

Opinion

Private business won't do the job

Deregulating the U.S. Postal Service is becoming a popular topic. Postal rates are increasing and some think the quality of service is decreasing. But handing our mail system over to a private industry is not the answer.

In the early 1800s, before the U.S. Mail offered service to what is now the western United States, independent companies tried unsuccessfully to manage mail distribution. Without the government's organization and funding, the mail could not go through.

Today the Postal Service is suffering from *too much* organization and funding. Bureaucracy and unionization inhibit efficient mail delivery. James Miller, who is waiting to be confirmed as President Reagan's budget director, says the Postal Service isn't managing itself as well as a private company would. He says that a private company would operate on a smaller budget and move the mail faster.

Rising costs of union employees and red tape hinder the efficient use of a government monopoly in the postal service.

Before deregulating the postal system, why doesn't Congress lower the salaries of overpaid postal workers, cut through bureaucratic red tape and reorganize management to create a smoother postal system? Then maybe the paradox of rising costs and decreasing service will end.

The Battalion Editorial Board

United Feature Syndicate
MARGULIES
©1985 HOUSTON POST



Hassled freedom worth move from the Dorm Zone

As midnight settled within the halls of the dorm, the noise level was just peaking. I had just begun to study for tomorrow's quiz when the door burst open — again.



Camille Brown

For the third time that night I had someone in my dorm room for a friendly chat, and the visits came between a fire drill, a floor nacho party and a philosophical debate on the merits of Sbsia Dining Hall.

This, sadly enough, was not the exception but the evening routine. Before midnight I was the envy of all politicians — a model socialite and happy to be there. After 1 a.m., when the muffled roar fell over the hall, I would finally begin to concentrate on my overdue homework assignments. Life in the dorm was anything but boring.

It was about 1:30 a.m. on one of those nights when the potentially wonderful, magical benefits of an apartment were finally made clear to me.

I decided to move off campus. I knew at that moment that I would gladly tolerate the hassles of monthly rent payments and the pains of catching the early morning shuttle bus. I was ready to sign my first lease. I was ready to face stereo-blasting neighbors.

I yearned for the chance to park my car within a mile of where I lived.

After three years of bubbly, on-campus dorm life, criticism of apartment life was not going to wane my growing enthusiasm to have my own swinging bachelorette pad.

But now, four weeks into my world of reality, I'm still learning all the ups and downs of being a real person living in a real apartment. I'm learning about the little things that Texas A&M protected me from during my three-year, sheltered existence in Haas Hall.

In the dorm, I lived year-round in sweatsuits and sweaters, because I had a roommate who believed in arctic comfort. I'm sure my roommate just wanted to see how low the thermostat could go before icicles formed in the toilet. Experiments like this contributed to her high grade point as a biology major.

I haven't seen my year-round sweat-suit since last spring. In my new duplex, the thermostat is kept at a toasty 80 de-

grees, and only the strategically placed fans keep the air in our sauna just below the boiling point. And, of course, the screens on the windows have never materialized so I have to lock out any hope of a passing breeze to cool the place down for free.

Which brings up a subject I was warned about — repairs. In the dorm, I turned in a work order for everything from minor inconveniences to semi-tragic outages. As a paying resident of Haas Hall, we had the right to complain if the sink wasn't unstopped within 24 hours.

After four weeks in the duplex I'm still patiently waiting for the property manager to put on the screens, fix the disposal, put the hinges on the pantry door, plug the hole in the bathtub, attach the freezer door cover and mow the front lawn. I'm sure the delay has nothing to do with the overdue inventory sheet still lying unmarked on the kitchen cabinet.

Roaches are an inevitable part of life in College Station. The little monsters will find you whether you live in a dorm or a duplex. They'll even climb stairs — there were as many roaches on the fourth floor of Haas as there were on floor one.

Only one difference marks an off-campus roach stomp. If I kill a roach in my duplex, I have to pick it up to throw it away. In the dorm, I just swept the remains into the hall to be vacuumed away by the maid early the next morning. On-campus roach killing was almost painless.

