

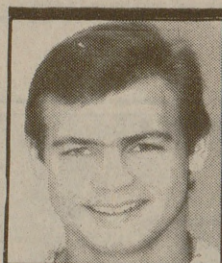
## Make sure what you call racism really is racism

The past month gave all of us a much needed opportunity to raise the level of our knowledge about black history. Black History Month also raised my personal awareness of racism and the struggles that some African-Americans face due to their color.

Racism is a terrible social ill. This fact is readily apparent. Sadly, though, this message of racism is often delivered with no provocation. Such a touchy and heavy subject should not be treated lightly. It is difficult for me to think of a nastier label to be tagged with than that of a racist. Unfortunately, many African-American groups do not realize this.

The issue which prompted me to write on racial discrimination, a subject I normally prefer to defer on, is the plight of one Ray Sykes, an African-American Houstonian.

Ray Sykes owns a relatively large Buick, Jeep and Eagle dealership near Humble, just north of Houston. Actually, he only owns 40 percent of the



**Matt McBurnett**  
Columnist

dealership. General Motors owns the rest. Well, the business failed and, of course, racism is to blame. At least that is the story that Sykes and 10 of Houston's African-American organizations pretend to believe.

The organizations rallying in behalf of Sykes include the Black United Front, numerous Baptist groups, the National Emancipation Association, the Third Ward Civic Club and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. These groups apparently coauthored a telegram sent to GM Chairman Roger

Smith and President William Stemple which stated, "We are especially troubled by what we perceive as racial overtones with regard to different treatment by GM of other dealers in this area that have faced similar financial difficulties." A meeting with GM was also demanded.

The action, or inaction in this case, in question is the supposed neglect by GM of the Sykes dealership. Sykes said that GM refused to provide bailout cash for Sykes when needed, though it had recapitalized at least a half-dozen white dealerships in Houston. He did take some blame for his books being in disarray. It sounds bad, right? Not when GM spokesman Tom Beaman informs us that GM has taken "extra steps" in assisting Sykes, including recapitalization twice.

First of all, GM owned the majority of the Sykes dealership. They obviously will do all that they can to see that the

business is a success. It seems to me that recapitalization or aid in any form would be their prerogative anyway. The only complaint that could possibly be levied against GM would be that of preferential treatment for other dealerships in the area. This does not apply since the Sykes dealership has been bailed out twice already. What more could Sykes and these numerous African-American organizations want? Would they be satisfied if GM bought the cars back for the sticker price?

This is one of the most blatant displays of sheer mule-headedness that I have seen. Goodness, Sykes, your business failed because it was crappy, not because of GM.

Rev. Jew Don Boney, chairman of the Houston chapter of the Black United Front claims that, "If GM won't meet with us, we will take what actions are necessary." The only necessary action would be either the application of a little

logic to the situation by the banding organizations representing Sykes. The cessation of the racism battle cry does not apply.

Though it may be a black thing I do not understand, I am sensitive to the issues of racism. In this case, I side with GM and chide the senseless groups who let the racist label fly to compensate for the poor management of an auto dealership.

I cannot believe that the NAACP became involved in this thing. I see a need for African-American organizations, especially the NAACP and I respect their efforts. When the groups throw the racism label around recklessly, they do nothing but desensitize the public and further solutions to the causes that they represent. No reaction is much better than overreaction.

*Matt McBurnett is a junior electrical engineering major.*

### Mail Call

#### Knowledge of God brought by faith

EDITOR:

In response to James Hammit's letter of Feb. 22: James, your admirable lifestyle does not undeniably disprove the existence of God. No amount of effort by mortal man can disprove, or even prove, God's existence.

The knowledge of God and of his son, Jesus, as savior can only come through faith. Faith is God's gift, given to us through his Holy Spirit.

All men think for themselves, that is also God's gift. The different thinking of the believer comes from the Holy Spirit. Look at I Corinthians 2:14-16:

"The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual man makes judgements about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgement: 'For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?'" Both believer and unbeliever have free choice.

James, I compliment you on your charitable lifestyle, more Christians should behave the same way. It is Christ's teaching. I'm glad that your lifestyle brings you joy, but I hope that you and other atheists will take a longer, deeper look at faith in God.

Faith in God is not mindless submission to a restrictive moral code. Faith in God is true freedom from the judgement

and bondage that this world puts on all men. Only through faith can any man's joy be made complete.

