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**Romanian man granted asylum in U.S.**

Associated Press  
 HOUSTON — A Romanian seaman who was granted political asylum Thursday said he hopes his wife and two children can be brought to the United States so they can live and work an honest life.

Paul Firica, 44, said through a translator that he is very happy because he has dreamed for years of defecting to the United States.

"He wants to thank the American people and the immigration service for allowing him to stay in this country," said translator Bego Memet of Spring, also a Romanian defector. "He says he will be much happier when he is reunited with his family here, where they will have a chance to live and work an honest life."

Paul O'Neill, district director of the Immigration and Naturalization Service in Houston, said he decided to award political asylum to Firica because the seaman has a justifiable reason for wanting to stay in this country. However, O'Neill declined to elaborate.

Firica said Thursday at a news conference in Houston that he planned to move to Austin to stay with Rev. Tom Wilson, who has been involved with the movement to spread the word of the Bible in Romania.

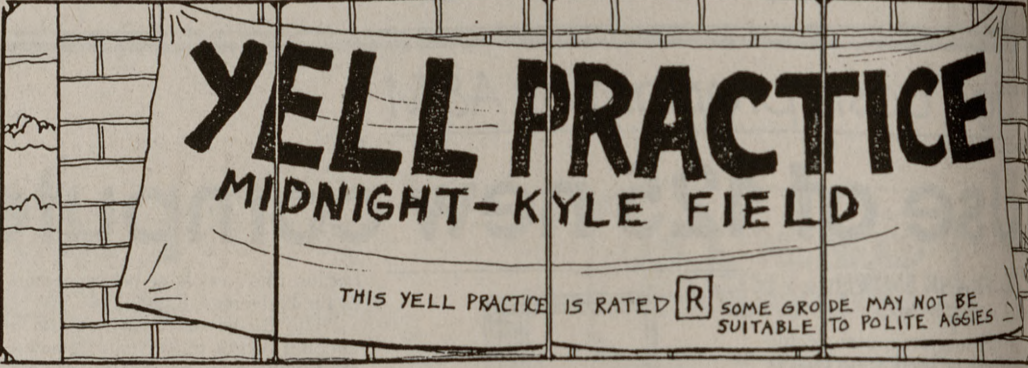
The seaman said earlier that he waited to defect until his wife and two daughters, ages 17 and 23, were able to live without his support. "With the help of God, they'll manage," he said with teary eyes.

Firica walked off the Romanian vessel Zalau Tuesday night. The ship, loaded with cattle hides, left for Romania Wednesday night.

Firica's asylum is good for one year, O'Neill said. At end of every year the application must be reviewed.

"Ultimately, he can apply for permanent resident status," O'Neill said.

**Warped** by Scott McCulloch



**Club helps foreign students meet others, adapt to A&M**

By SANDRA SUTPHEN  
 Reporter

Students who come to Texas A&M from all over the world have a little help trying to fit in at the University. They can get together to speak their native language and meet other international students every Wednesday night at the Europe Club meetings.

"We have members from all different countries in the club," says Dan Wegener, vice president of the club.

Wegener is an American but has lived and traveled extensively in Europe, and he says that joining the group was a logical choice for him.

The members come from all around the globe — Spain, Austria, Italy, Scotland and France, as well as Canada, Russia, Czechoslovakia and many South American countries.

"We have a real interesting crowd," Wegener says. He says the Europe Club is an organization for international students who don't know much about the United States. They can meet people who can help make the transition a little easier.

Wegener says the club is a support group, helping students with the problems that arise when someone lives in a different country. This includes problems with transportation

along with finding places to go during the holidays.

Many of the new members don't know about the community and what it offers, Wegener says, and the club is full of people willing to help out.

"It's difficult for them to break in and learn about the United States,"

"It's difficult for them to break in and learn about the United States. (The club) is a vehicle for them to do it."

— Dan Wegener, vice president of the Europe Club.

he says. "This is a vehicle for them to do it."

"We have people who don't have any idea of what it's like here, or they have an image, and when they get here they are sort of disoriented."

The Europe Club has existed since the '70s, Wegener says, and the membership has evolved through the years. In the past, there have

been more American and undergraduate members; but now the majority of the members are graduate students, South Americans and other non-Europeans, such as American students who have studied abroad.

"I would say the reason that we have a majority of graduate members is because we don't get the much exposure with the undergraduates, and we would like to have more," Wegener says. "At one time, we had about 30 members who were European out of about 80 members but the others had an interest in the club."

The club activities during the year include parties and trips to different places in Texas. Club dues are \$10 per semester. The dues help pay for the parties and trips.

Last semester the club went to the Renaissance Festival with the International Student Association, and last year they went to the rodeo in Huntsville. Most of the members had never seen a rodeo, Wegener says.

"Once we went to Fredericksburg and for the German members," he says, "it was sort of like meeting the past."

**Delta Sigma Pi** presents

**Crossroads**  
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November 20 7 p.m. MSC Room 212

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*William Shakespeare, 1596*

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*Marie Antoinette, 1770*

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*Karl Marx, 1844*

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