

OPINION



Help small farmers buy all their farms

By ART BUCHWALD
Columnist for The Los Angeles Times Syndicate

President Reagan, in last week's radio address, said the government has done everything it can for the farmer. It is now time for others to pitch in and do more, "from officials at the state level to banks, private groups and individuals in the community."

I wasn't quite sure what I, as an individual, could do to help the farmer, so I drove out to Culpeper, Va.

"Hi, Farmer Brown, President Reagan told me I should pitch in and help you. What exactly can I do?"

"You can buy my farm."

"I don't know much about farming."

"Shucks, there's nothing to it. All you have to do is get up at 5, milk the cows, feed the hogs, and see how many chickens died in the night from the frost. Any fool can do that."

"When do you get to play golf or tennis?"

"After you till the soil, plant your seed, spread fertilizer, spray for bugs and dig furrows for irrigation."

"Don't you ever get into town?"

"Sure. You get to go once, maybe twice a week, to meet with your banker and explain to him why you can't meet the payments on your loan."

"Dave Stockman says the reason you farmers owe so much money to the banks is you keep speculating in land and buying new equipment to make windfall profits at the expense of the American taxpayer."

"Dave's a good old boy, but he knows as much about farming as he does about drawing up a balanced budget."

"It wasn't just Stockman. President Reagan said the same thing. The reason you're in so much trouble is you bet on inflation and you were wrong. Didn't you hear him Saturday morning?"

"I meant to. But since it was the weekend I decided to relax and dig trenches, repair the barn, cut down timber, wash my horse and sit up with a sick calf."

"I'll let you have the farm real cheap."

"How much money can I make?"

"You can make a bundle — provide the bugs don't get your corn, the zero temperatures don't freeze your tomatoes, your cows don't get pneumonia, the dollar gets weaker and the Russians are starving to death."

"You don't make it sound like much fun."

"It's a lot of fun, if you're a gambler. What other business offers you a chance to bet your house on the crap table one year?"

"The people in Washington say the reason you farmers are living on the edge is that you're always producing too much food and the taxpayers are stuck with the bill."

"I can't quarrel with that. We're just dumb people who know how to grow things, but we don't know how to market them. The ideal situation for America is if we farmers didn't grow enough food and made everyone pay through the nose. Then instead of the taxpayer having to give us price supports we could charge him \$15 for a pound of potatoes. I'm sure those smart fellows in Washington will be able to figure out a way of causing a food shortage in the country so we could get a fair price for our crops. You should buy my farm now while it's dirt cheap. Then when Washington works out a plan there will be a few farms left you can get \$6 for a quart of raw milk on the open market."

"It sounds tempting. But I'm not sure I want to be a farmer. Even if you make a lot of money it doesn't sound like you have much time to enjoy it. Isn't there some other way I can help you?"

"Well, if you're going back to Washington you can take this corn cob with you and tell Dave Stockman to stick it in his ear."

Small town life has its advantages

An article on the editorial page of a recent issue of the Houston Post suggested that Texas A&M should annex the University of Houston. The UH professor who wrote the article claimed that the addition of UH to the Texas A&M System would give the Aggies a foothold in Houston and give UH Permanent University Fund benefits.



Loren Steffy

I had little interest in the article itself, but the author referred to College Station with such flattering terms as "corn patch," "briar patch" and several other metaphors denoting rural backwardness.

Over the weekend I had the distinct "pleasure" of driving to Houston to attend a wedding. The wedding was wonderful, most weddings are, but the drive

to Clear Lake City brought the Post article to mind. The term "corn patch" also popped into my head as I avoided a potential accident, dodged the ten-foot-deep ravines in the middle of I-45 and was exposed to the automotive courtesy of the average Houston motorist.

I recalled the numerous times I had heard fellow students complaining about College Station being dull, tiny, uncultured and devoid of life except for A&M. Compared to Houston, College Station may be lacking in excitement, but the "small-town" atmosphere does have its advantages. The other morning at 2:30 a.m., for example, I walked from my apartment to the 7-11 and returned home without being robbed, raped or murdered.

I can hop in my car and drive wherever I want without worrying about bumper-to-bumper rush-hour traffic at any given hour, and I have most of the potholes on the major streets memorized. I can also roll down my window

and inhale relatively clean air as opposed to the lung-coating aroma that usually infests a large city.

True, I can't shop in Neiman-Marcus; I can't eat at Bennihana's; I can't catch a flight to Bolivia; and I can't admire the sun setting behind College Station's skyscrapers.

Houston, you can have your fancy stores, your pollution, your big buildings, your nightclubs, your crime, your Ku Klux Klan rallies, your crowded streets, and your teeth-gnashing motorists.

I'll just sit back in my corn patch and watch the sun set on the horizon and maybe later I'll drive down the road and smile at the driver ahead of me who wants in my lane, knowing that it really doesn't matter if he gets one car length ahead.

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

LETTERS:

Sully's Symposium not 'predictably boring'

EDITOR:

In response to your Feb. 19 editorial questioning the thought put into this semester's Sully's Symposium, I must admit that I am not sure if you understand the framework around which the forum was designed. From its inception, the forum undertook to obtain the views and philosophies of as many students as possible whose influence and activities had an impact on campus life. Inviting David Aders, student body president to respond to questions about the impact of the Zentgraft settlement, minority recruitment, and the GSS issues did not in my mind turn out to be "predictably boring."

