

opinion

Letters

Complaints answered

Editor: I am writing this letter in response to the letters of Frank Reister, concerning the monitor in the MSC main lounge, and Stephen Weiss, concerning the content of one of our productions.

In response to Mr. Reister's letter I felt the term "obnoxious" regarding the monitor was unwarranted. The monitor and its programming are there for the enjoyment of the students, staff and faculty of the University. Thousands of dollars are spent to provide these entertaining videos and surveys are taken to determine what the viewers want. The volume control is easily accessible for those who wish to turn down the volume for any reason. There are, Mr. Reister, a large number of people who do watch these monitors and gain enjoyment from them.

To Mr. Weiss, may I address the following? The tape to which you refer was a satire on the film "Raiders of the Lost Ark," and was certainly not meant to be a racial slur. The piece was done in fun, and it was hoped it would be viewed similarly. If the piece offended anyone, we, the producers, apologize. May I remind you that being able to laugh at oneself, as well as others' perceptions of you, is the most basic element in the gift — a sense of humor.

Mike Alderfer
Chairman MSC Video Tape Committee

Call 'em Aggies

Editor: People who stayed for yell practice after the California game truly deserve to be called Aggies.

Bob Presley
Oceanography

A new head coach?

Editor: It's interesting how everyone likes to be a post-game coach. It's so easy to exercise one's hindsight and just tear apart the losing coach's decisions and calls during the game.

One such letter to the editor was printed in Tuesday's Battalion. I would really like to meet the author of that letter, especially since I have yet to meet a perfect person who knows how to make every decision as it comes. A team plays hard and gets out-

scored by two points and the coach suddenly becomes an "arrogant, self-serving, publicity seeking B.S. artist." Mr. Fosberg, you certainly have a way with words; why don't you put your talent to constructive use? I will also contact the Board of Regents and inform them of your coaching expertise so that you can become head coach next year.

Philip Massirer '87

Legett Hall exists

Editor: In your article regarding dorm life in the Aug. 29 Battalion, you failed to mention those rooms available in K.K. Legett Hall, which is the oldest dorm on campus. We can understand your oversight, however, because Legett really can not be categorized with the other dorms and is separated from the other north side dorms. Nevertheless, as residents of Legett Hall, we would like everyone to know that we do exist and are extremely proud of our dorm. By the way . . . we are All University Champions.

Tracy Triplett '85
RHA Delegate Legett Hall

Alien story needs help

Editor: I was distressed to read your front page article of Aug. 10 concerning undocumented aliens in Texas public schools. The headline, "Aliens in area schools cost Texas thousands," was misleading and the article was grossly incomplete. It costs \$2,400 to educate a public school student for one year, no matter if the student is an undocumented alien or a citizen.

The article itself failed to point out that undocumented families pay sales taxes and property taxes just like citizens. Does not an undocumented person purchase gasoline, clothes and other taxable items? Since the undocumented most undoubtedly live on someone's property, they must also indirectly pay property taxes. It is sales and property taxes that finance public education in Texas.

I hope that in the future, The Battalion takes a complete look at the public education costs and financing.

Bobby Slovak



"WE KNOW YOU'RE IN THERE, LOUIE . . . DROP YOUR GUN AND THEN COME OUT WITH YOUR HANDS UP JUST AS SOON AS THE PRISON OVER-CROWDING PROBLEM IS SOLVED!"

Drunk drivers sobered by 'KNURD' road signs?

by Dick West
United Press International

WASHINGTON — NotSafe, a California organization whose stated goal is to "protect everyone from everything at any cost," has expanded its field of anxieties to include subliminal messages.

According to Dale Lowdermilk, the head paranoid, NotSafe supports legislation to require that the public be warned when subliminal messages are used in communications media, such as on bumper stickers.

Sublimination, as all of us Nervous Nellies know, occurs below the level of conscious perception. When a message produces a psychological change so slight as not to effect the consciousness, it is said to be subliminal.

Some years ago, there was concern that television advertisers would flash subliminal commercials on the tiny screen. I haven't heard any of that kind of talk lately, which probably is just as well.

My guess is that viewers continued to buy consciously advertised products, even when they subliminally preferred Brand X.

One of the focal points of Lowdermilk's new crusade are the "STOP" signs seen at traffic intersections and at numerous other locations along our busy thoroughfares.

Because "STOP" spelled backwards is "POTS," Lowdermilk argues that these signs subliminally promote drug abuse. And he may be right. Certainly something is responsible for increased marijuana consumption.

It could be, as Lowdermilk suggests, that the highway department is unwittingly promoting "erratic behavior" through "hypnotic programming."

But I'm not sure what the replacement for "STOP" should be.

"YIELD" obviously won't do.

Although "YIELD" spelled backwards is pure gibberish, the word is veritably crawling with subliminal messages.

Would you want your children borrowing your car for dates if you knew they were going to be incessantly confronted by signs urging them to "YIELD?" I sure wouldn't.

I'd rather take a chance on them reading "STOP" backwards.

Lowdermilk says "subliminal 'abstrac-

tions' contain many diabolical, ambiguous, subversive and X-rated communications that must be strictly regulated." Perhaps they should. I'm wondering, however, whether sublimination couldn't also be used for good.

