

## We need to educate the state's poor, too

Some of you may have heard the furor in the news a while back about the way Texas school funding was ruled unconstitutional. Most of you were probably somewhere between "yeah, so?" and "huh?" in your reactions to the news.

Basically the courts ruled that it was not fair for schools in rich neighborhoods to get more money than schools in poor neighborhoods. So how does this affect you?

As a possible future college graduate, you are more than likely going to be one of the elite, the top 20 percent of the people who make 50 percent of the wealth in this country. Your piece of paper will get you 160 percent of what someone without it is going to take home. You are going to be the ones living in the rich neighborhoods and your children are going to be attending those schools. Your tax money however is going to go in part to support some little school somewhere down around Brownsville and other poorer sections of the state. Your children are not going to be able to get the kind of education they could if all your money went to their schools.

However, that attitude ignores some very relevant realities. For a company to choose to locate in an area, either it has to be able to do so more cheaply than in other possible sites or it has to be able to get something at the site it can't get elsewhere. There is always going to be somewhere that a company can locate more cheaply than the United States, where they can find people who will work for less, that doesn't require costly environmental controls, with lower taxes, etc. So to get a company to locate in the United States we have got to offer them something they can't get elsewhere, and the object all companies want that is always in short

**Michael Litchfield**  
Columnist

supply is a skilled, educated workforce. We cannot compete with the third and fourth worlds for cheapness, so we have to compete on quality.

Unfortunately our workforce is not all that great: we rank below the Japanese, we are sliding below the Western European nations and soon the Koreans and the rest of the "Four Dragons" may outstrip us.

We have to support the public school system. We have to educate all of our citizens and not with the tired rote learning that is popular in so many of our school systems, but a flexible education that teaches our children how to solve problems and reason, not just regurgitate what some underpaid wretch just wrote on a blackboard. This is not cheap. The students going to the schools in the rich neighborhoods are getting it, or at least a closer approximation than the poor schools get. It is not enough for the elite to be educated; the entire workforce must be educated and capable of performing complex, challenging tasks. Doing that is going to take money, your money because you are going to be the ones who have it. Neither can you pull your kids out of the public system and place them in private schools, for that will make a ghetto our public system. We are going to have to pay more and more for the excesses and shortsightedness of our parents, and hopefully we might have a country worth something to give to our children.

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MARGULIES  
OF THE RECORD  
NEW JERSEY



## Judge Thomas' critics reveal growing divisions among blacks

**Trey Jacobson**  
Columnist

**"To propose that the black population should, because of historical circumstances, hold similar political perspectives is almost as ludicrous as claiming that all whites should hold to the same views, or that we are all out to 'get the blacks.'"**

friends, teachers and other powerful influences early in life. For blacks growing up in the face of discrimination, one might believe that they will cling to similar perspectives. However, such a model fails to take into account the socialization of black men and women into various organizations, socioeconomic classes and relationships outside the black community.

The suggestion by Walters seems more implausible when one considers that more and more blacks are better educated and are assuming prestigious leadership positions in both the private and public sectors. Moreover, the income levels of certain members of the black community have been rising. It makes sense to predict that segments of the black population will become conservative or even Republican. Thus, the growing prominence of conservative blacks such as Thomas, Stanford Professor Thomas Sowell, former Ambassador Alan Keyes and Connecticut Rep. Gary Franks may not be a devia-

tion from the right at all, but instead a reflection of a burgeoning population of conservative blacks.

To squash this new element and to maintain group identity, many blacks seem to suppress original individual actions and thoughts by labeling other blacks with names like "Uncle Tom." If a black person criticizes redistributive social programs, he is often called insensitive to his own race. Call me ignorant, but aren't such claims a little extreme? Heck, is it so wrong for fellow students or Thomas to act independently of the political leanings of the NAACP?

It also seems to me that the apparent ideological and political division occurring in the black community is indirectly linked to ways of perceiving the actions of the white population. Suppose for instance that a prominent black economics professor, like Sowell of the Hoover Institute, supports the affirmative action policies of President Bush and many Republicans. Is Sowell, therefore, a racist like Bush is purported to be? Although the question is an inconsequential one, it brings to light the clouding of the once dichotomous labels. Now, a white man might not be so easily tagged as a racist for his conservative beliefs.

Obviously, the examination of Thomas' values has sped up the examination of race politics in this country. However, not only are the claims of quotas being called into question, but so are claims of racial unity among the black population. From this, what will happen is anyone's guess. But one might hope, as I do, that the outrageous comments of liberal blacks in this country, especially from a highly placed professor like Walters, will become increasingly ignored.

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## MAIL CALL

The Battalion is interested in hearing from its readers and welcomes all letters to the editor. Please include name, classification, address and phone number on all letters. The editor reserves the right to edit letters for style and length. There is no guarantee letters will appear. Letters may be brought to 216 Reed McDonald, sent to Campus Mail Stop 1111 or can be faxed to 845-5408.

## Youth program did not waste water

EDITOR:

Contrary to the letter to the editor regarding excessive shower water use, the Youth Opportunities Unlimited (YOU) Program was, in fact, not the responsible party Richard Szecsy accused of wasting water at Cain Pool. The YOU Program does not use the swimming facilities in mass. At the most, we have had five or six students at the pool for either swimming lessons or practice for the YOU Olympics. Even then, they used the pool in the evening under the direct supervision of the headmaster of the program and an accompanying pool staff lifeguard.

