

# Opinion/editorial

## Editorials

### Seniors beware: Finals may not be sacred

Something ominous has been going on while students weren't watching — ominous if you cherish the thought of no finals your last semester here.

The Texas A&M Faculty Senate will vote today on a resolution that will require graduating seniors to take final exams — at the scheduled time. This would probably require moving commencement dates, a problem that the Senate considers in another resolution.

The additional resolution says "necessary and appropriate changes" should be made in the semester calendar so grades for degree candidates will be reported at the same time as other students. The resolution recommends that "efforts should be made to maintain timely and meaningful commencement and commissioning ceremonies." The policy is to take effect no later than December 1985.

The Faculty Senate has been studying this proposal in its Academic Standards Committee. The report of the committee and the motion to vote today on the issue was decided at the Senate's final 1983 meeting.

Talk about stacking the deck. Students, who were taking final exams when the decision to vote today was made, are probably unaware of what's happening. And if they are aware, they

haven't had time to settle in and regroup before the vote.

Pretty sneaky.

Good arguments exist for both sides of the issue. Professors seem to feel students get more out of class when they have to take finals to tie the class together. Students enjoy the special treatment seniors have in Aggieland.

But The Battalion Editorial Board objects to the timing of the vote. Enough students haven't had time to make meaningful comments, whereas the members of the Faculty Senate have had ample time to study the topic. And even though the Student Senate has come out against the resolution, the timing of the vote still hampers organized student opposition.

The Faculty Senate doesn't have final say on the matter. If the vote passes — and it is expected to easily — it still is subject to recommendations from vice presidents before it is proposed to Texas A&M President Frank E. Vandiver for final approval.

Even so, an issue that affects students will have been slipped past them with a minimum of student input and a maximum of student ignorance.

— The Battalion Editorial Board

## The 'new' Battalion: We want your help

The Battalion you are reading is different — renovated, you could say. From a new headline typeface to an "expanded" editorial page, The Battalion has undergone several changes for the spring-semester.

There is a reason for all this. For too long, The Battalion has operated in a vacuum, oblivious to the student body it represents. We want to be the student newspaper of Texas A&M, not a newspaper simply put out by A&M students.

The typeface changes are purely cosmetic — we realize that. But other changes have been made to improve our product, including a reorganization of our staff, complete with a new editor and a new editorial board.

Here's the catch. We want your help. In order to serve the University community, we have to know what the University community wants, how it feels, what it thinks is important. We want you to make this your newspaper.

We are accepting ideas, suggestions, letters and columns, and we encourage your participation. If you feel the need to get something off your chest, write us. If world events concern you, write us. If we don't live up to your expectations, write us.

A newspaper needs input from its readers. The Battalion is no exception. — The Battalion Editorial Board

## An interesting candidate

Alexander Haig, president of Texas A&M University? It could have been. The former U.S. Secretary of State was on the list of candidates for the job that Frank E. Vandiver finally got.

That's the only interesting news received when the University released the list of candidates to the Bryan/College Station Eagle, ending a three-year courtroom battle over the right to publish candidates' names.

The Eagle filed suit against the Uni-

versity in 1981, and the Texas Supreme Court ruled Wednesday in favor of the paper. A slight victory for freedom of the press?

The Eagle thinks so. The University doesn't. Either way, the fact that Haig was on the list made an old story interesting. And the next time A&M chooses a president, candidates as "different" as Haig will be made public knowledge — before the decision is made.

