

OPINION

McCaw's service not worth price

Bryan-College Station has been plagued by poor cable service for years. These troubles were only made worse when McCaw Cablevision took over the system left by the two previous companies.

McCaw recently announced it would drop Chicago's WGN from its programming. After much community protest, McCaw announced that it would keep WGN. They could have saved themselves a lot of hassle if they consulted the records of the old companies, who also suggested dropping WGN and met with similar community opposition.

The cable company's second blunder is the introduction of the new cable packages. Basic cable service will consist of five stations for \$4.00 per month. This basic package, which will be the minimum service deal offered by the company, conflicts with the College Station cable franchise ordinance which states:

"The Company currently furnishes and shall continue to furnish users a minimum of 12 signals or channels..."

The basic package's five channels fall short of the minimum. Only by purchasing the eight-channel Broadcast Pac can viewers receive the minimum number of signals specified in the city ordinance. But the basic deal alone, not a basic-Broadcast Pac combination, is the minimum service furnished.

Of course, the Broadcast Pac is only an additional \$2.00 a month, assuming you don't want it installed. Installation costs \$250.00.

Why so much? Because the cable company is a monopoly. Why is it a monopoly? Because the cities of Bryan and College Station give it special permission to be one. But along with that permission goes the right of the cities to regulate the cable rates.

The rate increase put anything but local channels beyond the grasp of most students and many other members of the community.

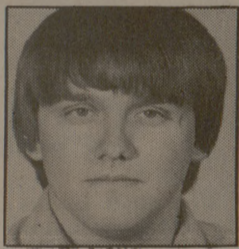
These random price increases and service changes must stop. It's time for the city halls to exercise their authority and put some restraint on McCaw's ever-increasing prices.

It's time for McCaw to listen to the voice of the community. People are tired of being expected to pay more and more money for cable "service."

The Battalion Editorial Board

Americans catch 'Sovietophobia'

There is a new disease that is affecting millions of Americans. Everyone is susceptible to the disease: government officials, movie actors and ordinary people. The disease clouds people's reasoning abilities and can be fatal to those afflicted and those around them. The disease is Sovietophobia.



Karl Pallmeyer

Sovietophobia is a form of xenophobia, a disease that causes a person to have an unnatural fear of someone or something that is different. Xenophobia begins with a misunderstanding that grows into an actual fear. Once the disease enters the fear stage a person loses all rational thought, begins to hate and is prone to violence. Throughout history there have been many cases of xenophobia. In one form or another this disease has been the cause of millions of deaths and has caused discomfort for most of the world.

Xenophobia has been the cause of hundreds of wars. It has caused many millions of people to be enslaved by their neighbors. It has often caused the world to be kept in the darkness of ignorance. It has often caused people to deny others their rights as humans. Xenophobia was directly responsible for the execution of a great man from Nazareth who wanted only to tell the world how everyone could live in peace. It has caused the death of many great men.

America has often been plagued by xenophobia. Xenophobia caused a group of European immigrants to virtually exterminate all of the "true" Americans on the continent. It has caused many Americans to try to subjugate some of their own countrymen. We have fought many wars because some people had become infected by the disease.

Xenophobia, in the form Sovietophobia, is now running rampant in America. A form of Sovietophobia struck America once before. During the 1950's a senator from Wisconsin named Joseph R. McCarthy had a bad case of Sovietophobia. While under the influence of the disease, McCarthy did a lot of damage to several legislators, actors and scientists. Few people were willing to stop him. Many people were so afraid of him they actually helped him with his "witch

hunts." McCarthy was almost able to infect the entire nation with the disease until people finally saw how ill he really was.

Sovietophobia still has an influence on our government. Often our domestic policies are based not on what we can do for our country but what we can do to keep them from doing anything to our country. Our foreign policies are often acts of fear instead of acts of compassion.