Now, as an added safety precaution, I have to use almost half a roll of toilet paper to pick up the smashed bug without touching it. I justify the increase in toilet paper costs by counting the expenditure as a type of insurance against illness.

And little did I realize that moving off campus would be a move into a different time zone. I actually get tired at midnight in the duplex, but in the dorm zone, midnight is the beginning of study hall. Bedtime in the dorm was usually around 2 a.m., but now the stillness of a private room rocks me to sleep by 12:30 a.m.

This has cut study time down to about 30 minutes a day. This is one of the many adjustments I'm still trying

to work through.

So now that I have made the jump from convenient, cramped luxury to hassled freedom, I can knowingly look back and spot the most treasured and hated aspects of dorm life. Dorm residents should appreciate the free toilet paper and those all-too-rare "unruns," but when visitation hours and late night noise gets to you, there is an alternative.

Just off campus there lies another time zone, complete with private rooms, unlimited visitation hours and most importantly, parking.

My new stack of monthly bills and a few inconveniences are a worthy trade-off for off-campus comfort.

Camille Brown is a senior journalism major and a columnist for The Battalion.

Mail Call

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.

What AIA really wants

EDITOR: I was appalled and angered when I read an article in a local newspaper.

There seems to be a nationwide watchdog group that has formed to fight liberal bias in college classrooms by auditing courses, then reporting their "findings of liberalism and marxism" by college professors to inform the poor, unsuspecting public of "biased teaching."

This group that goes by the mendacious title of Accuracy In Academia has said they have no immediate plans for Texas A&M, but is ready to audit and report "misstatements by professors" at the University of Texas.

Such auditing will be done by a group at that university. An instructor of mine brought this potentially frightening situation to the attention of my classmates. Except for myself, no one else was aware of the AIA, and this complacency sent chills down my spine. This "group," if allowed to continue to heighten their asinine activities, would not only be reporting on lectures, but in a sense, manipulating and stifling our very thoughts and ideas. And that is an inexcusable sin not only in the academic community, but in the world at large.

I didn't come to this University to learn a lot of filtered, generic facts being passed through a narrow-minded funnel. I came as an individual, seeking other individuals, with independent minds of their own, to learn in an atmosphere electrified with so many ideas and thoughts and so much untethered knowledge. The intrusion — no, invasion — of universities nationwide and the ensuing "witch hunt" of their faculty seems to be an Armageddon of the freedoms of thought and speech.

I, as a concerned student, have a simple request: that you, fellow students and learned professors, become aware of this travesty of the academic community, your community and your children's and know what this "Accuracy In Academia" is really trying to accomplish.

David Banks '87

Students suffering from cablevision

EDITOR: As a member of the staff at one of College Station's predominantly student-occupied apartment properties, I am appalled at the treatment being given Texas A&M students by one of our local "service" (?) businesses.

Evidently McCaw Cablevision does not consider the fall semester at the University an opportunity to welcome our past students back to town or to provide for our many new students living away from home for the first time a pleasant transition to "living on their own."

Apparently McCaw sees this time of year as a chance to squeeze every possible penny out of their young customers

(who, incidentally, have no choice, thanks to the merger of our two former cable companies, if they wish to enjoy any form of pay TV). In the apartment business we spend most of our work days trying to provide the best possible "homes away from home" for the duration of the students' academic years.

The business practices of McCaw are a gross injustice to the very people who support not only my job, but thousands of others in Bryan-College Station. A few of the "questionable" business practices McCaw engages in at present are:

1. Demanding a copy of each student's lease upon request of service. A lease is a binding contract between the property and the resident. It is none of McCaw's business how much rent you pay, who you live with or how long you have agreed to live in your residence. When questioned about this demand, a McCaw representative stated that the lease copy, which McCaw keeps on file, is needed because they intend to charge a yet-undetermined fee upon the change of roommate names on the lease. Anyone who has ever dealt with the students knows that due to personality conflicts, changes in financial status, etc., roommates change constantly. What a wonderful source of revenue McCaw has found!

