

OPINION

Predictions

New Year's Eve in Oklahoma — sounds pretty exciting, doesn't it? Well it wasn't. As I sat home that night and watched the sleet and snow fall, I reminisced about all the things that happened at A&M in 1984. It was a year of controversy, change, life, death, triumph, tragedy, and achievement. But now its nothing more than memories and history.



Kevin Inda

While I sat there watching my Base Hound lap up his allotment of champagne, I couldn't help but wonder what was going to happen in 1985. My curiosity was expressed at 12:09 when my dog wet on the floor.

That little accident was quite predictable, as are many other things. After a few seconds of deliberation, I thought it might be interesting to look ahead to 1985 and see what might occur.

The upcoming year will be full of controversy and change. Issues that previously weren't questioned, will become questions and dissension will occur between people.

Last year's episode involving SWAMP wanting to sit on the MSC grass was just a glimpse of things to come. Now that SWAMP has successfully demonstrated that all the students at A&M don't think the same way or believe in the same things, and had to tell about it, other groups will probably come out and stage demonstrations.

SWAMP got students to think about how they feel and speak up about it, something that previously was unheard of. Even though it seemed most students were against SWAMP, and what they were protesting for, the group still made an important point. People have the right to believe or speak up about anything they want — they also have the right to disagree. Neither group SWAMP or their opposition, was in the right more than the other. They both were just exercising their rights.

University officials will also have to accept something they're not accustomed to — change.

After two long and hopeless court battles, the Board of Regents will end up with a worse winning percentage than Jackie Sherrill. Gay Student Services will finally have to be recognized by the University and women will be marching in the band. Two trivial issues will finally be decided after a countless amount of money and time has been wasted. Fully spent denying citizens their basic rights.

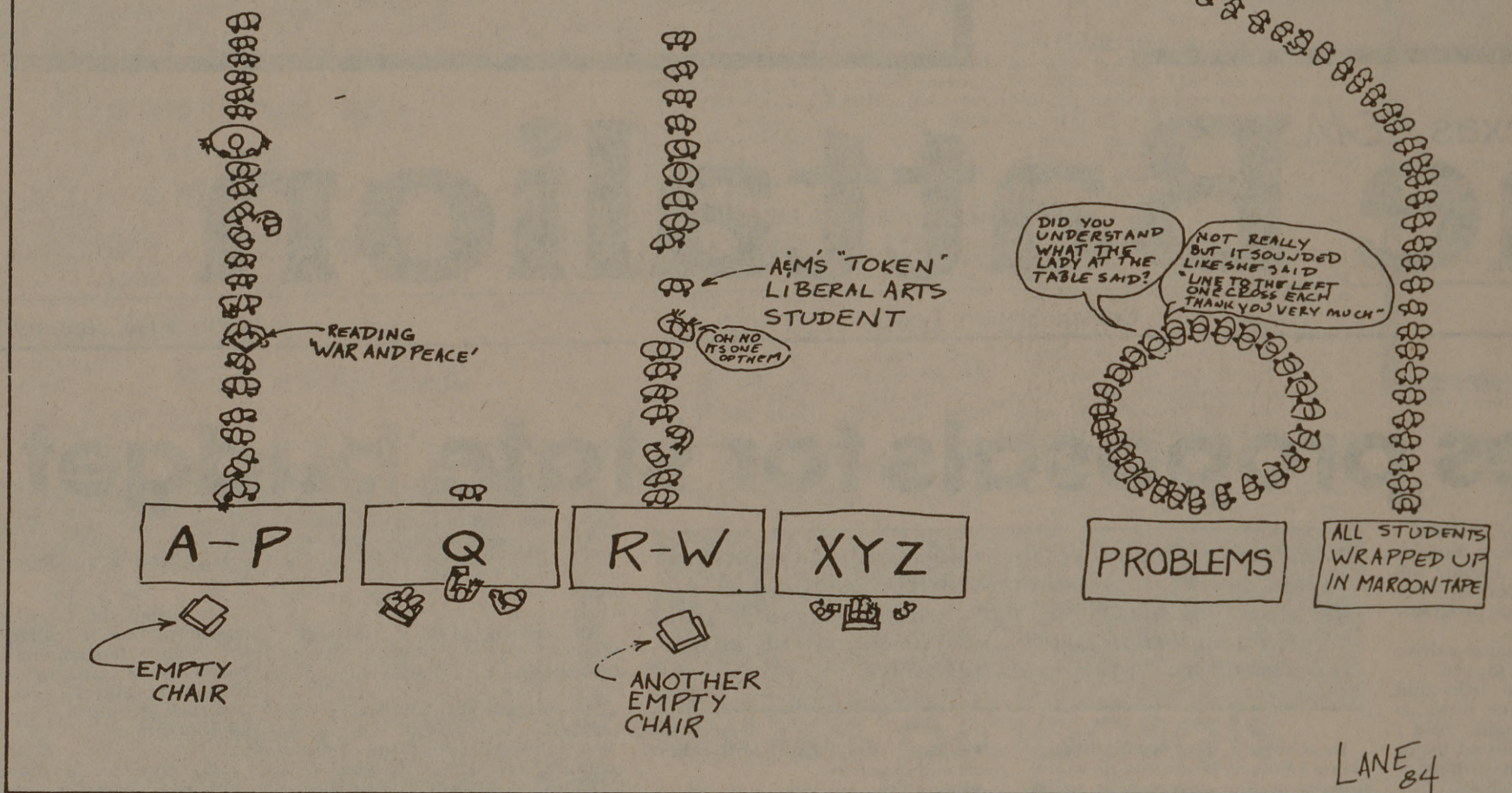
The Corps of Cadets will also be under watchful eyes in 1985. After the degrading incident last Fall, the Corps will be unable to continue functioning with the vigor they're used to. The Corps will still be the center of activity concerning University traditions, but they will have to walk lightly when it comes to late-night activities.