Mark Wainright '86

#### Employers look for quality first

EDITOR:

To those of you out there who find it so unjust, immoral, unfair, wrong, degrading, illegal, irritating, retarded, utterly disgusting, not in accordance with your inner being or just plain uncool to be hired by another Aggie, I would like to address you for just a minute.

Let's say you've been out of school several months and were about to go to your next job interview (the 67th one, for argument's sake because widget graduates are in abundance this spring), which was to be conducted by a former tuba player of the Aggie Band.

He reviews your work, overlooking the part of your resume that read you were once a member of "Aggies Against Other Aggies." On the basis of your records and your personal aura, you are hired.

Now, don't tell me you would turn down the job because you and he once shared the same campus. But that's exactly what you're saying when you think former students will hire you only because you once attended Texas A&M University (which, personally, I think is a good reason anyway since these former students, more than anyone else, are aware of

the trials and tribulations you went through to graduate).

If you really think a person is going to overlook a roomful of bright people to hire you without first looking at your qualifications, you are gravely mistaken.

Perhaps that's why you're sitting in front of that desk instead of behind it.

Nancy Nguyen '89

#### Fraternity T-Shirts degrade A&M

EDITOR:

This letter is directed to those fraternities (and you know who you are) that degrade this great University by putting profanity and vulgar pictures on their T-shirts. Not only are you representing your fraternity, but you are also representing Texas A&M University.

These kind of actions are what create the one bad apple in the whole bushel. Nobody at Texas A&M wants to be looked down upon because of this bad apple. With all the hype about becoming a world class university, these so-called "recognized" fraternities are putting us back in the little leagues.

Chad Prior '89

#### Have an opinion? Express it!

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. There is no guarantee that letters submitted will be printed. Each letter must be signed and must include the classification, address and telephone number of the writer. All letters may be brought to 216 Reed McDonald, or sent to Campus Mail Stop 1111.

## Time for new non-communist countries to rebuild

The leaders of the reforming communist countries are attempting to throw off the shackles of communism. I wish I could boast that we classical liberals triumphed in enlightening communists to their folly. But arguments against communism did not win the day. Instead, socialism collapsed under the weight of its own destructiveness. Poverty, hunger, sickness and pollution were much more convincing arguments than anything Milton Friedman could say.

So the task in hand is to rebuild. All building needs a vision or a blueprint. This vision must be a society based on representative governments, civil liberties and free-markets. A society where the individual, not the state, determines the course of one's life.

The first step of the process must start with free elections. This is the only way to effectively purge the old-line socialists from the ruling elite. No Communist stands a chance in free election. Only those candidates who promise free markets and civil liberties will win office. Witness the results of recent elections in Poland, Lithuania and Nicaragua.

Election are not enough. Upon gaining office the new representatives must draft a new constitution. A government operating without constitutional limits is sure to encroach on the freedoms of the people. Strict guidelines must be set which define those limits the state is not



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allowed to violate.

Much like the the United States Constitution and Bill of Rights, each country's constitution must contain a structure for the legislature and for the judicial branches of government. The constitution must enumerate the necessary rights such as freedom of speech, due process and the right to own and trade property. The judicial branch must then be empowered, by the right of judicial review, to uphold the principles of the constitution.

The theory of communism was based upon the abolishment of private property. It is imperative that private property rights be engraved in stone within the laws of each country.

This is the linchpin of capitalism. Markets cannot exist without property rights. How can you sell what you do not own? People need to be able to trade property to better themselves. Without the gains from trade, which naturally follow from private property, people

have no incentive to undertake activities which require initiative or risk.

The Soviet legislative branch last week legalized the private ownership of land. Gorbachev realizes that collective farms have been a disaster. About two percent of Soviet farmers lease land and produce for profit. This small minority produces, however, one-fourth of all agricultural produce. Greed produces where altruism fails.

The Communist governments must also abandon the inefficient, state-run enterprises. Talk about the biggest, most polluting waste of manpower and capital that the world has ever seen. These monoliths must be privatized. This means that whoever runs the companies needs to be able to reap the rewards from his or her labor. One plan is to issue shares of stock to the workers and managers. That is progress, but is only a half-measure.