— The Battalion Editorial Board

Slouch

by Jim Earle

# WELCOME BACK!

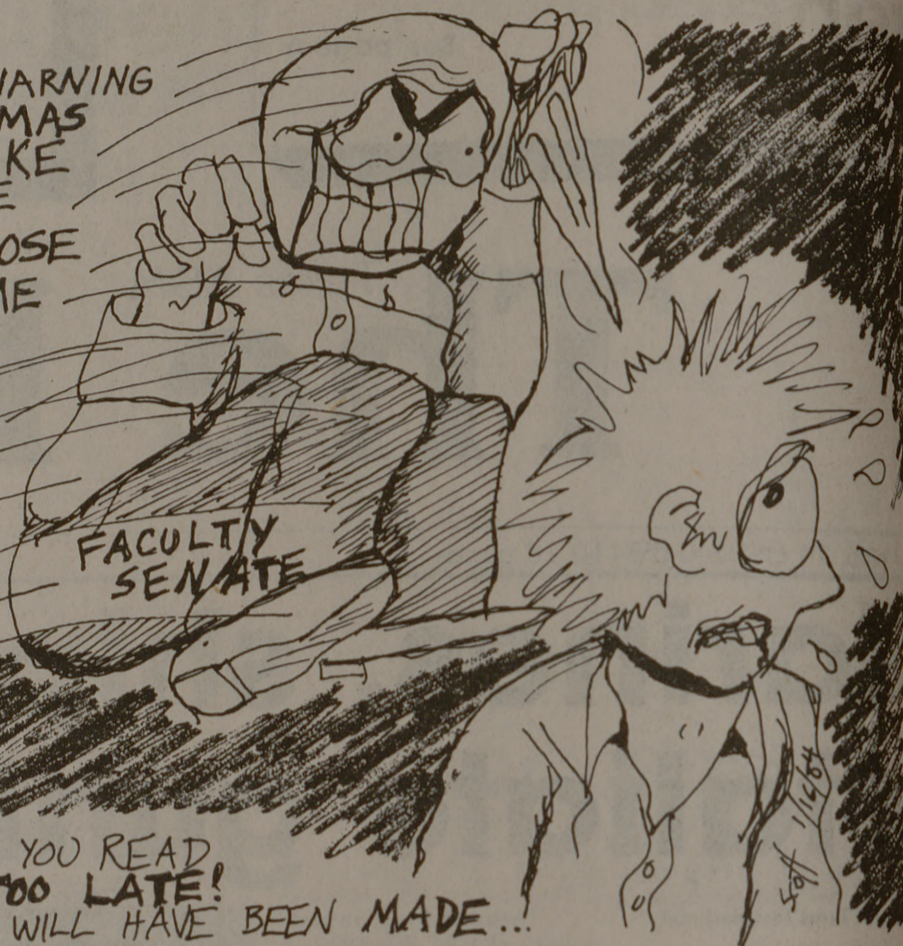


EARLE 1-13-84

IT CAME WITHOUT WARNING DURING THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS TO STRIKE TERROR IN THE HEARTS OF ALL THOSE WHO MIGHT BECOME SENIORS...

..AND IT STRIKES DEEP...

..AND BY THE TIME YOU READ THIS... IT WILL BE TOO LATE! THE FINAL DECISION WILL HAVE BEEN MADE...



## Phone bills: the future

By ART BUCHWALD

Columnist for The Los Angeles Times Syndicate

Now that the local phone companies have received their rate increases, people are going to have to make some very hard choices before they call someone they love. If you think your telephone bills are going to be out of sight in 1984, just wait and see what happens in 1985.

"Hello, Momma, this is George."  
"I don't know any George."  
"George, your son."  
"Oh THAT George. You hadn't called in so long I thought you had joined the Foreign Legion."  
"Don't be that way, Momma, I called you last year."  
"So that's such a big deal?"  
"Do you know what a local call costs these days?"  
"Of course I don't know. I can't make one anymore."  
"I was going to telephone you a month ago, but instead used the money to buy a car."  
"Naturally a car is more important than calling your mother."  
"I need a car for work. Then I was going to telephone you on your birthday, but Carol's tuition bill came in on the same day, and I had to decide whether to

wish you a happy birthday or let her finish her sophomore year."  
"You made the right decision. Education is much more important than calling one's mother. I thought I might hear from you last summer, but your sister tells me you went to Nantucket instead."  
"Momma, I promised the family a vacation, and besides, it only cost us half as much to go to Nantucket as it would have to call you."  
"It didn't bother me. You made the right decision. Your sister went to Easthampton, but she also had time to ring me."  
"Her husband makes \$250,000 a year. Doris can afford to make 35 local calls and not even feel it. Don't put her in the same class as me."  
"So what would it hurt if you called me from the office and let the company pay for a call?"  
"Momma, we're not allowed to make local calls from the office any more. Every local call we make has to be authorized by two officers of the company."  
"Are you trying to tell me a big company like yours can't afford to let an employee call his mother?"  
"You're talking about millions of dollars, Momma. The company is now facing a stockholder's suit because they

found a woman in the accounting department who was telephoning her baby every afternoon."  
"So where did you get the money to me today?"  
"The banks are now giving local phone call loans to their favored customers. Can we talk about something besides what this call is costing me?"  
"Why not? It's your dime."  
"That wasn't very funny, Momma, what's going on with you?"  
"Mrs. Fisher's husband died, and her sitting pretty with 47,000 shares of Standard Oil of New Jersey, a \$500,000 in municipal bonds."  
"What is she going to do with it?"  
"She's thinking of selling it all and buying a Princess phone in her bedroom. Some women have all the luck."  
"Listen, I'm going to hang up in a minute. I only took out a bank loan for a call. Is there anything you need?"  
"No, I'm fine. It's nice to hear your voice. So when will you call again?"  
"I'm not sure. Sally hasn't spoken to her mother for six months, and she's the next local call we make has to be her."  
"It doesn't surprise me. Your wife always struck me as a woman who cared how she spent your money."

