

Opinion



Mail Call

Study like a nomad

EDITOR:

We, the fourth floor "Flirts" of McFadden Hall, would like to take this opportunity to thank the housing office for granting us an inconvenience during finals week.

On this festive 4th of July, our jubilation was brought to a halt when we were informed that we would have to move to other floors. As if to compensate for this abrupt inconvenience, we were then told that the change was to occur by Wednesday to avoid clashing with finals. Wonderful! I guess the idea never occurred that we might be busy gearing up for finals at this time.

In retrospect, none of us remember being told that such an inconvenience might take place. We were led to believe that the rooms we had chosen would be our humble abodes for the summer duration. In fact, we were recently handed a memo to that effect. I guess we missed something.

We do believe that change is inevitable. Yet, we also believe that we were rendered helpless by not being forewarned or given a minute's say so in this matter. In essence, we were forced to decide without choice, because the shuffling around will take place regardless of whether we are inconvenienced or not.

As good Ags, we will respectfully abide by the rules, and we will learn to adapt to our new environment. For some of us, it will entail going through finals with a stranger for a roommate. For others, it will entail going through finals without the camaraderie that has developed on our golden fourth floor. But, most importantly, for all of us, it will entail approaching finals with one less day of studying. For this we are thankful!!

Leroy Barela
accompanied by 12 signatures

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 classification, address and telephone number of the writer.

I get no kicks out of World Cup soccer fans

As a sports fan, I suppose I should be pleased that in 1994 the planet's most popular sports event — the World Cup soccer championship — will be held in this country for the first time. But all it does is make me nervous.



Mike Royko

For years, I've watched the highlights of international soccer competition on the TV news. And the highlight is usually a riot by the fans.

I'm not talking about an American-style sports riot, which comes in several tame varieties.

We have the baseball riot. In its mildest form, it's two or three beer-soaked louts wrestling in the stands until the cops haul them away. At its most ferocious, it's fans climbing light poles or overturning a few cars to hail a World Series victory.

There's also the football riot. The biggest one in memory occurred last season in San Francisco, when some of the fans yelled "nyah, nyah," at Mike Ditka and he threw a wad of gum at them, causing mass nausea in northern California.

Hockey fans sound nasty, but they almost never brawl. In fact, the closest thing to a riot I've ever seen at a hockey game was when the players leaped into the stands to crack the skulls of some rude fans.

What I'm saying is that for all the beer they drink, all the noise they make, and all the bets they lose, American sports fans are reasonably well-behaved. You'll see more punches thrown at a country and western concert than a sporting event.

But when you talk about international soccer competition, you're talking mayhem, mauling, stomping. First they announce the final score, then they give you a body count.

They don't mess around. A few years ago, some British fans got angry at some Italian fans. So they pushed them over a wall, crushing more than a dozen Italians to death.

The British fans are the most notorious in Europe, and deservedly so. Their idea of whoopee celebration is to stick someone with a knife or a jagged bottle, toss ball bearings, or pitch someone off the top of the stands or in front of a subway train.

But the British aren't the only ones who take their soccer seriously. Latin



D. WELLS 88

Americans, known for their frisky natures, have had some dandy riots.

After a big game in Colombia, some fans in the upper deck expressed their displeasure with the outcome by dropping fireworks and urinating on the fans in the lower deck. This caused a stampede to the exits that left 24 people very flat and very dead.

Sometimes it doesn't take a riot to get

soccer fans killed. A locked door will do it. In Greece, somebody forgot to unlock an exit after a game and 21 fans were squeezed to death. The same thing happened in Moscow and dozens died.

There have been riots in China and Mexico. And when Austria beat West Germany in a World Cup soccer game, one German fan was so upset that she tried to strangle a cheering Austrian. The man was quite shaken, since the angry woman was a nun.

You don't even need a soccer game to have a soccer riot. In Hungary, actors performed a play poking fun at soccer. If the police hadn't hidden the actors under the stage, a mob of more than 1,000 indignant fans would have dismembered them.

I've never understood why soccer affects its followers that way. It's not as violent as hockey, football or boxing, and it doesn't have the subtle tension of baseball. If anything, it's always struck me as kind of dull: a bunch of bow-legged guys named Heinz or Jorge butting the ball with their heads.

Maybe it's because it's the only game in which the players use their heads to propel the ball. Assuming that the fans of soccer also play the game, all that butting of a ball with their heads might make their brains squishy.

That may be why soccer, the world's most popular team sport, has never caught on in this country. In our favorite games, we throw, catch and kick balls; hit them with bats and rackets; dunk them through hoops, and throw them into little holes. But we don't do them with our heads.

If anything, a ball bouncing off the head of an outfielder or punt receiver is considered funny, and we laugh derisively.

So what will happen when all the soccer teams and their fans are here and Heinz and Jorge start bouncing balls off their heads, and millions of Americans who know nothing about the game start laughing?

Do we want British skinheads rioting in our streets, Colombians urinating on the lower deck, or nuns grabbing throats?

