

# Opinion

## The greater threat

Today is the third day since Texas began fining motorists for not wearing seat belts. Any driver found unrestrained is subject to a \$25 to \$50 fine. The law has its merits, but it is ahead of its time.

Before Texas attempts to deal with drivers who are determined to risk their lives by driving without a seat belt, it should attempt to deal with drivers who are determined to risk the lives of others by driving with an alcoholic beverage in their hand.

Not having an open container law presents a greater threat to the safety of Texas motorists than not having a mandatory seat belt law.

The seat belt law primarily protects the life of the wearer, but an open container law would protect not only the drinking driver, but his victims as well.

The seat belt law, in theory, is a positive step toward safety on Texas highways, but without an open container law to accompany it, the positive step becomes little more than a stumble.

If beer-guzzling drivers are forced to be strapped in before they go for an inebriated spin, it still doesn't protect the potential victims — even if those victims have their seat belts fastened.

The Battalion Editorial Board



## How do you cross a picket line in zero-gravity?

By JOHN HALLETT

NASA has run into a snag in the space station program. It seems that the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Astronauts, Spaceworkers, Warehousemen and Helpers of America wants to unionize NASA employees.

"It's a very real problem," says George Jetson, cartoon spokesman for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. "Can you imagine what it will be like if we are forced to go to eight hour workdays with an hour and a half for lunch? And don't forget that the contract that has been presented to us also calls for 15 minute coffee breaks on the hour. That means we'll only get six hours of work out of each astronaut a day. Right now, the average astronaut puts in 12-16 hours a day."

"Are there any immediate problems?" I asked.

"As a matter of fact there are," Jetson replied. The Atlantis crew voted Sunday morning to start their own local. We responded by not honoring the demands

they put forth. In turn, Atlantis threatened to abort the mission and bring the shuttle down two days early. After two hours of tense negotiations that didn't get anywhere, President Reagan named former President Richard Nixon as an arbitrator in the contract dispute.

"How come the press was kept in the dark," I asked.

"Well, this is off the record, mind you, NASA was afraid that a grass roots movement comprised of blue collar workers in support of the Atlantis astronauts would build momentum and force us to compromise our position. Anyway, you can print this, Nixon caught the first plane out of Newark early Sunday morning and got here three hours after Reagan called him.

"Let me tell you that choosing Tricky Dick was a big mistake. He came in here saying that NASA ought to be willing to give a little considering that the average number of mission tasks performed by each astronaut had risen in the past year compared to last year. The rise compen-

sates for a reduced flight schedule — the result of maintenance problems not covered by the manufacturer's limited warranty on parts and labor."

"I'm curious, what kind of warranty comes with a shuttle?"

"One year or 12,000 miles, whichever comes first."

"You're kidding, the big three automakers can do better than that."

"The company told us it was a typo in the contract, it should have been 24,000 miles. Before we signed, the General Accounting Office checked the fine print in the purchase agreement but I guess it got past them. We didn't notice it until the ink was dry on the contract. Anyway we purchased an extended warranty on the drive chain and the electrical system."

"Hey, I'm no expert but even I know that the shuttle doesn't have a drive chain, George."

"That's right, but the company who manufactured the aircraft is in Senator Waste's state and he was up for re-election when we purchased the warran-

ty. He pushed the appropriations measure through the Senate claiming that it would bolster the local economy which has been sagging for years."

"What was the problem?"

The company we had the contract with bought out most of the local industry, automated three-quarters of the jobs and laid off thousands of workers. Not only does the company monopolize most of the industry and businesses in the area, it owns the only mortgage company in the county. The unemployed have little hope of finding jobs and the company is foreclosing on mortgages left and right. Will you excuse me for a moment, please?

"Atlantis, this is Houston, your coffee break was over five minutes ago, what's the problem guys."

"Houston, this is Atlantis. Sorry George, we got wrapped up in 'All My Children.' We're getting back to work right now."

"See that you do Atlantis," Jetson replied. "We don't want any goldbrickers

up there sloughing off so that they get in some overtime.

"OK John, what were we talking about?"

"You just finished telling me about extended warranty. How come you didn't keep an eye on Atlantis?"

"It's part of the emergency assistance program that went into effect as soon as arbitration was finished with the Atlantis crew. I'm doubling as a media relations specialist and mission controller."

"What did the crew gain from arbitration?"

"Double overtime — triple on days, new lockers, a dental plan, American Express Gold Card for crew member and separate facilities for men and women aboard the shuttle."

"What's the American Express for?"

"Commercials."

John Hallett is a senior political science major, a columnist and News Editor of The Battalion.

## Mail Call

### Scripture for victory

EDITOR:

A preacher in Hearne who is a graduate student in psychology at Texas A&M cited the following scriptures to me after the Ags beat the cotton out of that other school. I thought it very appropriate for the occasion:

"I-say-ahh 42:10 And the enemy shall come from the north as a raging bum steer, making vain boasts against the farmer and his house. And it shall come to pass that the enemy shall be humiliated and be sent to graze in the bluebonnets and the farmer shall harvest his cotton and be glad."