Specifically, it occurred to me that subliminal messages on street signs might be used in the current national campaign against drunk driving.

Suppose, for example, an intoxicated motorist weaving his way down the street came to a sign that said "KNURD." Consciously, the sign makes no sense. Subliminally, however, it would not give a pause to a tipsy driver.

Wouldn't the blotted-tongue behemoth of the wheel try to clear away his alcohol haze long enough to figure what the sign meant, perhaps even backing up to make sure he had read it right?

I think so. I'm convinced that encountering such a sign would be a sobering experience.

Meanwhile, the word "DRUNK" would be implanted in the driver's brain, making him subliminally aware that he had unconsciously downed a few too many.

Reagan's foreign policy challenged by events

by Helen Thomas
United Press International

WASHINGTON — President Reagan's skills in foreign policy are undergoing a severe test.

He has a major superpower confrontation on his hands with the Soviet Union. And he is in danger of getting the United States bogged down in the quagmire of Lebanon where religion and power politics are exploding at gunpoint.

In the case of battle with the Soviets, Reagan clearly has the upper hand and the world with him in his scathing condemnation of Moscow for the shooting down of a commercial Korean airliner.

The president has been long on rhetoric and short on action, a fact which displeases his conservative constituency, but wins points among the moderates and the liberals who might have thought he was triggerhappy.

Reagan's denunciation of the Kremlin comes easy. He has had years of practice and earlier this year called the communist state the "focus of evil" in the world. Since the downing of the jetliner, the president has let loose a barrage of adjectives that rarely, if ever, are used in polite diplomacy.

He has called the Soviets "barbaric . . . uncivilized" and condemned them for their "horrifying . . . terrible . . . crimes against humanity."

But at the same time, he has not lowered the boom against the Soviets and has not been half as tough as President Jimmy Carter, who, after the invasion of Afghanistan, ordered an embargo on grain sales to the Soviets, stopped the flow of U.S. technology and barred U.S. participation in the Olympics in Moscow.

Reagan's retaliation has been restrained: stopping some cultural and diplomatic negotiations, and hoping to block landing

rights for Aeroflot, the Russian airline, around the world.

Otherwise it's business as usual, except for a new climate that has been created that adds to world tensions.

The president has sought to galvanize world's outrage against the Soviets and he has been successful. "It is not the United States against the Soviet Union; but the world against the Soviet Union."

He may be effective in isolating the Soviets, but also may add to their paranoia in dealing with the West.

There is no question that Reagan is winning the battle of world opinion and he has put the Soviets on the defensive. Some aides see pluses in the fallout, including the possibility that the reaction of the world will help Reagan in his bid for MX missile funding and other controversial defense programs.

They also see an easier road for the United States when it begins to deploy Pershing-2 and cruise missiles in Europe starting in December to offset Russia's powerful SS-20 rockets.

In the Middle East, the picture is more complicated with the United States in the middle. With Marines suffering casualties in Beirut firefights, questions are bound to arise when Congress returns next week on whether there should be American involvement if a civil war erupts in Lebanon.

If there is much more bloodshed, there is bound to be a clamor to pull out the American forces. Some congressional leaders, however, believe the United States must remain in Lebanon to provide the diplomatic and military muscle for Lebanon to become an independent sovereign nation again.

But that will take some doing, and it will involve Reagan's total talents as statesman and commander in chief.

College cost-of-living rising

by Maxwell Glen
and Cody Shearer

Washington — American colleges may have found the way to avoid a revival of 1960's style campus activism, and also shoot themselves in the foot.

Such are the unfortunate implications of this month's College Board summary of tuition costs across the country. On the average, the Board says, students will have to pay \$4,700 to attend public universities and colleges and \$8,500 at private institutions — 12 percent and 11 percent more, respectively, than they did last year.

Meanwhile, in the real world, the Consumer Price Index rose only 2.6 percent for the year ending last June 30.

Higher-edflation has not gone without its defense by administrators, who readily declare that since the mid-1970's college costs increased slower than inflation and are only now catching up.

Yet it has burdened today's students with weighty financial considerations. A recent UCLA study found that 66 percent of all seniors at four-year institutions held at least a part-time job during school last year, compared to 36 percent in 1971.

Financial obligation, one hopes, encourages responsible behavior, but excessive doses of it can foster the narrow-minded focus — money, money, money — common on campus today. In excessive quantities, makes law, medical and business schools perfunctorily popular, and activism and liberal arts out of vogue.

When the price of knowledge takes a toll, academia's recent concerns about the direction of higher education and college students seem rather amusing.

Slouch

by Jim Earle

"What do you mean, 'There's no game?' There's got to be a game! I just bought a huge block of Kyle Field tickets at half price on the fifty-yard line!"

The Battalion

USPS 045 360
Member of Texas Press Association
Southwest Journalism Conference

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 an 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 telephone number of the writer.

Columns and guest editorials also are 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 (409) 849-2611.

The Battalion is published Monday through Friday during Texas A&M regular semesters, except for holidays and examination periods. Mail subscriptions at \$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.

United Press International is entitled exclusively for the use for reproduction of all news dispatches credited to it. Rights of reproduction of all other matter herein reserved.

Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.