2. Several students have complained they were repeatedly billed by McCaw for basic cable — even when basic was paid by the complex where they resided. In the apartment business you may not legally charge what is considered "Double Rent." Evidently McCaw has their own laws for billing.

3. When our mass influx of students began in June, McCaw decided to change their practice of issuing boxes to the students when they signed up for cable at the business office. Instead, after completing the paperwork, giving a copy of your lease for their files and paying your money, McCaw now sends a serviceman to your residence to place the box on your TV and join the adapter to the TV. This enables McCaw to charge you a \$15.00 ACTIVATION CHARGE. Evidently, McCaw does not believe A&M students, many of whom are engineering majors, are capable of attaching two pieces of cable together. Or perhaps McCaw simply "engineered" another wonderful avenue of additional revenue.

Students, some of us appreciate your being here in our fine city. Evidently others see your stay as the ultimate opportunity to milk you of every cent possible. Before you sign up for any "services," be aware of your rights. YOU can be the one who makes or breaks a business...

W. Warren
College Station

Reward offered

EDITOR: Friday I left my brown Buick Regal parked on Throckmorton between Jersey and Lewis St. The next morning I discovered that it had been hit on the passenger side's rear corner. Police

Mail Call

found blue paint on my car and matching chips on the ground. They said without any kind of witness I would have to pay for it.

I'm asking that anyone seeing or hearing anything about my car to give me a call. Also, if anyone sees a blue vehicle with a dented left front end with brown paint streaks that may have been involved to please call me. I don't have the money to get my car fixed, but I will give a \$50 reward for information leading to the apprehension of the driver of the blue vehicle.

Kelvin Deupree
260-3793

Welcome back Ags

EDITOR: We would like to welcome all of you back for the start of the fall semester. After a summer of fun and excitement and perhaps a little work, we're sure you all are eager to once again resume your educational pursuits.

We're sure all Aggies are looking forward to a great fall and football season. You can be sure we will be doing our part with the 12th Man and we look forward to visiting with many of you this year. Once again, welcome back and good luck!

Joe and Patty Hlavinka '86
Parents of the Year 1985-86

The Battalion
USPS 045 360
Member of
Texas Press Association
Southwest Journalism Conference

The Battalion Editorial Board

Rhonda Snider, Editor
Michelle Powe, Managing Editor
Loren Steffy, Opinion Page Editor
Karen Bloch, City Editor
John Hallett, Kay Mallett, News Editors
Travis Tingle, Sports Editor

The Battalion Staff

Assistant City Editors.....Kirsten Dietz, Jerry Oslin
Assistant News Editors.....Cathie Anderson, Jan Perry
Assistant Sports Editor.....Charean Williams
Entertainment Editors.....Cathy Riely, Walter Smith
Art Director.....Wayne Grabein
Copy Editors.....Rebecca Adair,
Mike Davis, Sarah Oates
Make-up Editor.....Ed Cassavov
Staff Writers.....Tamara Bell,
Meg Cadigan, Ed Cassavov,
Cindy Gay, Doug Hall,
Paul Herndon, Wendy Johnson
Tammy Kirk, Jens Kroepeke,
Trent Leopold, Mary McWhorter,
Jane Pang, Tricia Parker,
Brian Pearson, Lynn Rae Povec,
Marybeth Rohsner, Gigi Shamsy,
Kenneth Sury
Cartoonists.....Mike Lane,
Scott McCullar, Kevin Thomas
Columnists.....Camille Brown,
John Hallett, Karl Pallmeyer
Photographers.....Greg Bailey,
Anthony Casper, Frank Hada,
Jaime Lopez, Michael Sanchez

Editorial Policy

The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting newspaper operated as a community service to Texas A&M and Bryan-College Station.

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.

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. Editorial staff phone number: (409) 845-3316. Advertising: (409) 845-2611.

Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Battalion, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas 77843.