Roger Carver '86

### Don't downplay tradition

EDITOR:

From the articles in The Battalion last week I think we could be safe in proclaiming it "Anti-Tradition Week."

I am a first generation Aggie, neither my parents nor any relatives have attended this great institution. I entered Texas A&M blindly, I knew absolutely nothing about the traditions and little more about the academics.

After being here a little over a year I feel I could change schools (even to t.u.) without my academics suffering at all, but you couldn't pay me to transfer anywhere. I have grown to love this school and all that it stands for. Sure, education is important, even more so than traditions, but it is not enough. People might come to A&M for its academics, but they stay because of its traditions!

One great tradition, which unfortunately is no more, was the University's non-recognition of fraternities. They were not recognized in the past because they served no purpose. Now some are recognized and many more will be, but they still serve no purpose and are even detrimental to the unity of A&M.

A&M is not like other schools. Here it is not necessary to spend hundreds of dollars to join a social organization. At A&M the dorms and Off-Campus Aggies serve as very strong social organizations and they cost next to nothing to be a member. I guess that is not such a big deal. If people want to waste their money, that's their business.

The one thing that disturbs me is their lack of re-

spect for the traditions at A&M. Sure they might go to yell practice and one or two make it out to bonfire, but where were they during the first Silver Taps? At rush parties. Silver Taps is probably the second most meaningful tradition at A&M, and the fraternities blatantly disregarded it as if it were nothing at all.

So come on, Ags, don't let people downplay traditions. They are the backbone of A&M; they are what makes this school different, and better than any other in the world!

Ken Ankele '88

### Biblical perspective

EDITOR:

The controversy about AIDS has finally stirred my writing blood. I am a Christian and my stance on the issue is from a biblical perspective.

The Bible is God's word. The central theme of which is God's plan to save mankind through His Son, Jesus Christ (See John 3:16). The truths contained in the Bible are logical and self-evident, but there are numerous scholarly books that verify the Bible's authenticity including: *More Than A Carpenter* by J. McDowell and *Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis, among others. Even a brief summary of these is beyond the scope of this letter.

God's commands against sin are for a person's own good. For example, the Bible commands not to get drunk (Ephesians 5:18), not to be sexually immoral, including homosexuality (Corinthians 6:9), but the greatest command was as follows: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself." (Mark 12: 30-31).

Some of the people I love most have been alcoholics. Some overcame it and some literally destroyed their lives. In the process they brought much pain to themselves and to those they deeply loved. Sin is destructive to self and to others. According to the Bible, homosexuality is a sin, and thus is destructive to self and others.

God doesn't want people to die with AIDS (homosexuals or innocent babies), nor does He want alcoholics and their victims (including innocent babies) to die in automobile wrecks. God wants us to have joyful, wonderful lives; that is why He sent Jesus (John 10:10) and gave us His commands to follow (John 14:21). He wants us to renew our spirits (to be "born again") and become members of His eternal kingdom (See John, Chapter 3), but it is our choice. He has done all He can.

I am commanded by God to love all mankind, including homosexuals, but never to accept homosexual-

ity as an "alternate" lifestyle. I believe if Christ was again on Earth in the flesh, performing miracles, He might well be healing homosexuals from AIDS. However, He would no doubt tell them "Go now and leave your life of sin" (John 8:11).

L.M. Smith

### Learn, then criticize

EDITOR:

This letter is in response to Michael Davis' letter. Davis, where do you get off prejudging or criticizing groups if you don't know what you're talking about? I'm writing in reference to your criticism of the National Society of Black Engineers. For your information, NSBE is open to people of all races and sexes in engineering, science and applied science disciplines. There is also membership for any discipline not mentioned above.

It is obvious that you are basing unfounded conclusions merely on the name of the organization. If everyone rationalized in that manner, I guess everyone here would exclude anyone who wasn't of the Southern Methodist faith; the YMCA wouldn't take in anyone who wasn't a young Christian man, etc.

Really, Davis, I'm disappointed that someone who is evidently ready to finish his education still has a lot to learn. You need to learn to find out what things are really like before you try to find something wrong with them and blindly jump to conclusions thereby showing off your ignorance and stupidity.

Since it is quite evident that you don't know what you're talking about, in the future, before you start criticizing anything, learn about it first.

Stanly Goodridge

### Merry Christmas, Hotard

EDITOR:

I would like to wish all the students of Hotard a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I offer my thanks and appreciation for their cooperation which helps me to do a better job.

I especially thank you for your kindness and friendship and for the wonderful Thanksgiving goodies you have given to me and my family to enjoy. Also for the Christmas gifts each year.

May God bless each and every one of you.

Linda Martinez  
Custodial, Hotard Hilton

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