Class of '85 giving art endowment fund

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Tax proposal may aid poor Americans

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Ag student-athletes lead dual existence

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Texas A&M
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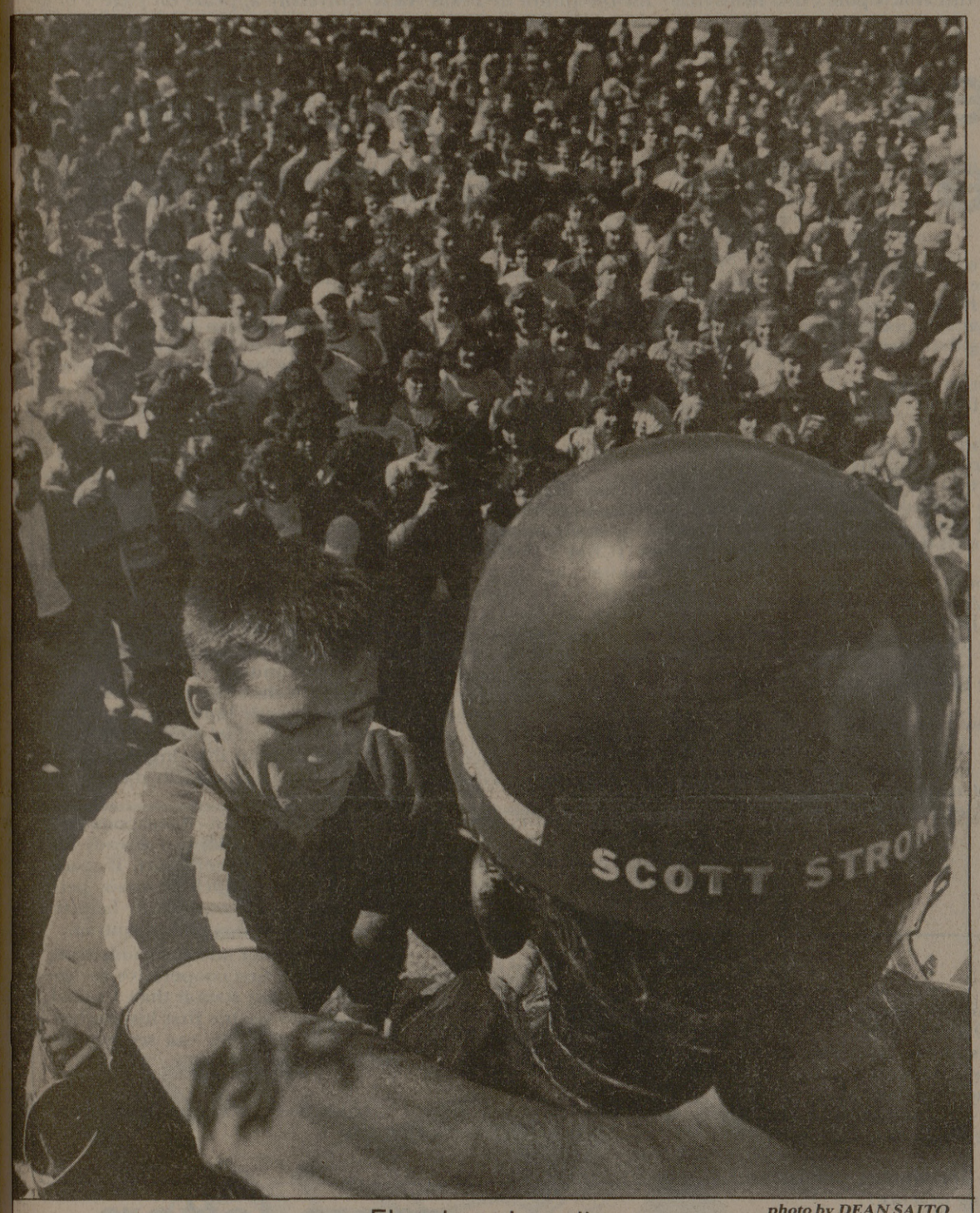

Elephant walk

photo by DEAN SAITO

Senior yell leader Terry Hlavinka climbs up onto the statue of Sul Ross to begin yells that kicked-off elephant walk Tuesday afternoon.

Yasser Arafat resigns as chairman of PLO's leading committee

United Press International

AMMAN, Jordan — Yasser Arafat, head of the Palestine Liberation Organization since it was created 20 years ago, abruptly resigned Tuesday as chairman of the group's executive committee, a spokesman said.