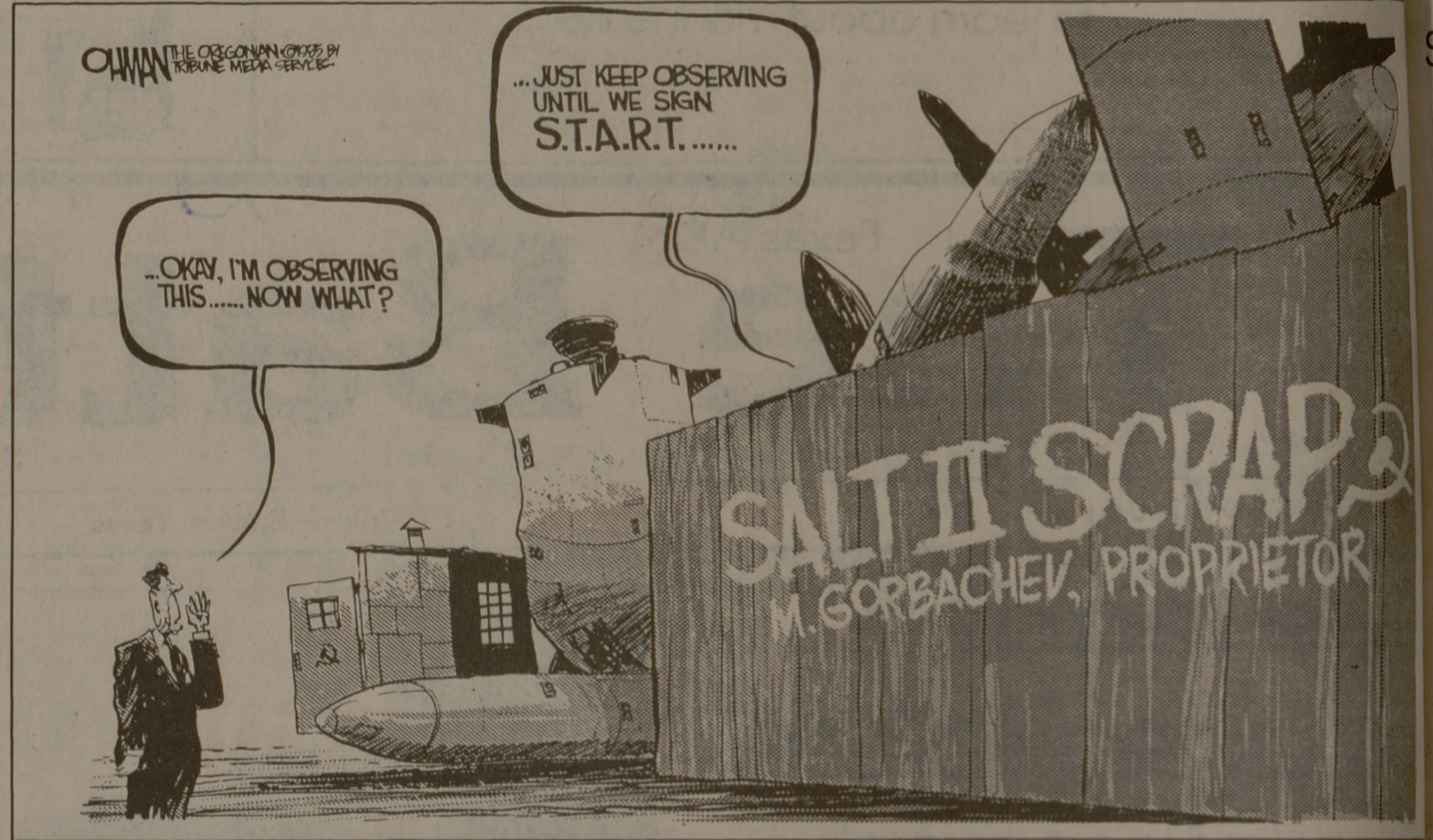
Sovietophobia has now infected several moviemakers in Hollywood. Last summer's "Red Dawn" was a prime example of how horrible the disease can be. Sylvester Stallone has a bad case of the disease. In "Rambo, First Blood II," Stallone returns to Vietnam to find the place swarming with Russians. It is as if Stallone is blaming the Soviets for all of our problems in Vietnam. Stallone's next movie is being advertised with the slogan "World War III is about to begin." In "Rocky IV," which is supposed to be released in the fall, Stallone has to fight a Russian boxer. Maybe Stallone has a good idea: it would be better for two boxers to meet in a ring than for two million soldiers to meet in some third-world country.

Sovietophobia has also infected many ordinary people. The popularity of movies like "Red Dawn" and "Rambo" show how many people actually believe that the Soviet Union is the root of all evil. These people try to rationalize their fears by recalling many counts of Soviet aggression throughout the world. These same people probably have trouble recalling any counts of American aggression throughout the world. To an outsider it would seem as if the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R were involved in a giant game of chess using the rest of the world as the board.

