

opinion

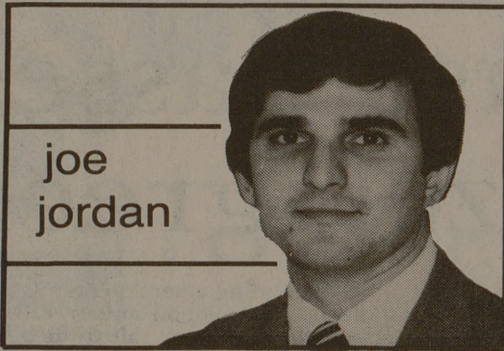
UT 'open letter' unfair

I never have and do not intend to make a habit of writing a letter to the editor every time someone or something annoys me, but when circumstances merit a response I can make exceptions.

As the newly elected Student Body President, I feel it is my responsibility to respond to an "open letter from UT students to A&M students" published in The Battalion on May 2. The letter, which was signed by both the outgoing and incoming Student Body Presidents of UT, unfairly criticized and misrepresented the actions of the A&M Legislative Study Group in regards to the issue of tuition increases.

The letter claimed that members of the LSG "testified in Austin for a tuition increase" and "(told) legislators that Aggies want to increase their own tuition." Either the authors of this letter grossly misinterpreted the actions of our LSG concerning this issue, or this was a flagrant attempt to discredit the LSG with our student body.

The position of the student body as determined by the Student Senate in SB 82-036-(12), passed on March 9, plainly expressed the view of the student body "as being opposed to a tuition increase, unless such is inevitable, in which case, the TAMU Student Senate supports a tuition increase by a fixed percentage of a predefined set of costs." The "fixed percentage" clause is to ensure tuition costs rise as slowly and as little as possible if they do rise. This has been, and is the



joe jordan

view that the LSG has presented to legislators in Austin.

The controversy seems to have arisen in regards to a committee hearing concerning HB 894 in the State Legislature on March 15. This bill is not a tuition increase bill. It is in fact an act to provide for a change in the process by which all state fees can be raised. The measure would allow all state fees to be raised no more than 100 percent during the next two fiscal years, and thereafter be raised only by an amount to offset inflationary impacts.

Although in theory this bill could allow tuition to increase from \$4 to \$16 per semester hour over the next two years, it is highly unlikely that this will be the case. Many legislators are against any tuition increase at all. What this bill does do is set a maximum on the amount that tuition as well as all state fees can be raised, and ensures that any increase is a

gradual one.

The bill allows the Appropriations Committee to increase state fees as part of the General Appropriations Act, which must then be approved by the State Legislature. However, an amendment proposed by our LSG will require that each substantive committee retain jurisdiction over any adjustment in fees as part of the appropriations process. In the case of a proposed tuition increase, this would put the jurisdiction in the hands of the Higher Education Committee. This will allow greater opportunity for public testimony on the impacts of any proposed tuition increase.

The LSG went on record for the student body of A&M as being opposed to a tuition increase in principle, but in support of HB 894 as amended, because the bill "will provide the optimum mechanism for raising tuition, given that such an increase is inevitable."

I realize that the issue is an important concern for all of us and that the legislative issues are not always easily understood; however, I would hope that in the future, those interested would take the time to research the issues before any accusations are made. Because of the LSG's thorough research and professionalism in dealing with legislators, they have raised the image of students in general and Aggies in particular with members of the Legislature.

The LSG heartily deserves our continued support and respect.

Slouch By Jim Earle

SO LONG CLASS OF 1983



Dial-less telephone can't beat party line

by Dick West

WASHINGTON — Progress occasionally is more illusory than real.

In the former category, I would put a report that the Bell Telephone Laboratories is working on a dial-less telephone that responds to voice commands.

The caller merely enunciates the number he wants to ring and a computer does the rest, a company executive was quoted as explaining.

I hate to be the tosser of cold water on electronic research, but a dial-less telephone that responds to voice commands already is old hat.

I saw such an instrument being tested the last time I paid a visit to The Future Is Yesterday Foundation, whose own far-out research is dedicated to proving that all progress is circular, eventually advancing to the point from which it started.

In truth, the foundation's experimental apparatus looked very much like the phone that used to hang in the center hallway in the house where I grew up.

"Isn't that a wall phone?" I asked Sam Harkenback, the foundation director who was showing me around the laboratories.

"Actually, it's our latest development in communications," Harkenback replied. "Try it and you'll see what I mean."

I walked over to the phone, lifted the receiver off the hook and put it to my ear. "You didn't ring yet," Harkenback told me when nothing happened.

With my other hand, I turned the crank a couple of times. This time, a nasal female voice came the line.

"Number, please," she said. "That's the operator," Harkenback advised. "She has been trained to respond to voice commands. Just tell her what number you are calling."

I recited the number of my friend Albert Phizbeam. In a trice, I heard long rings, followed by three short rings. There was a short period of silence which another female voice was heard.

"Delbert isn't at home right now," the voice said. "I think he took his car to the shop to get the carburetor adjusted."

"To whom am I speaking, please?" I asked, mystified.

"This is Owly Sue Cranny next door," the voice said. "I told Delbert I'd answer if he had any calls."

Harkenback could barely contain himself. "That's what we call a 'party line' chortled with ill-concealed pride. We do it attach three or four phones to the same line. If one rings, the other hear it. They can even pick up the receiver and listen in on the conversation they want to."

"Land sakes!" I exclaimed. "What do you think of next?"

"Well, actually, it's not new with Harkenback admitted. "We copied the basic concept from the FBI, which has been listening in on telephone conversations for years."

