

Opinion

Texas school days will be too long

A nine-hour school day is too long for anyone.

The state education committee led by H. Ross Perot last week recommended lengthening the school day in Texas public schools. So instead of Dick and Jane catching the bus at 7:15 a.m. for an 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. school day, they may have to board the bus earlier and hear the final bell later.

There are many arguments against a longer school day — the best argument being that those who need help the most will be helped the least by the longer day.

The attention span of a school-age child can barely withstand the seven-hour days they face this year. How can we expect them to withstand a nine-hour day when most college students seem to have trouble maintaining their attention span through four 50-minute classes a day?

Even businessmen are only required to spend an eight-hour day at the office. The reasons behind lengthening the school day need to be questioned. Is a longer school day needed to train today's students for today's rapidly changing technology, or is it just an excuse to turn schools into baby-sitting factories?

Maybe part of the answer lies in requiring students to attend all seven hours of the present school day. Many high school students are allowed to spend from two to three hours a day in class, spending the rest of the time in out-of-school jobs.

Complaints about the public school system abound. Solutions must be found, but diluting the work of our already over-worked school teachers is not a solution.

When the soup is watery, adding salt will only make it salty.

— The Battalion Editorial Board

New events center would be an asset

The Board of Regents' study of preliminary plans for a special events center is an important step in the design and construction of a facility Texas A&M desperately needs. G. Rollie White Coliseum simply can't handle a University of over 36,000 students, and A&M cannot afford to wait much longer before building a multi-purpose arena.

With an estimated price tag of \$45 million, however, A&M might not be able to afford to build one. "That's a lot of money for a basketball arena," is the way some people put it.

Still, the truth remains. When present facilities are outgrown, new ones are needed. It's the same for special events centers as it is for engineering buildings. A facility such as the Frank C. Erwin Special Events Center — the Uni-

versity of Texas' multi-purpose arena — is a powerful recruiting tool, not only for athletes, but for all prospective students. It would be an impressive addition, and one that would certainly benefit Texas A&M.

At its meeting Monday, the board viewed a slide presentation showing how other institutions developed similar special events centers. The regents then discussed the various options available, including seating capacities, square footages and costs.

It is The Battalion Editorial Board's hope that the regents decide on a plan that will be the most beneficial to the people who will use the facility the most — A&M's students.

— The Battalion Editorial Board

Letters:

Abortion rally presented facts

Editor:

I am writing in response to the article concerning Monday's demonstration against abortion. First of all, I am relieved that the rights to peaceful assembly and freedom of speech were acknowledged. However, Monday's demonstration was not only an appeal to the emotions, but an appeal to the facts.

If the author of the article had taken the time to really examine the demonstration brochures, her questions and criticisms, as well as those of other choicers, would have been answered immediately. One of the brochures listed alternatives to abortion such as adoption, supportive community services, and rape crisis centers which provide immediate medical attention so that pregnancy and disease can be avoided. Another brochure stated that pregnancy resulting from forcible rape is extremely rare.

The demonstration itself was "emotional" because abortion is a serious moral and emotional issue that is negatively affecting our entire society. Child abuse, for example, as gone up 500 percent since abortion was legalized.

I personally would like to thank the organizers and participants of the demonstration for waking me up to the facts about abortion and for effectively appealing to my emotions. I also appreci-

ated their Christian, Bible-based perspective which was really the wisest, most rational approach to adopt.

I would like to submit the following problem to the author of "Emotional Appeals." A woman suffering from tuberculosis gave birth to a defective child, whose father was also infected with VD. Her second child was born dead, her third child was born with a birth defect, and her fourth child was born with tuberculosis. Upon discovering that she was pregnant with a fifth child, would you, Miss Smith, suggest t she get an abortion? Chances are the response would be affirmative, in which case you would be assenting to the murder of Beethoven, one of the greatest composers of our time.

Think about it. There are alternatives to abortion, but abortion is not a positive, effective or moral alternative.

Dawn Wright
Graduate Student

Right to choice

Mr. Peters' letter in the Jan. 20 edition of The Battalion has struck a very sensitive chord. It is one that indeed has very little middle ground. I am not writing to defend the rightness or wrongness of abortion; just the right to decide.

No one who has been through an abortion was happy to make the decision. It is not a choice that one makes easily,



Peace-niks aren't violent

A U.S. Army soldier was abducted by an anti-missile group in West Germany. Or was he?

The soldier in West Germany, it was reported by the Associated Press, had faked his own abduction.

He was found in a barn in Bavaria. Under questioning from U.S. Army and German government officials he admitted it was all a hoax. He had in fact told his wife a white lie.

Why did he call his wife and tell her that he had been kidnapped?

Because he was afraid his wife would be mad at him for failing to pick her up after work, he said. And so he blamed the peace-niks for holding him hostage.

There are groups of people in West Germany who are strongly against the placement of U.S. missiles on their land. They argue that the arms race is the Soviet Union versus the United States, and they don't want to be the battlefield for the confrontation.

And from time to time, especially when prominent officials or nuclear mis-

siles visit West Germany, the protestors pull out their signs and their skeleton costumes and march.

Peacefully.

**donn
friedman**

This "kidnapping" is the first case of violence against Americans that I have heard attributed to the anti-nuclear protestors. They are, for the most part, involved in passive resistance to the U.S. Army.

No kidnappings. No murders. No trials and executions of army officials for crimes of Army against the peoples of the world.

The Army is antagonistic toward these groups because of political orientations. And this problem of attitude still lingers through in the accusations of the soldiers.