Arafat submitted his resignation to the Palestine National Council, the Palestinians' parliament-in-exile, at the end of a two-hour speech, PLO spokesman Ahmad Abdul Rahman said.

The reasons for the move were unclear and Rahman declined to discuss specifics, but he did say Arafat was responding to pressure put on his leadership by four Syrian-backed factions that ousted him from Lebanon last December in heavy fighting.

"If pressure against the Palestinian revolution (PLO) would be reduced through his resignation, he was willing to submit it," Rahman said. Asked if he was referring to Syria, he said, "yes."

At the end of each annual Palestine National Council, members of the PLO executive committee normally resign, so a new membership can be elected, and there is always the chance that PNC delegates, refusing to accept Arafat's resignation, will reappoint him chairman.

Arafat, 55, has been chairman of the PLO, which is seeking a homeland for Palestinians, since its creation in 1964, and he has survived attempts to oust him.

"Abu Ammar (Arafat's nom de guerre) is the property of the Palestinian people, and his resignation should be decided by them," said Rahman, a strong Arafat supporter.

Arafat's speech, during which he reviewed PLO developments since the council met last in February 1983, was closed to reporters. Rahman said it was interrupted at various points by applause and Arafat supporters called him "the symbol of the Palestinian revolution and our leader until victory."

Rahman said Arafat's resignation took many in attendance by "complete surprise," and that 10 members of the committee immediately made speeches imploring him to withdraw it.

In apparent preparation for his resignation, Arafat took seats in the third or fourth rows of the meetings the past two days, instead of his usual place in the front row.

The current PNC session is being boycotted by the Syrian-backed rebels who have been most vocal in demanding Arafat's ouster.

The PLO's executive committee and the central committee each went into emergency session for discussions after Arafat's announcement, Rahman said.

Rahman said Arafat explained during his speech his reasons for visiting Egypt last December after the Syrian-backed PLO rebels drove him and 400 fighters from the northern Lebanese port of Tripoli.

Egypt, on the basis of the 1979 Camp David treaty, is the only Arab nation at peace with Israel, and calls for Arafat's resignation intensified after the bearded guerrilla chief warmly embraced Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak last December.

A&M tackles problems facing University today

Editor's Note: this is the third in a three-part series on the futute of Texas A&M.

By SHAWN BEHLEN
Staff Writer

The Target 2000 Committee has fulfilled its obligation. It has compiled a lengthy list of the major problems facing Texas A&M and presented it to the Board of Regents along with an even longer list of recommendations.

During the same period in which that committee deliberated, University President Frank E. Vandiver proposed the inclusion of Texas A&M in a network of world universities — institutions working on problems of fundamental importance to the world.

Looking at those two pronouncements, many have said the problems outlined by the Target 2000 committee must be solved first before Vandiver's concept for the University's future can be put into action. And the task of attacking those problems has fallen to the Long Range Planning Committee.

Last June, Chancellor Arthur Hansen set up the Planning Committee, calling for the formulation of a "comprehensive long range plan for the period of 1985 to 2000 for each institution in the Texas A&M University System; the scope of which is to encompass physical facilities, personnel, programs, and all functions of each institution and identify those areas in which we seek preeminence or excellence."

The Plannning Committee consists of University administrators, administrative staff members and faculty. One of those administrators is Dean of Faculties Clinton Phillips.

"We were asked by the System people to address all of the Target 2000 proposal and were asked to categorize them as to whether we supported them, whether we were already doing something about them, whether we felt we couldn't do anything about them at this time or whether we rejected them," Phillips says. "We started off bumbling around as one always does in these situations, but we brought in a consultant and got some help. I think we're doing a pretty good job."

Phillips, who is chairman of the program priorities subcommittee, says the job of ranking the proposals on a priority basis was a huge task.

"We were trying to take an overall University-targeted view," he says. "We looked for foundation blocks for the whole plan and we tended to emphasize some basic support areas.

"Some of our highest priorities were those programs which benefit across college lines. Then, of course, we looked at what the various deans said were the most important programs in their colleges."

That input from each of the deans came after the Planning Committee asked for a list of the programs each college deemed most important and worthy of support.

"The programs chosen for support will receive more funding from different sources," Phillips says. "They will receive money from the Available Fund and will be identified as an area seeking funds from the outside. On the other hand, in some of the programs it may not take more money. It may just take a dedication to do something."

Phillips says his subcommittee set up criteria to help the colleges choose the programs, but he stressed that the criteria was not highly detailed.

"We really tried not to be too specific so we wouldn't straitjacket the colleges," he says. "What I think the colleges did was look at how they could build their strengths and they looked at world and societal needs."