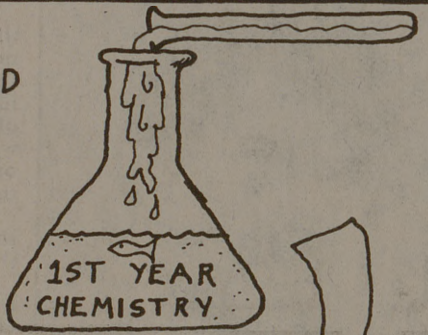
I asked Harkenback what the use of the "party line" might be.

He said he envisioned a group of businessmen conversing with each other what he termed a "conference call."

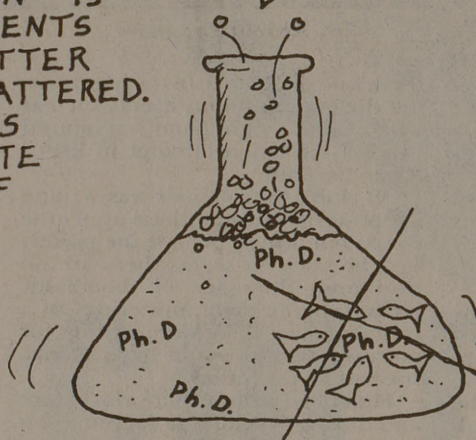
"But the main potential is with the 'party line' can do for wrong number he added.

EXPERIMENTS IN CHEMISTRY

① INTRODUCE DECENTRALIZED TEACHING.



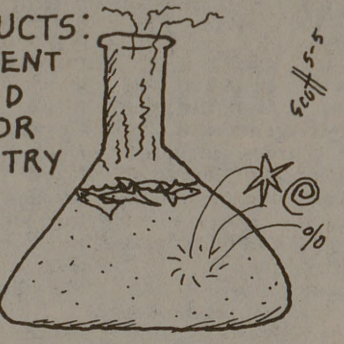
② REACTION HEATS UP. STANDARDIZATION IS DESTROYED. STUDENTS SEEKING THE BETTER TEACHERS ARE SCATTERED. CONDUCTED TESTS ASSUME COMPLETE RANDOMNESS OF QUALITY.



③ DISTILL THE SOLUTION UNTIL THE STUDENTS SWEAT BLOOD. SUBSTITUTION OCCURS—'A'S' AND 'B'S' CHANGE TO 'D'S' AND 'F'S'. ALKYNES OF SUFFERING OCCURS.

OH, GOD!! HELP US...

④ BYE-PRODUCTS: ONE EXCELLENT PROGRAM AND ALL HOPE FOR THOSE CHEMISTRY STUDENTS.



WHEN FINISHED, POUR "SO-CALLED" SOLUTION DOWN THE DRAIN.

Letters: Concern should be apathy

Editor:

It seems that someone needs to sit down with Richard Fosberg (whose letter appeared in Friday's Battalion) and explain a thing or several.

Like most closed-minded people, he attacks those he disagrees with personally, calling Ted Kennedy a "scum," for

instance, Joe Jordan is not a threat to Fosberg's conservative Texas A&M — you can take it from this "liberal."

I suggest that we should be concerned with the overwhelming apathy inherent in this University. By blindly submitting to mindless traditions and entrenching our conservative, head-in-the-sand attitudes, we keep the real world from

affecting us here in good ol' Aggieland. It seems that at Texas A&M we are trained to defend a hopelessly out-of-date institution from the slings and arrows of the modern world, all so that we can better impede the growth and progress when we move out into society.

The framers of the Constitution that Fosberg refers to, even the founders of this college, understood that change was necessary for advancement. Our simian ancestors changed from lumbering around all stooped over to walking erect, for which I am very grateful. The Third Reich utilized the Big Lie in order to change the future, but at Texas A&M it's being used to preserve the past. We can no longer ignore the rest of the world, or the world will surely pass us by.

Micheal Panzer

Tuition truth

Editor:

Doug Jones' statement about Texas having the lowest tuition of any state in the country is only partially correct. It should have said "Texas has the lowest tuition of any state-supported higher education system that charges tuition in the country." As of May 2, the 18 colleges and universities of the California state university system still charged no tuition whatsoever.

C'mon Dougie, let's tell the Ags the whole truth.

Dale A. Carlson

Lack of understanding confronts El Salvador

Editor:

This letter is in response to Mr. Frank McDonald.

Mr. McDonald: I do not wish to insult you, but after reading your letter in the May 2 Battalion there is nothing else I could call you but naive. It is unbelievable how many people like you try to convince others about political situations on which you have very little background.

Sometimes to my surprise, a lot of people who talk about El Salvador or Nicaragua are unable to locate those countries on the map. A gentleman who wrote to the Battalion last week stated that El Salvador has 1.5 million people when actually that tiny country has 5 million people.

You are right when you wrote that Central American countries were many years under the oppression of military dictatorships which were supported by the United States government. But dictatorships did not end four years ago when Marxist-Sandinista government took power in Nicaragua, and it became a totalitarian state that also is taking away freedom from our people.

They took complete control of the vision networks, not allowing any owned stations, and they control news in newspapers, radio and media. They attack the religions, have killed many political leaders, oppose the Marxist-Leninist regime. They have built one of the strongest armies in Latin America with 200,000 members trained by Soviet officers equipped with all kinds of modern weapons.

Do you call this democracy, Mr. McDonald?

The Sandinistas, with the help of the Soviet Union, have been exporting their Marxist Revolution to El Salvador, and make no bones about it.

Mr. McDonald, I ask you please preach about some situation you understand, because if U.S. aid is received soon in Central America, El Salvador will be another Nicaragua and be too late for the United States to any action.

Is that what you want?

Alvaro Lacayo

The Battalion

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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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