

# Opinion

## Not a wasted effort

Greek fraternities on campus are moving toward alcohol-free rush parties. Ronald Schultz, president of the Texas A&M Interfraternity Council, says he supports the move, and several fraternities already are holding "dry rushes." We are glad to see fraternities taking responsibility for their guests.

Pledging a fraternity should be more than just adopting drinking buddies, and rush parties should be more than an excuse to get free alcohol.

Rush parties are intended to get pledges by familiarizing prospective members with the fraternity and its functions.

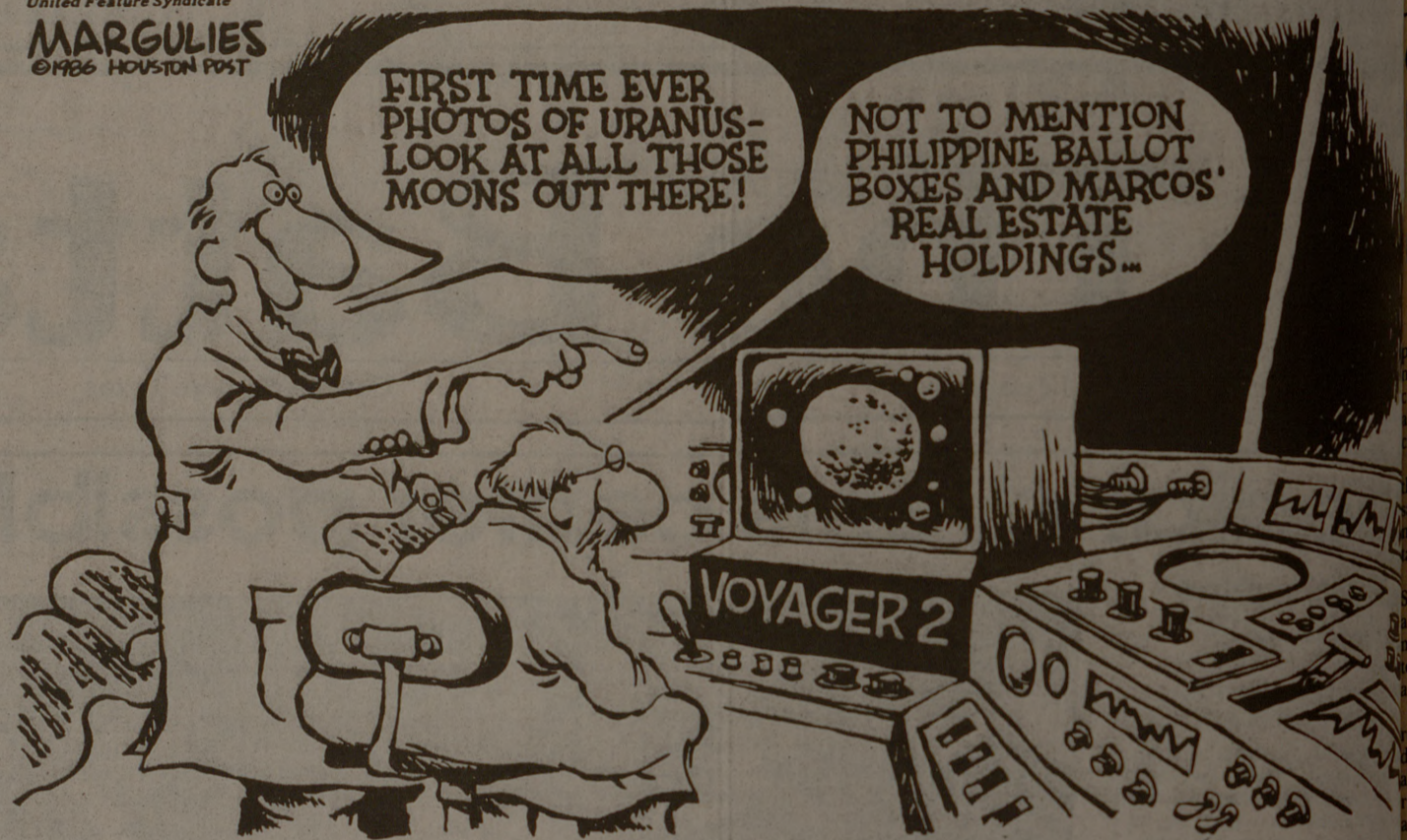
Eric Kaysen, a member of the ATO fraternity, which is holding a dry rush this semester, says, "We don't pledge the ones we pour out the door at midnight anyway."