Sully's Symposium is not and was never meant to be closed to dry public relations speeches. Any individual wishing to speak or make a suggestion for an upcoming forum is encouraged to drop by the Lambda Sigma office, on the second floor of the Pavillion. Lambda Sigma is and has been trying to get the true "movers and shakers" of this university. Last semester the Corps commander, representatives of Black Awareness, and many other organizations discussed their respective concerns. This semester, Lambda Sigma has already set as goals getting H.R. "Bum" Bright and President Vandiver to speak at upcoming forums. Definitely not the path of least resistance.

Bill Emshoff

Batt staff should learn to 'do unto others...'

EDITOR:

I have often wondered, as I have read all of your adverse articles about Student Government, if anybody realizes all of the good this organization does.

I wonder when people attend Aggie Muster, and are in awe of all that goes on, if they realize the whole ceremony is put on by Student Government. How

many people's parents visit during Parent's Weekend and enjoy all of the festivities? Yes, that too is coordinated by Student Government.

How many couples that participated in the Big Kiss realized that Student Government was the main instigator of this event? Does anybody know someone who received free blood from Brazos County, thanks to all the blood donated in the Blood Drive? Again, this was coordinated by Student Government.

Did anybody realize we sponsored a 4-day national Student Government conference, COSGA '85, for over 250 student leaders from all across the nation? How many people will participate in the Big Event, and how many people will be helped out by this service? This, too, is sponsored by Student Government.

Well, I think I have gotten my point across, even though I could go on and on. Many of these events are taken for granted. People just think they somehow get done. Well, thanks to Student Government things do get done, contrary to what The Battalion thinks.

It is a shame that all of this election controversy has been made up! For anyone to believe that Student Government controls who runs for office is absurd. (For your information, the only things that are checked are the candidates's grades and his/her standing in the University.) But thanks to the "power of the press" and ignorance of The Battalion Editorial Board, people believe trash like this! Laura Madla happens to be a very credible person, and along with Jim Collins, has done a fantastic job with the Election Commission. It is too bad the Editorial Board took all of her comments out of context and had to drag her name through the mud. In many people's opinions, your cartoon printed on Feb. 23, was tasteless and extremely inconsiderate!

It is sad to think that an important lesson in life has passed the Editorial Board by, and that lesson is to treat others only as you would have them treat yourself. Think about it!

Cliff Dugosh, '86
accompanied by 35 signatures

Attendance at Women's Week disappointing

EDITOR:

What does it take to get at least fifty people to come hear an incredibly wealthy business person speak on success strategies, especially if that person is a female? What about a brown bag luncheon on interviewing do's and don'ts, a great performance by the Women's Chorus, a style show, or a speech on the early women's movement by Dr. Sara Alpern? All of these events were part of the second annual A&M Women's Week held the week of Feb. 18. They were free of charge and open to the public.

However, having barely twenty-five people attend Lyn Noble's speech was embarrassing when the faculty members outnumbered the students. I know that last week may have been bad for many because of tests; yet, I still feel the attendance was quite low for a student population of 33,859 in which about 14,000 are women. So why did we have an attendance problem?

You cannot blame it on the public relations when both Aggie Women and Women In Communication sponsored it. Besides the usual flyer distribution and decorating of the MSC kiosk and backboard, we put a notice in the "Around Town," bought a Battalion ad and had two articles printed in The Battalion. We even mailed and delivered 300 special invitations to women student leaders, faculty, corp officers and sororities.

We are interested in learning and discussing relevant topics such as leadership training, career planning and choices, health, safety, family, and dressing for success. We offer field trips to Houston or Dallas that allow students to meet women executives in a variety of professions. We act as a support group which can connect you to the right people for solving personal and academic problems. Also, men are encouraged to join because men need to know how to work side by side with women.

Just twenty years ago women were admitted as students at A&M. They never dreamed that women today would be entering career fields and leadership positions that were traditionally off limits to them. The days of

women attending A&M for an "Mrs." degree are long gone (at least they should be). Obtaining a college degree is only half the story; the other half is becoming involved to learn about people and skills that you do not get in the classroom.

Connie Rogers
Class of '87

All not as pleased with A-1 service as KK

EDITOR:

This letter is in response to the article published in The Battalion on Monday, February 25, 1985 entitled "Wiatt: no viable alternatives to towing for campus police." Director of Traffic and Security Bob Wiatt was quoted as saying, "It is a good feeling for students to know that even if their car is being towed, it is being taken care of."

I would like to say that I do not share this "good feeling" that other students may have about the A-1 wrecker service and in fact my Jeep, which was towed just recently, was not properly taken care of. Being a four-wheel drive vehicle, it has a front and rear transmission which are both supposed to be disengaged before being towed to prevent damage to the drive train. When I went to pick up my Jeep at the A-1 lot I found only the rear transmission had been disengaged. It seems to me that a company that has towed as many vehicles as A-1 should know the correct way to tow all types of vehicles and I can only hope that no permanent damage has been done to my Jeep.

I am in favor of the proposed "boot" or lock on the base of the wheel rather than a tow-away policy. These devices would eliminate the tow-away cost for the student as well as other problems such as in my case. Since A&M receives no money from the wrecker service, why not use the "boot" device? The money collected from this practice could go toward building more parking facilities which would help eliminate the parking shortages here at Texas A&M.

Pat Parker, '86

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The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Communications.

Letters Policy

Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length. 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 be signed and must include the address and telephone number of the writer.

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