Texas A&M System's administration Thursday when the formation of a Chancellor's System Student Advisory Committee was announced.

The committee, which will be made up of students from each of the institutions

never came to life until now. Chancellor Arthur Hansen and the Legislative Study Group deserve credit for this long-awaited move.

Now it's up to the committee members to make the group a workable, useful forum. It will be quite a task for them to represent the ideas and feelings of the thousands of students in the Texas A&M System, but it can be done, as other universities have proven.

Many universities in the Northeast and Midwest have voting student members on their boards of regents. In Texas, to get a voting student regent would require an act of the state Legislature. But in the mean time, the chancellor's committee is a first step in the right direction.

Editorial

in the System, will meet regularly to discuss issues of general importance to all students in the System.

Student representation in the System administration is an old idea, but one that

Fuzzy discussion of Central America

by Donald A. Davis

United Press International

WASHINGTON — There is a whiff of Saigon about the White House press room these days.

In Vietnam, the daily press briefings were called the "Four O'Clock Follies" because of the incredible information the governments and the military tried to spoon feed reporters. The jargon, at times, was amazing.

There was the pilot of a fighter shot down by a Hanoi missile who nursed his plane back to the coast and died when it crashed in open sea. He was listed as a "non-combat death" because his plane did not go down in North Vietnam.

"Protective reaction strikes" allowed U.S. jets to raid across the border. People of several nations died in an "incurion" into Cambodia. "Search and destroy" missions were a license for destruction. "Free fire zones" meant you could shoot anyone who moved.

The war was full of such terms, which provided South Vietnamese and American briefers convenient camouflage behind which to hide. By careful use of the language, a briefer could stand in that hot corner room with its dirty yellow walls and lie like a thief.

The White House press room is a far world away from that corner of Tu Do Street and Le Loi, a property which now belongs to the other side.

But while reporters sit in air conditioned comfort on cushion chairs, feet on a royal blue carpet, the words being used, by the briefers sounding ominously familiar when they talk about another war — a growing battle on the border between Honduras and Nicaragua.

It is not that they are telling falsehoods. But the statements are transparent.

Anyone who has read accounts by newspaper reporters who have visited the scene or watched television footage showing the fighting knows that rebels

fighting the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua are getting help from the United States. The fact is not even disputed.

What is in question is the policy involved, and on that point, the administration does its best to fog the issue.

Rep. Edward Boland, D-Mass., head of a House intelligence subcommittee, fathered a congressional resolution that deals specifically with two items: It forbids U.S. military aid from being used to overthrow the Managua government or to provoke a conflict between Honduras and Nicaragua.

The White House blithely says — day after day — that the law is being obeyed in letter and spirit. The wording of the law is specific — the United States must not support an overthrow; it is not to provoke a conflict.

Reagan himself did nothing to clarify the matter last Friday when he stepped into the press room and also declared the law was being obeyed. He followed that with a comment that "whatever we are doing" in the area is for the purpose of interdicting arms to El Salvadoran guerrillas. The fuzzy remark did not clarify anything, but rather confirmed that something is being done in secret.

The Boland amendment does not say anything about helping the insurgent Nicaraguans, helping Honduras — a "friendly government" — defend itself, or trying to interdict the flow of weapons to communist rebels in El Salvador.

The spokesmen refuse to go beyond the statement, claiming they are not permitted to comment on "covert" actions. The United States wraps its operations in the flag and secrecy as it tiptoes around a Latin American quagmire that has the familiar scent of rice paddies.

The sad part — obviously a lesson unlearned — is that it remains simply impossible to get the Reagan administration to say, outline or justify exactly what the United States is doing in the Central America.



Yesterday plans tomorrow

by Dick West

United Press International

WASHINGTON — An international monetary conference scheduled for next month is being sponsored by two supply-side economists who advocate putting the United States on the gold standard.

Meanwhile, other forward-looking Americans were organizing a "Save the Yo-Yo" campaign. This venerable plaything, which has outlasted chariots, the pony express, bouffant hairdos, vaudeville, petticoats and the golden age of radio, is now reported near extinction.

I don't know enough about international finances to say whether backing U.S. dollars with a fixed amount of gold would help stabilize the value of other major currencies, as is claimed.

I do, however, recognize advanced thinking when I encounter it. So I went down to The Future Is Yesterday Foundation, a local research center and think

tank, to see what other radical irons might be in the fire.

"You're just in time to check the progress on some of our more far-out projects," said Sam Harkenback, the research director. "Come on into the laboratory."

In one corner of the lab were 11 brawny young men dressed in moleskins. "They're experimenting with a new football formation," Harkenback explained. "It's called the single wing. It's specifically designed for teams in underdeveloped countries that don't have the resources for two-platoon football."

He directed my attention to a table where four lab assistants wearing white smocks were seated. They were taking turns sliding domino-like tiles to the center of the table.

"They are playing something called mah-jongg," Harkenback told me. "It's a

new game we're trying to perfect. We hope to introduce it in Third World countries, especially the Orient. Many people can't afford to play Man."

Harkenback pointed toward the center of the lab where a musical group composed of seven guitars and a metronome was belting out a tune of strange rhythm.

"We call that a waltz beat," he advised. "The reason the tempo is so funny to your ears is because it's in 3/4 time. We plan to try it out at the Mall during the Fourth of July celebration."

So tranquil did I become listening to the sound I forgot to ask Harkenback about the prospects for the gold standard. But if the yo-yo makes comeback, you'll know the climate is right.

Letters: Tuition stance defended

Editor:

If the old cliché "ignorance is bliss" bears any substance, there is one happy Aggie at this fine University.