For almost 40 years now man has had the capability to utterly destroy the world. For almost 40 years now the United States and the Soviet Union have been involved in a series of thaws in the cold war. This can not continue much longer. Something has got to change or mankind will not be able to last another 40 years. Fear and hate and violence are going to have to be replaced with understanding and love and cooperation.

Unlike the old line from all the old western movies, this "town" is big enough for the both of us.

Karl Pallmeyer is a senior journalism major and a columnist for the Battalion.



Reporter's life in 'real world' differs from The Battalion

As a staff writer for The Battalion last semester, I got a kick out of seeing my name in the paper and occasionally hearing someone say, "Haven't I heard your name before?" or "Do you work for The Batt?"

Ann Cervenka
Guest Columnist

Well, now that I write for the Waco Tribune-Herald, I still get a kick out of seeing my name in the paper, but no one else seems to really care.

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story assignments for me! I expected to be held by the hand for about a week until I got used to my new surroundings.

Not so. I became a full-fledged reporter on day one. In fact, my first byline came the next day and I probably wrote about 10 stories that week.

At A&M, I averaged two a week. In fact, the Trib had me driving all around Central Texas.

I believe my first out-of-town story was in Reisel. Who's ever heard of Reisel? At A&M, I usually just had to walk over to the MSC or some other building on campus. Not here.

Another difference is the type of work I do here. Real things happen in a city such as shootings and fires. Not just Board of Regents meetings and programs by MSC committees.

My first story in Waco was about a suspect who shot a police officer in the head. Never a dull moment.

Well, that's not exactly true. I have taken my share of obituaries — not too exciting.

But normally, the newsroom is buzzing with reporters and photographers, heading every which way to make their deadline, kind of like "Lou Grant."

Speaking of deadlines, I have definitely learned to work under pressure. The newsroom is not a fun place at 11 p.m. on Saturday night before the Sunday edition is due. In fact, it's awful.

Editors are screaming at reporters who are frantically trying to add the minute touches to their work.

And that brings me to another point. Although I spent many nights in Reed McDonald past midnight, I never did five days in a row for nine hours straight each day.

At the "Trib," my normal shift is from 2 p.m. to 11 p.m. Not real good for the social life.

But that's what you expect being at the bottom of the totem pole. Even as a lowly intern, I do have my own desk, typewriter and phone (with my own number, of course). At The Batt, I had a temporary spot at a long desk shared by every journalism student and staff member around.

But the "Trib" does have its drawbacks: working weekends, nights, no name it. News doesn't only happen between 8 and 5.

But I always try to remember what my journalism professors say: "greater experience."

And they are right. I have learned more at the Waco Tribune-Herald in two weeks than I learned at The Battalion in a semester. I actually think this lifestyle is for me.

But come next fall, I think I will be content as a staff writer for The Battalion at good old Texas A&M.

Ann Cervenka is a senior journalism major who is spending her summer as an intern at the Waco Tribune-Herald.

Mail Call

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.

Police station lines inspire Aggie Jokes

EDITOR:

I had a rather unfortunate incident this morning involving the campus police. I went over to their office to get a duplicate parking sticker for my daughter's car since she rides with me to work and we may wish occasionally to drive her car. By the way, her car is registered in my name so it is technically my second car.

The young ladies who were on duty were courteous but so entrenched in bureaucratic double talk that they insisted that I spent some 30 minutes or more in each of several lines to just get cleared so I could purchase a duplicate sticker.

I assured them that there was no way that I intended to stand in line for that length of time to pay them \$12 for parking a car that may be on the campus 3 or 4 times this summer.

As you may surmise, I'm a little upset — I do not want special treatment — I am not in Russia and I do not intend to let a bureaucratic service function of this university intimidate me or hand me this kind of flack.

As a faculty member of this university for 28 years, a graduate of this univer-

sity, a recipient of the Faculty Distinguished Achievement Award in teaching and a Century Club member I am ashamed of what I observed this morning.

When I got back to the office several of my fellow faculty members, including one faculty senator, added horror stories of how they were so rudely and indifferently treated that I thought they were referring to the KGB.

This is pitiful — the Campus Police are virtually despised — not for doing their job, but in their manner and behavior.

It appears to me that they (the campus police organization) have forgotten that without the students and faculty, their would not be much need for their "service."

This is a classic example of the University perpetuating "Aggie Jokes."

James H. Marsh '51
Professor of Construction Science

The Battalion
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Editorial Policy

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Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the Editorial Board or the author, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Texas A&M administrators, faculty or 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.

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