We don't need that. And if any indignant soccer fans are going to write nasty letters, I will tell you in advance that I won't take you seriously unless you enclose a statement from your physician saying that you don't have a spot on your head.

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Come on you Regents, follow the University's rules

Wanted: At least one Texas A&M Regent who will stand up and announce he will no longer remain silent while the board embarrasses A&M with its actions.



Richard Williams

Our Regents are supposed to help set the course for the University. The Board is supposed to be composed of individuals who can keep this University on a course that is consistent with the outstanding goals and standards A&M has set.

Surely at least one Regent has the guts to stand up and announce to the rest of the Board that he will no longer remain quiet while A&M refuses to listen to messages from the public.

I hope that there is at least one Regent who will send a message to the faculty and students of A&M that he believes in the right of the public to know and the necessity of following the laws of the state of Texas.

The laws of the state of Texas require a governmental body, like A&M, to respond to a request and, if needed, request an opinion from the Texas Attorney General within 10 days. Wednesday marked the 23rd day since *The Battalion* originally requested information regarding the search for president.

The Board has refused to listen to this message about open records the public has sent A&M. A Board that will not listen to the rules the public has set is an embarrassment.

No one from the Board will inform *The Battalion* why they have not complied with the laws of Texas.

Bill Presnal, Executive Secretary of

the Board, has said he will not comment any further about the matter. James Bond, Deputy Chancellor for Legal and External Affairs, told me that he has not made a decision about our request.

Surely A&M's Deputy Chancellor for Legal and External Affairs is not ignorant about the law.

Bond told me he is very informed about open records laws. He pointed out that he argued a case all the way to the Supreme Court. (He said the court refused to hear the case and that the lower court issued "an opinion, a concurring opinion and a very, very, very strong dissenting opinion." A&M lost the case.)

Bond said that he knows all about the 10 day period, but he has not responded to our request.

If Bond is so informed why is continuing to refuse to reply and request an opinion as required by law?

The only reason that anyone I have talked to can come up with is that since A&M has dealt with the issue before and knows that by not replying, not requesting an opinion and stalling for time they will not have to release the information until after the search is over. By doing this they know they can deny the faculty and students of A&M their right to know who is seriously under consideration for president.

However, this is not a legitimate reason to refuse to follow the law.

The Board, Presnal and Bond would probably like *The Battalion* to forget our request for this information, but *The Battalion* has no intention of ending our quest for information that we feel is open to the public.

If there is one Regent willing to break away from A&M's history fighting the laws the people have set up I hope he will speak during the Board's meeting this weekend. I hope someone has the

guts to take a stand on the side of the people of Texas and the students of the faculty of Texas A&M.

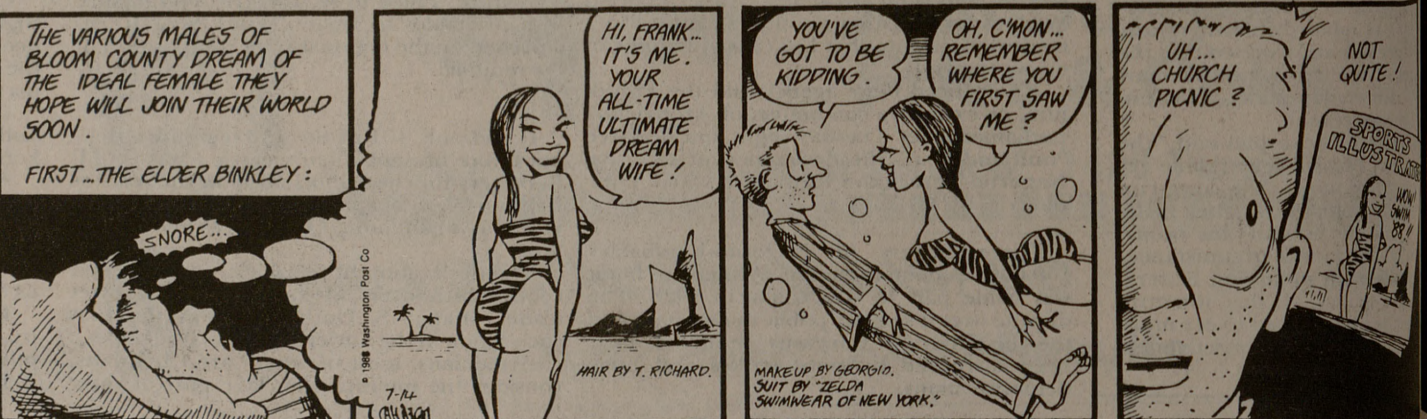
The Battalion's search for a list of serious might not be completed until the University has named a new president. This individual could be named as early as this weekend at the Board meeting.

Lots of rumors are floating around about who the next president will be. The leading candidate seems to be James C. Miller III. Miller is director of the Office of Management and Budget and a member of Reagan's cabinet.

Miller can't be reached for comment but he is rumored to be looking for a new job since Reagan won't be in the White House much longer.

Richard Williams is a senior agricultural journalism major and editor of *The Battalion*.

BLOOM COUNTY



The Battalion

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