In response to Thursday's letter by Mr. Schwartz concerning tuition policy, I have a few comments to make on behalf of the Legislative Study Group.

Had Mr. Schwartz taken the time to inquire about the position the student senate had voted to take concerning HB894, he would have found the LSG to have represented the students well in their opposition to the tuition increase. The comments he and his teaspig colleagues misconstrued actually stated that if the Legislature finds a tuition increase inevitable, the LSG proposed it be indexed at a fixed percentage of a pre-defined set of costs. This would insure that an increase would be a percentage of a percentage, which would in turn minimize the impact an increase, if any, would have on students enrolled in state institutions.

A little research would have indicated that HB894 didn't even include tuition, which was pointed out at the public hearing by Madelan Yanta during her testimony before the House Appropriations Committee. It may come as a surprise, but Mr. Schwartz' beloved friends from the Texas Student Lobby offered heated testimony against a tuition increase on a bill that technically didn't include tuition. Ms. Yanta's work has opened the minds of the Legislature to an acceptable compromise as opposed to the traditional 100 percent to 200 percent flat rate increases proposed in previous years.

In conclusion, I encourage Mr. Schwartz to do his research on student issues and student views from the ground up, starting with how Texas A&M students actually are being represented to the state Legislature. Aggies be proud somebody is doing their homework!

Fred Billings '84

Nicole Williams '84

TAMU Legislative Study Group

Police tickets

Editor:

Laredo, Texas has been hit by the recession in the U.S. and the Mexican peso devaluation. The city has no shoppers any more. The city is poor. However this city has found a new natural resource: A little hill 18 to 20 miles north of Laredo on I-35 where, when you are driving your car towards San Antonio,

those fine outstanding Ags who drive a car. As most of us can imagine, a pound car is no match for a bicyclist and probably more easily maneuvered. The cyclist would obviously win.

With that in mind I think it's high that the people in charge of planning TAMU, and I use the term loosely, should consider the removal of "parking lot" on East Main Drive. If this is done it would be to the benefit of those Ags who drive to campus. In the meantime, it would be a good idea to realize that East Main Drive is not a two-lane thoroughfare and to direct accordingly.

As long as the "parking lot" exists this street there exists a higher than average chance that another name will be added to the flag pole for Silver T. to the roll call at Aggie Muster.

Joseph L. Diaz
Agricultural economics

Dangerous situation

Editor:

Well it happened again. As I was riding my bicycle to class on East Main Drive, I was nearly runover by one of

those fine outstanding Ags who drive a car. As most of us can imagine, a pound car is no match for a bicyclist and probably more easily maneuvered. The cyclist would obviously win.

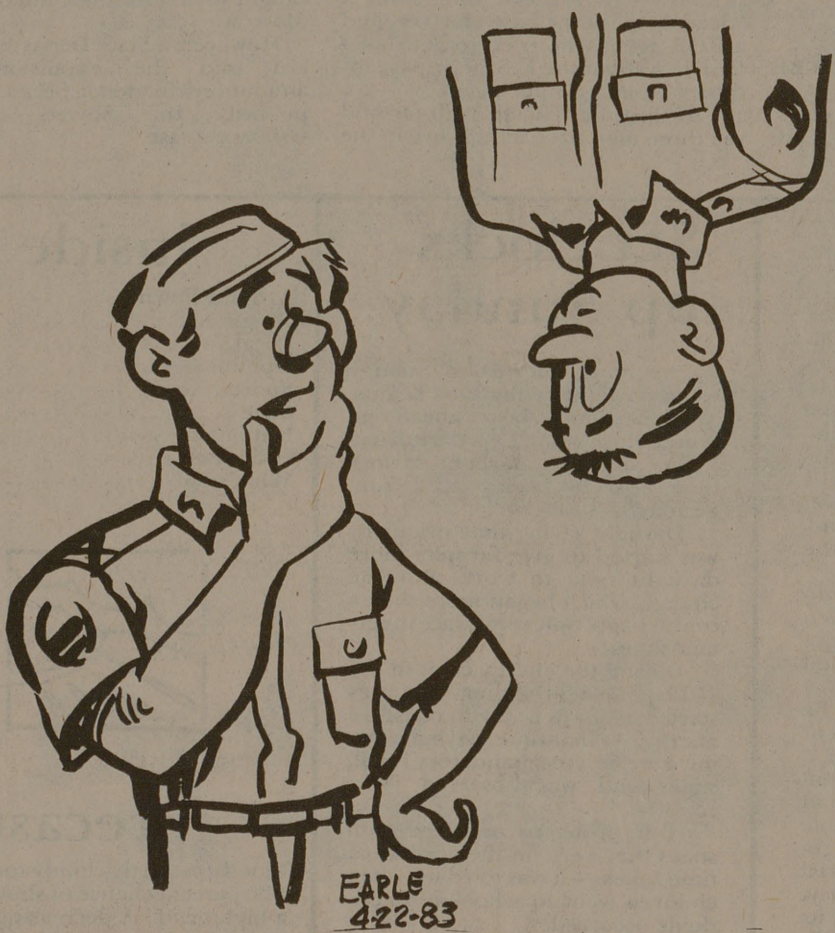
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Andy Jones

Editor's note: This letter is being printed again because of a typographical error in Thursday's Battalion.

Slouch By Jim Earle



"After we figure out how to get you down, I'd suggest that you lay off that light beer for a while."

The Battalion

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The Battalion also serves as a laboratory resource for students in reporting, editing and photography courses within the Department of Communications. Questions or comments concerning any 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 too long. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit for style and length, but will make every effort to preserve 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, but are not subject to the same length constraints. Address all inquiries and correspondence to: The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843, or phone: 777-2611.

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