Once the committee had the input from the Target 2000 report and the various colleges, it set to the task at hand. And Phillips says that when considering the proposals, funding was a major consideration.

"That's where it all came from," he says. "There's a finite amount of money in the Available Fund each year. We have been spending an awful lot of it on buildings and when you spend it on buildings, you don't spend it on other things. We had to ask, 'Where do we really want to spend our money?'."

Phillips' subcommittee set up five levels of priority in which they

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Money

Campus machines may provide students with change

By DAINAH BULLARD
Staff Writer

Historically, stamps and quarters have been as scarce as hens' teeth on the Texas A&M campus. However, a Student Government project proposing the installment of five change machines on campus soon may alter that situation — at least as far as quarters are concerned.

The project is spearheaded by the Student Government's student services committee. Student Services Vice President Wayne Roberts said the group has been working on the project since the beginning of the Fall '84 semester.

According to the committee's plans, the University will own the change machines.

The type of machine in each location will depend on the demand in the area. The machines will give a variety of change — including nickels, dimes and quarters — and some machines will even change $5 bills, Roberts said.

The committee conducted a two-week survey to verify the need for the change machines, then carefully calculated appropriate locations for the machines, he said.

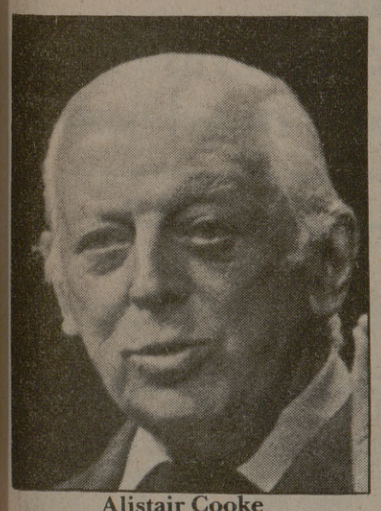
"We proposed some locations, but the final approval hasn't come yet," Roberts said.

The committee has proposed that change machines be located in the Commons, the Corps of Cadets Guard Room and northside lounges A-1, A-3 and C-1, Roberts said. In addition, the committee plans to publicize the existence of a change machine in the laundry room east of Moses Hall, he said.

The committee's proposals were submitted at the first of the semester to Robert Smith, A&M's assistant vice president for fiscal affairs and controller, Roberts said. The future of the project depends on the Smith's decision, Roberts said.

"We should hear (the decision) any time," he said. "It looks real promising."

Cooke: Convention politics lost drama



Alistair Cooke

By ROBIN BLACK
Senior Staff Writer

The American presidential convention system has lost the drama, suspense and appeal that originally made it unique, Alistair Cooke, an observer of the American scene, said Tuesday night.

Cooke's speech in Rudder Theater opened the first night of the three-day E. L. Miller Lecture Series.

The native of Manchester, England, 76, was described by University President Frank E. Vandiver as a modern Alexis de Tocqueville. Vandiver introduced Cooke to the less-than-capacity audience.

Cooke worked as a correspondent in the United States for the British Broadcasting Company for more than forty years.

Cooke, almost stereotypically calm, deliberate and distinguished in the best British tradition, described his experiences of relating to his fellow Europeans the rise in America of everything from motels to exit polls to, more recently, the yuppie. Most of his work was in reporting on and analyzing the American political system. Cooke recalled a letter he received years ago from a frustrated British reader:

"He told me how he had grown tired of reading about the American political system and pointed out to me that it was difficult enough trying to understand the standard game of chess much less the American version where the knights are called campaign managers, the pawns move all at once and the bishops are not used. That was, of course, before 1984."

Cooke desribed the view abroad of the American presidential conventions.

"They see it as something between a coronation and a circus," he said.

He traced the development of the convention system back to the birth of the political parties.

President George Washington, he said, considered the parties a mischievous association and combination.

"I wonder what he would have thought of PACs (political action committees)," he said.

Parties developed and grew in stride with the country's population, he said, until the task of choosing a presidential candidate became complicated. That's when the caucus system, which soon led to the convention system, had its beginnings. It didn't come in without a fight.

"The intensity of the discussion of the caucus system and the choosing of electorates made the abortion issue look about as important as the question 'Is aspirin really good for the bloodstream?'" he said.

The convention system grew and flourished until the influence of television.

"That may have dismantled the system," he said. "The convention is no longer the battlefield for the presidential nomination. It is, instead, the surrender ceremony, or the coronation in the case of the incumbent."