Nobody knows for sure what will happen in 1985. Maybe the Liberal Arts Department will finally be able to offer degrees in the fine arts, or maybe the governance of A&M will become more democratic than authoritarian. Who knows, the yell leaders might be scratched for cheerleaders, somebody besides Willie Nelson might perform after-bonfire (if there is one), and more emphasis might be placed on academic achievements than athletic achievements.

I guess we'll just have to wait and see what happens.

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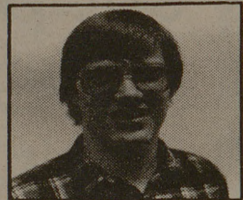
REGISTRATION AT A&M - AIN'T IT GREAT!



Gays seeking office draw criticism

KKK actions harm America's image

The city of Houston is embroiled in the controversy of preventing homosexuals seeking city offices from being discriminated against on the basis of sexual orientation.



Loren Steffy

The subject of gay rights is causing a national upheaval. Supporters and protesters are adamant in their views. But homosexuals, just like other minority groups before them, will eventually gain social equality. The American ideal of "all men created equal" can't be eluded for long.

The issue is not the social acceptance of gays, but the methods some gay rights protesters use to make their point. A few days ago in Houston, the Ku Klux Klan marched to protest not

only approval of city ordinances granting equal opportunity to homosexuals, but also Mayor Whitmire's support of the proposed ordinances.

As in any case where civil rights are involved, the Klan is on the side opposing the minority. Gays, in their eyes, are un-American simply because they are gay.

The Klansmen, who seem to think they are patriotic fellows who protect America from any racial impurities, are well-known for their lynchings of black Americans during the Civil Rights Movement. In addition to protesting the influx of Vietnamese fishermen to Seabrook, Klansmen also run for public office and teach Boy Scouts to use M-16's in order to perpetuate their twisted vision of patriotism.

Basically, the Klan is a bunch of schoolboy mentalities playing big-boy games. They have nifty titles like "Grand Wizard" or "Grand Dragon",

cute ways to use "k" instead of "c" and even have their own little secret code words for undercover missions.