## Signs foreshadow elections

By DICK WEST

Columnist for United Press International

Tired of relying on polls and punditry to identify the front-running presidential candidates?  
( ) Yes. ( ) No.  
Like to try a little "political mysticism" for a change?  
( ) Yes. ( ) No.  
If the checkmarks above are in the affirmative column, perhaps you should get in touch with Emily Prager, an in-house magazine soothsayer.  
She has just finished appraising a sizeable part of the 1984 presidential field according to "the ancient Chinese astrological calendar."

It could be, as Prager suggests, that predictions based on such intangibles as "random fate, yin and yang, subtle vibrations and birth aura" are more reliable than forecasts founded on such mundane considerations as voting patterns, platforms and political machine power.

I, however, found Prager leaping to some conclusions I am not yet prepared to jump at. Therefore, be warned that the Chinese astrological calendar can be subject to more than one interpretation. To get the facts out of the way as quickly as possible, there are 12 animal signs in the Chinese horoscope. The beasts so honored are the rat, ox, tiger, cat, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, rooster, dog and pig.

This, the final year of the 1984 election campaign, is a Year of the Rat. All clear thus far?  
( ) Yes. ( ) No.  
Then let us proceed.  
By reason that 1911 was the year of his birth, President Reagan may be said to have been born under the Sign of the Pig. "The Pig has a vintage year in the Year of the Rat," Prager tells us. "The only thing he has to watch out for is the Snake."

The only astrological Snake in the race, it turns out, is Jesse Jackson, who was born in 1941.  
By Prager's lights, Jackson apparently would be a more formidable Democratic nominee than Walter Mondale (1928, the Year of the Cat), John Glenn (1921, the

Year of the Rooster) or Gary Hart (1937, the Year of the Ox).  
Maybe so. But if we dig a bit deeper into the Chinese calendar, certain questions arise.  
For instance, the 1980 election that put Reagan in the White House came during a Year of the Rooster. Does this mean that Glenn, himself a Rooster, waited four years too many to mount his bid for the presidency?  
And to your average confused voter, a Year of the Rat would seem an ideal period for Mondale, a Cat.

And what of Alan Cranston (1914, Year of the Tiger) and Ernest Hollibon (1922, the Year of the Dog)?  
Both are among the announced candidates for president, and Tigers and Dogs normally are a match for Pigs. Yet Prager makes no mention of them in her predictions.  
Too bad for Democrats, none of whom were born in 1915, 1927 or 1931, all Years of the Dragon. A fire-breathing candidate may be just what the party needs in 1984.

## The Battalion

USPS 045 360

Member of Texas Press Association Southwest Journalism Conference

- Editor... Rebeca Zimmermann
- Managing Editor... John Wagner
- City Editor... Patrice Koranek
- Assistant City Editors... Kathleen Hart, Stephanie Ross
- News Editor... Tracey Taylor
- Assistant News Editors... Susan Talbot, Wanda Winkler
- Editorial Page Editor... Kathy Wiesepape
- Sports Editor... Donn Friedman
- Assistant Sports Editor... Bill Robinson
- Entertainment Editor... Shelley Hoekstra
- Assistant Entertainment Editor... Angel Stokes
- Photo Editor... John Makely
- Staff Writers... Robin Black, Bridgid Brockman, Bob Caster, Ronnie Crocker, Bonnie Langford, Christine Mallon, Kay Mallett, Sarah Oates, Michelle Powe, Lauri Reese, Dave Scott, Kelley Smith, Karen Wallace
- Photographers... Michael Davis, Bill Hughes, Katherine Hurt, Eric Lee, Dean Saito
- Cartoonists... Paul Dirmeyer, Scott McCullar

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 telephone number of the writer. Columns and guest editorials also are welcome, but 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) 847-2611.

The Battalion is published Monday through Friday during Texas A&M regular semesters, except for the day 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.

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

Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843