The governments ought to have a garage sale for their industries. Western companies could simply buy the state companies. That should not be a problem. A few bribes and golden parachutes ought to facilitate the transfer of ownership. Mega Firm Inc. could

simply pay some Communist official enough money to keep him knee-deep in booze and women for the rest of his life. Perhaps a chateau in Switzerland could sweeten the deal. Accounting majors refer to this as the value of "goodwill."

The second step of market reform requires that prices be freed. Prices must be allowed to adjust to a relative scarcity and a surplus within the economy. Both Poland and Vietnam released prices, and within weeks all the shelves were filled with goods. Granted they were more expensive, but expensive bread is better than no bread.

An influx of western private capital would augment the growth of these newly forming economies. Foreign management restrictions should be abolished. No western company is going to invest time and money if they cannot control the operation of the firm. These western goods and services would erase the shortages created by central planning. The McDonald's in Moscow is a perfect example of the benefits of "greedy capitalists."

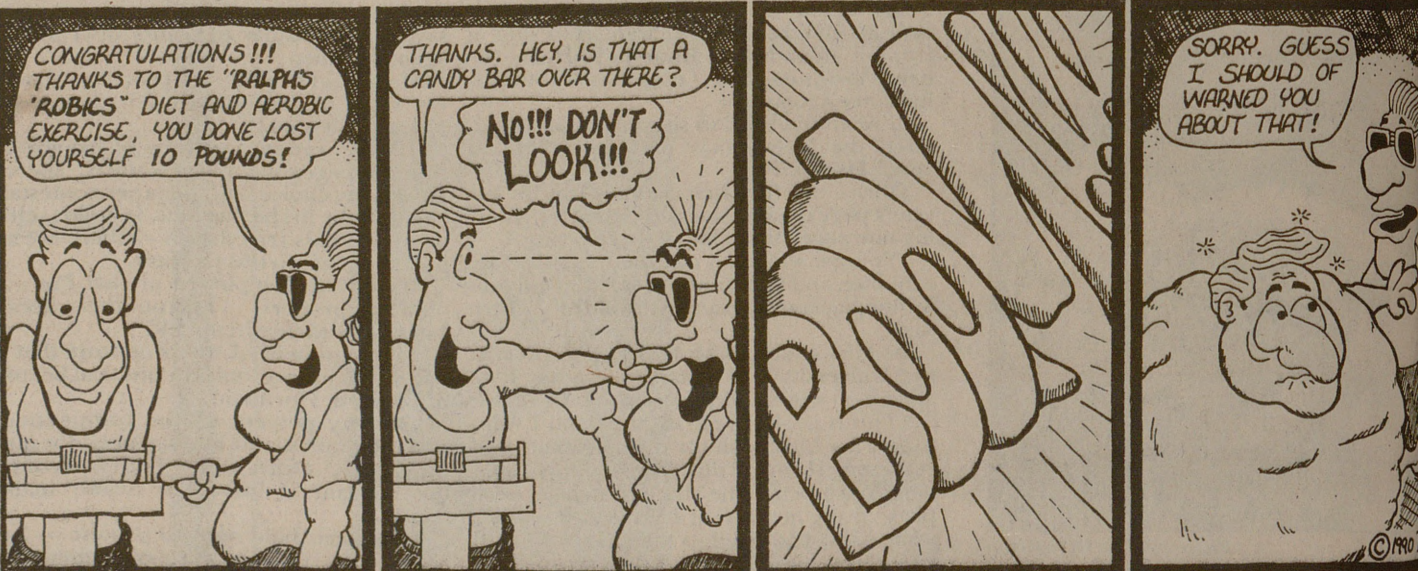
Though private investment in private companies should be encouraged, governments should not send huge packages. If anything, government only postpones market reforms. We would argue that aid to Israel, Egypt and the Phillipines helped their economies?

This outline of the future of the non-communist countries provides the skeleton of a free and prosperous society. The basic underlying assumption of these reforms is that there can be no force between economic and civil liberties. A cursory look at the injustices endured by the people of the world points to an almost perfect correlation between repressed civil and economic rights. This phenomenon called communism was above all else an attack on economic rights; therefore, it must be low that to destroy it, economic rights must be reestablished. This is obvious easier said than done, but delay of form will only exacerbate the plight of the already collapsed socialist world.

*Andrew Matthews is a junior economics major.*

### Adventures In Cartooning

by Don Atkinson



#### The Battalion

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