If alcohol is the only attraction the frat has to offer, then it is not worth pledging. If alcohol is the only thing that attracts pledges then they are not worth having.

Fraternities have an obligation to their guests and members, and it's good to see them assuming that responsibility. After all, fraternities should be pledged for their fraternal-ness, not for their drunkenness.

The Battalion Editorial Board

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## Learning to cope with deviant liberal tendencies

"Pssst! Hey you."

I looked around. A distraught face was peering at me from behind a planter in the Blocker Building.

"Yeah, you. C'mere."

It was my old buddy Irving Snodgrass. He looked scared, like he was just caught selling "Bedtime for Bonzo" tickets to Mikhail Gorbachev.

"I gotta talk to you — in private. I think I'm losin' it. I think I may be a... a liberal!"

"Shhhh! Are you trying to get us both killed?" I quickly ushered Irving into a nearby broom closet. "What do you mean?"



Loren Steffy

"I swear... I always tried to be a good American. I learned the words to the pledge of allegiance before I was five. I hung John Wayne pictures on my wall and I saw 'Rambo' seven times. But lately, I realized I may have... you know... deviant tendencies."

"Like what?"  
"Like, on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, I got to thinking, 'you know, maybe he wasn't such a bad guy after all.'"

"That's not so bad. Even President Reagan finally admitted that King was OK."

"It gets worse. These feelings come over me, and I just blurt out things. The other day I noticed the black smoke rising from the Firemen's Training School. Suddenly, I just shouted, 'The government isn't controlling pollution.' I don't know how it happened. I barely escaped the lynch mob alive."  
"Later, I was working on my taxes in

my dorm. My mouth got dry and I began to sweat. My only relief was saying, 'The wealthy should pay a greater share of the taxes.' It was just a murmur, but I swear my roommate heard me. He moved to the other side of the room. Now every time I come home, he leaves."

"Maybe you're just not bathing enough."

"No. This is serious. In political science the other day we were discussing Star Wars. I don't know why, but I said, 'The government isn't promoting disarmament.' The whole class grew silent. Our Accuracy in Academia reporter scribbled my name down."

"Maybe he just wanted to get your class notes," I suggested.

"I don't think so. I went to the Quack Shack to see if they could help, and while I was having things stuffed in every possible orifice, I said, 'Wouldn't it be nice if we had a national health care

program?' I didn't even realize what I was saying. The nurse, taken by surprise, dropped a tray-load of instruments."

"What did the doctor say?"

"Oh, he was real nice. He told me it was just stress from clenching my teeth in my sleep."

"Well, see, nothing to it." I tried to sound positive.

"But my deviations stem from more than involuntary teeth-gnashing. I've even considered changing my major. At first I thought maybe sociology or education. But now I'm even considering philosophy or, God help me, journalism."

"You do need help," I said. I fished through my wallet and pulled out a card with a phone number on it. "Here, call this number."

"The Liberal Hotline?"

"There are people there who can help. They understand. Millions of oth-

ers also have problems believing crayons can stop nuclear missiles."

"Really?"

"Sure, you're not alone. You're the only one who thinks you're enough to keep track of your sunglasses without having to tie them around your neck with an \$8 piece of string. Guilt that accompanies hidden liberal tendencies can be devastating. The Hotline helps closet liberals feel better about themselves."

"Wow, thanks. I feel better already," Irving said.

"Don't mention it. It's not so bad, all, is it?"

"Maybe not. See ya." Irving opened the closet door and started to leave. Suddenly, he stopped and looked at me.

"Peace, brother," he said.

Loren Steffy is a junior journalism major and the Opinion Page Editor of The Battalion.

## Military aid to the Contras would end export of terrorism

President Reagan has mentioned that he would like to see military aid resumed to the Contras of Nicaragua. Military aid from the United States to the Central American rebels was reduced to "humanitarian" aid by an act of Congress last year. Since then, the Contras have been relying upon other governments and organizations to provide the arms and means to fight the Sandinista government.

A decision by Congress to grant military aid would be a welcome sign. I was worried that the act put on by Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega in New York, (nice clothes, jogging in Central Park, speeches, and so on), would permanently convince Congress that Nicaragua was a misunderstood and peace-loving country.