Yes, our lost soldier is being admitted to a U.S. military hospital to undergo mental examination. But he is more likely to be treated for story-telling than for attitude toward the peaceful protestors — people he regards as his enemies.

We need to keep in mind that people who protest against the U.S. Army actions are not directly protesting against U.S. citizens.

They are protesting against demoralization.

Armies shoot bullets. Armies fire missiles that kill. Armies arm our major weapons. Armies march with guns and guns.

The peace-niks are the ones marching with the signs and the flowers.

(Donn Friedman is sports editor of The Battalion and a senior journalism major.)

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

author, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Texas A&M University administrators or faculty members, or of the Board of Regents.

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.

The Battalion is published Monday through Friday during Texas A&M regular semesters, except for holiday 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 herein reserved.

Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.

Editorial Policy

The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting newspaper operated as a community service to Texas A&M University and Bryan-College Station. Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the editor or the

neither does one easily choose to bring an unwanted child into the world. Both the consequences and choices must be carefully weighed no matter the decision.

At least now with the legalization of abortion, it has become a safe procedure. Today's women now face a much higher chance of complications with a full term pregnancy than with an abortion.

Mr. Peters should face the fact that abortion will continue. It will either be through the front door or the back. But for post-1973 women, it is finally a safe alternative for a difficult decision.

Chuck Sowders
Class of '85

Student favors senior finals

Editor:

I would like to add to the recent controversy about senior exemptions from finals. It seems to me that the basic reason that most students are against the proposed change is laziness, pure and simple. Some of them have come up with "arguments" such as the following.

"It's a tradition." This logic says that something should be done a certain way for no other reason than because it was done that way in the past. There is no reason to lend that argument credibility by saying anything further.

As for the material covered in class, I think it is obvious that studying for a comprehensive exam will strengthen and unify the material. Of course, profs could give seniors such a test near the end of the semester without calling it a final and having it during finals week. But those who did it would be quite unpopular and I doubt the practice would become widespread. I think it would be better to just have regular finals.

I am not just saying this from a safe distance. In fact, I would be one of the first to have to take finals at the end of my senior year. I can see beyond the annoyance of studying for more finals, however. I just think that the proposed change is in the right direction for Texas A&M. It's got to start being more like a real university and less like an agricultural and mechanical junior college. I'm not saying that we should blindly follow other universities (like having a bell tower). In fact, there may be things that Texas A&M does better than any other school. I just think the proposed change is a step in the direction of improving the University.

Brian Sterling
Class of '86

Laws hypocritical

Editor:

Tell me this.

Under our current laws man can be tried for statutory rape if he engages in fornication with a minor female, even if she is willing. This law infers that a minor female is not mature enough to make the decision herself to engage in sex.

Yet a large percentage of the population is opposed to the implementation of a "squeal law" on the premise that it is none of a parent's business if his or her children are having premarital sex.

This is blatant hypocrisy! I do not see how such duplicity can be defended.

We should choose to either adhere to morality or reject it.

Also, one final note: I thought Scott McCullar's portrayal of taking finals as being analogous to bearing a cross was in poor taste. Mr. McCullar, do you expect to be martyred for taking finals?

Ricky Davis

Space research is practical

Editor:

Regarding your front page article of Jan. 18: Dr. Borlaug errs when he says space can't feed people. Weather satellites have proven immensely useful in crop production, and Landsat systems have returned massive data on soil quality, pollution and the like. Space does have practical, even agricultural, uses.

In grouping space travel with nuclear arms, Dr. Borlaug is as guilty as the environmentalists he accuses of "polluting America's youth." Rather than bemoaning a militarized space, Dr. Borlaug should join other scientists in promoting peaceful, scientific uses of space.

Mike Cole
Dunn Hall

Student defends Code of Honor

Editor:

I must say I disagree with Ms. Wiesepape's statement that the Aggie Code of Honor is little more than a farce.

There is no way that you will find a university where everyone is perfect and no one lies, cheats or steals. But the majority of Aggies do live up to the Aggie

Code of Honor. This was made apparent to me last Thursday when I left a bill containing a large sum of money on my bus. Not only was the billfold given the driver, but nothing was missing.

I'm from the North and I assure that for the same thing to happen at a large university elsewhere, getting the billfold back would have been nothing short of a small miracle. But I don't think that this was an extremely unusual case. I believe most Ags would have done the same thing.

Ms. Wiesepape says that many violations of the Honor Code go largely ignored, but what about all the good things Ags do for each other? You rarely hear about the acts of kindness and integrity that makes students of A&M special. Why? Because they happen so often that we begin to expect them and take them for granted.

I have never met people quite like Aggies. They are some of the best people in the world and if you think that Texas A&M is a world class university, it's because it's made up of world class people.

Ms. Wiesepape, the Aggie Code of Honor isn't something that can be forced by a judicial board. If it was, it would lose its meaning.

The Aggie Code of Honor is something that each individual Aggie decides to adopt because of his pride and respect for Texas A&M.

Kellie Coppell
Class of '85

Batt cartoonists short on humor

Editor:

I would like to vent a personal frustration concerning the humor, or better stated the lack of humor in The Battalion today. Come on hoser, the stuff is just funny. I sure hope the people who write the cartoons for the Batt are not seeking a career in this field. The unemployment lines are already long enough without them adding to the problem.

Why not sponsor a cartoon of the week contest with each dorm submitting a favorite cartoon and let R.I., Warped, the hoser person be the judges. They could pick the one that they feel displays the least humor and have it printed, thus assuring the readers of The Battalion a truly laughable experience.

Steve W. Lueckemeyer
Class of '85