But beneath this Tom Sawyerish appearance lurks a network of crimes committed by men, who, when they aren't wearing sheets over their heads and burning crosses, pass for everyday citizens. The Klan and violence go hand-in-hand. Over the years every minority group not covered by the White-Anglo-Saxon-Protestant standard has fallen victim to the Klan's harassment.

Supporters of the minority's cause are, in the Klan's eyes, no better than the minority. Whitmire has thus far only been protested against, but a white woman who drove from Ohio to Alabama in the 1960s to show her support for civil rights, was raped and murdered by four Klansmen, merely because she sympathized with blacks. Apparently the old guilt-by-association trick isn't

used only by fascist and communist governments.

Now, as the Klan turns its narrow-minded viewpoint to homosexuals, we are sure to see some valiant defenses of American morality. Perhaps naked, mutilated bodies of homosexuals will be strewn hither and thither across Houston, or maybe a simple riot will suffice.

After gays become accepted by society, who will be next on the Klan's list? Despite the advances towards racial equality for groups such as blacks, immigrants and women, the racist plague continues to blemish America's image. How long will Americans tolerate these sheet-draped fanatics with their archaic ideals? How long will we allow the Ku Klux Klan to turn patriotism into terrorism?

Loren Steffy is a sophomore journalism major and weekly columnist for The Battalion.

Two modest proposals for disarmament

By ART BUCHWALD

Columnist for The Los Angeles Times Syndicate

In the world of nuclear arms, missiles do not kill people, nations kill people.

Therefore at the start of the new arms negotiations it's time both the Soviet Union and the United States take a new approach to the question of disarmament.

Instead of negotiating the reduction of offensive and defensive nuclear weapons, we should negotiate limits on how many times each superpower may kill a person in an all-out war.

At the moment it is believed that the

U.S. and the Soviets have stockpiled enough weapons to destroy each other's citizens 10 times over.

The first step then is to produce an agreement that would reduce the nuclear arsenals in both countries to the point where they could only kill every American and Soviet citizen five times.

Cutting the KR (Kill Ratio) in half won't be easy, but it is possible to persuade the superpowers to agree to it, particularly when it can be argued that you only have to kill a person twice to make your point in an all-out holocaust. With a KR of five, both sides would still

have a margin of safety in case their missiles fail to hit their targets.

The U.S. military will argue that the Soviets may sign a treaty agreeing to kill every American only five times, and then cheat, by stashing away enough weapons to kill them seven times.

The Soviet military could balk at cutting the KR in half on the grounds that while the U.S. might reduce its weapons, they are still at a disadvantage because if we refuse to include West European warheads in the count, each U.S.S.R. citizen could still be killed eight times.

At this point the negotiators in Geneva would have to resort to compromise.

The Americans could address the U.S. military fears by insisting on on-site inspection of both nuclear stockpiles. If it were found that the Soviet weapons on hand had enough power to kill the Americans more than the agreed-upon KR of five, the U.S. could abrogate the treaty and proceed to build new weapons that would kill every Soviet citizen 15 times.

In exchange for on-site inspection, we would include the West European nukes in our KR, and reduce American stockpiles until both the U.S. and West European KR came out to five.

If the Kill Ratio formula is unacceptable there is no reason for the superpowers to leave the bargaining table.

Another solution might be to work out a fair agreement on how many people each side may be permitted to wipe out in the event of a war. Neither country would have to reduce its arsenal, but would be limited to firing only enough missiles to waste 100 million people on the other's territory.

The obvious question is, who would monitor the pact to see that the superpowers did not bag more than their limit? This could be done by the International Red Cross, which would have access to all the stricken areas. If either side went over the 100 million ballpark figure, the other would then be permitted to match them body for body.

With the limits set by the treaty, it would not only be a waste of money for the superpowers to continue the arms race, but there would be an incentive to reduce their nuclear arsenals accordingly.

I have no illusions that either the Kill Ratio reduction proposal or the 100 million limit on casualties can be successfully negotiated overnight.

I'm throwing them on the table as a starting point in the new negotiations. When it comes to serious disarmament talks you have to start somewhere.



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