Furthermore, YOU students are in classes for four hours per day and work the remaining four hours. Our students have done an outstanding job overall of upholding the high standard of the YOU Program and Texas A&M University. Anyone who feels that our students are misusing our campus is encouraged to contact our office at 845-3304. Because of our limited pool accessibility, it is evident that a different student group was responsible for the shower abuse around Cain Pool.

**Jon Turton**  
assistant headmaster  
Texas A&M YOU Program

## Will new justice bring moderation or end to conservatism?

**Reagon Clamon**  
Columnist

You've hoped and prayed and cried and bitched about it for years. You've all sat around in nostalgic stupors lamenting its passage. The flower children walking around in tie dyes and sandals have thought of nothing else since Woodstock. The guys in three-piece suits have lost themselves in it through "Leave it to Beaver" reruns and White House press conferences. Well it's finally here, and I hope you're all satisfied. What I'm talking about is the past, and with President Bush on the verge of putting yet another conservative on the Supreme Court, it is definitely upon us.

Now that the country is about to be thrust into the 1950s, we might ask ourselves a question that many Americans were asking themselves three and a half decades ago. Does the Supreme Court have too much power and not enough checks on their ability to exercise it? In 1955 the answer from most southern Americans, and a few students of the court, would have been a resounding "yes." Of course, if the court, under the guidance of Chief Justice Earl Warren, hadn't had the power to make bold policy changes then, the country's school system might still be segregated, and black Americans might have much fewer rights than they have now. But, does the end justify the

means? In his eagerness to bring justice for the forgotten minorities of America, Warren's court blazed a trail through the already well-traveled loopholes in the Constitution. Many of the decisions made during this period of the court's history either intentionally or indirectly expanded the courts powers to a point not seen since Chief Justice John Marshall created judicial review in 1803, giving the court the power to declare an act of congress unconstitutional. In *Cooper v. Aaron* (1958), one of the decisions most responsible for the expansion of the Warren Court's power, the court stated that previous decisions could be held as general principles; in other words, they were law. Suddenly, the Warren Court was making laws without having to worry about approval from another branch and with no bothersome constituents looking over their shoulders. As Justice Warren himself put it: "We serve no majority. We serve no minority. We serve only the public interest as we see it."

Not many would now contest the fact that something needed to be done. When Warren took his seat behind the bench, he looked out at a nation in paradox: a "Land of the Free," where people were told where to eat, where to sit and where to go to the bathroom, all because of the color of their skin. Big Earl didn't shed a tear of sympathy and turn his back, though, he rolled up his sleeves and proceeded to beat some sense into the state and local governments responsible. The ensuing battle was so polarized, so "us" versus "them," that the little questions, such as "Isn't Justice Warren kinda oversteppin' his boundaries a little?" were either ignored or dismissed as racist dogma.

The Supreme Court Warren left behind on June 23, 1969, was so souped-up that it could hardly be recognized as the same branch of government mentioned in the Constitution. When Warren E. Burger, Nixon's pick to replace Earl Warren, took the driver's seat, he was at the controls of a very powerful machine. Fortunately, his foot was well away from the accelerator. With Burger's conservative, yet very inactive leadership, the court drew itself back into most of its original limitations. This is how it has remained, even when President Reagan put ultra-con-

servative William Rhenquist behind the wheel in 1986. Then came Antonin Scalia and Anthony Kennedy, both staunch conservatives. Still, the court remained fairly balanced throughout the early '80s.

In 1990 President Bush got his chance to put a conservative on the Supreme Court. He chose David Souter, a former New Hampshire state judge. So when Bush puts his second conservative on the bench, be it Clarence Thomas or not, the super-charged "Supreme Machine" will be firing on all six cylinders: Rehnquist, Scalia, Kennedy, Souter, O'Connor and the mystery man or woman.

So, should we all run to the hills? Are we doomed to lives without topless dancers or Mapletorpe photographs? I don't think so. The Supreme Court, with all its power, still has trouble in a government with an unsupportive president. Whereas the Warren Court thrived in the benevolent arms of President Kennedy, the same court withered under the attacks of President Eisenhower. All we have to do is wait for a more liberal president; possibly not for long. Fineman and Thomas of Newsweek magazine see the Supreme Court's ideological shifts as the forebearers of a change in the White

House. As they point out, in 1857, the Dred Scott decision, which declared slaves were merely property, outraged so many people that Abe Lincoln practically won the presidency for merely disagreeing with it. The conservative revival we are experiencing now, the Newsweek article contends, is the direct result of a backlash from the ultra-liberal Warren era.

What it boils down to is if Bush succeeds in putting a hard-line conservative on the bench — and he will — the Supreme Court will no doubt be the focal point of the '92 campaign. After all, when your complaining about government policy, chances are your complaining about a Supreme Court decision and screaming about the Supreme Court makes for a great campaign speech. What Bush must remember if he is to keep his Washington address, is the flame that burns twice as bright, burns half as long. An ultra-ultra conservative court might succeed in forcing the country back to the good ol' days, but if Bush's six points of light burn too brightly, they might succeed in snuffing out his chances of re-election and bring the conservative era to a close.

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