Reinstating military aid could allow the Contras to cause enough domestic problems to prevent Nicaragua from arming rebels in El Salvador and other

Mark Ude  
Guest Columnist

countries in Central America. The Sandinistas then would be forced to abandon what has been an exportation of violence and terrorism to stable nations.

Yet there are those who disagree with the Contras. Tip O'Neill has said that he prefers to negotiate with Marxist-led Nicaragua. And that was exactly the position of the Carter administration — they were prepared to write off El Salvador as "lost to communism." This was due to their estimation of the high infiltration of Marxist rebels, and their wanting to avoid what could be called "another Vietnam."

The Reagan administration, on the other hand, by supporting El Salvador, training its army and supplying the Contras with munitions, had effectively negated the rebel activity in El Salvador. The definition of an ally is where one nation helps out another nation in trouble and does not abandon its government to its own devices.

To think that humanitarian aid is

enough to be effective is being naive. The insurgency in El Salvador has increased and the rebels there have just destroyed the electrical power grid which distributes power throughout the country.

With Nicaragua in our own backyard, we cannot ignore the problem and hope that other nations will stop the Sandinistas on their own. Like it or not, the United States of America is the sole leader in the Western Hemisphere, and we cannot skirt the responsibilities that follow.

Using Grenada as an example, neighboring countries relied on the United States to restore stability and peace to that troubled region.

Military aid to the Contras in Nicaragua, if approved by Congress, would give the Sandinistas a taste of their own medicine, a practice which the United States has not pursued for quite some time.

Mark Ude is a senior geography major.

## Soviet troop withdrawal from Afghanistan unlikely

Despite hints from Mikhail Gorbachev at last November's superpower summit, there is no evidence the Soviet Union intends to withdraw its 118,000 troops from Afghanistan, U.S. officials have concluded.

Barry Schweid  
AP News Analysis

The outlook is for an extended military standoff between the Soviet-backed Kabul government and rebel forces. Both sides are stronger. Neither appears able to gain the upper hand.

And while the casualties mount — an estimated 10,000 Soviet deaths, another 20,000 wounded or injured — Gorbachev apparently has decided not to withdraw from Afghanistan in order to improve relations with Washington.

This could have an impact beyond South Asia, where the war has raged on the other side of the Soviet border for more than six years. It raises questions about whether Gorbachev's leadership will produce changes in Soviet actions abroad.

Since Gorbachev's rise to power last March the Reagan administration has looked for signs of change in Soviet foreign policy. Gorbachev's evolving stand on limiting nuclear weapons is the main barometer U.S. analysts watch. But there are others, including Afghanistan, where Gorbachev's approach is being measured carefully.

Speculation that the Soviets might be thinking of a pullout began when Gorbachev took a relatively mild stand in discussing Afghanistan at the summit with President Reagan.

"We noticed, perhaps, an improvement in the tone of the Gorbachev presentation," said a State Department official. "He didn't go through the whole litany of the Soviet position."

At the same time, said another U.S. official, Kremlin propagandists and intelligence operatives fueled the speculation, whispering to

reporters the Soviets were just about fed up with their military venture in Afghanistan and were prepared to draw up a timetable for withdrawal. The officials spoke on condition they not be identified.

Within Afghanistan, a dozen noncommunist figures were brought into the Soviet-backed Kabul government.

But American analysts noticed that Gorbachev recited the standard Soviet position when he spoke to the Supreme Soviet following the summit.

Reports that Afghan Foreign Minister Shah Mohammed Dost presented a withdrawal plan to U.N.-sponsored negotiations last month in Geneva proved untrue.

"There was a certain amount of sleight-of-hand," the official said. "The bottom line was that there was no timetable."

Adding noncommunists to the Kabul government is considered to be a cosmetic move, at best.

American analysts reached some basic conclusions about Gorbachev soon after he took over.

The first was that he would concentrate on revitalizing the Soviet economy. The second was that he might pursue an arms control agreement or reduce tensions with the United States in other ways to permit him to focus on his domestic priorities.

This analysis has not changed. But Afghanistan apparently is not where Gorbachev intends to make the effort — at least now.

The Reagan administration has given the Soviet leader "appropriate assurances" that it would not exploit the situation in Afghanistan to Moscow's detriment, the official said. In fact, he said, the administration is prepared to offer guarantees.

Hints to the contrary, Gorbachev apparently is not listening.

Barry Schweid reports on U.S.-Soviet diplomacy for The Associated Press.

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