

U.S. must support U.S.S.R. in times of reformation

Democracy must not fail changing Soviet Union

The remaining communists in the world have good reason for lamentation: The Soviet Union is no longer what it was a fortnight ago.

A weary wind is blowing over the KGB headquarters in various states, carrying with it the smell of burning documents - a desperate attempt of the endangered organization to alter history.

The toppled statues of Lenin are now playmates for children, while the parents celebrate the death of the communist regime.

In Moscow, the all-Soviet Congress of People's Deputies voted to surrender power to a new body largely controlled by the republics, confirming the collapse of central authority. In its first meeting, the council recognized the independence of the three Baltic republics and approved the name change of the second largest city in the Soviet Union from Leningrad to its original name of St. Petersburg. For the hard-line communists around the world, this is a funeral. What is it for the rest of us?

There is an identity crisis going on in the United States as well, especially in the CIA and Pentagon circles. The central issue of this crisis is: if the U.S.S.R. is no longer our arch enemy, who then is? In short, it is a crisis of refocusing and reallocating energies, personnel and money.

It is clear the emerging form of the Soviet Union does not present itself as an enemy of the United States.

This is not to imply the United States should just abandon all spending for weapons production and development. But it means the efforts for disarmament should be intensified. Since the two countries are no longer the rivals they were, and since the Soviet Union is joining the ranks of the democratic countries, both countries should more vigorously pursue the goal of arms control.

The face of the world is changing. There is much less ideological distinction between East and West today. The East is eager to adapt to our ways of doing business, to our lifestyle.

What we need to do most is to help them in this painful process of transformation. With our experience and knowhow, we can smooth this rough road. Experts from both countries should make a list of problems facing the U.S.S.R., and rank them in priority order. Then, we would be able to send expert help to all areas which need it.

For instance, the Soviets face huge distribution problems. The United States could help by sending experts

to train Soviet officials in more efficient distribution techniques and policies. If the problem appears to be lack of willingness to cooperate, then the trainers should have the authority to fire uncooperative officials. This punishment is radical, but to be effective, especially in the beginning stages of reformation, softness has no place.

If the two countries can quickly reach an agreement stating their primary concern is cooperation, then a large portion of money otherwise spent on arms production could go toward helping the Soviet Union stand on its feet. President Bush says he understands the "enormous challenges that lie ahead for the Soviet people in meeting their own food and energy needs and beginning true economic reform."

The Soviets should not be allowed to feel betrayed by democracy. Of course, they should realize many days of hardship lie ahead to rebuild their collapsed economy. This is not easy for them. They always have been under very suppressive regimes. Suddenly, communism is no more, and the people must quickly adjust to democracy. It is one thing to vote for private property, market economy, entrepreneurship and foreign investment and another to work to carry them out. The chaos that will emerge once all these principles start being enforced is unimaginable.

Who gets what is a major question. The Soviet states are so interdependent, it will be difficult to come up with formulas for ownership transfer. Soviet leaders should make sure their people understand the process of transformation requires patience, sacrifice and suffering. They must inspire their people in order for them to understand what is happening is for the future, for their children. This is a difficult task because the communists also were promising a brighter future for all Soviets.

The people also must orient themselves toward the future. The model of democracy has proven successful. They can take solace from the idea that democracy works.

In the meantime, the West should provide as much technical and expert assistance as possible - something like a crash course in capitalism. With goodwill and cooperation, patience, and a willingness to work hard, the Soviet Union will stand up again. Hopefully, this time, the world will not be divided into East/West but will form a united front for a better future for all mankind.

Christina Maimarides

Maimarides is a graduate student in business administration.



Revisions on University statement on harassment will protect all students

Last spring Texas A&M President William Mobley changed the wording of the University Statement on Harassment and Discrimination despite objections by the gay and lesbian community on campus.

Mobley removed the list of protected minority groups from previous versions of the statement.

Before it was revised, the policy stated, "Students shall be treated on an equal basis in all areas and activities of the University, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin or educationally unrelated handicaps."

The new anti-discrimination policy begins, "Texas A&M University is committed to providing an educational and work climate that is conducive to the person and professional development of each individual."

"To fulfill its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, Texas A&M encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality, diversity, pluralism and the uniqueness of the individual within our state, nation and world."

"The University also strives to protect the rights and privileges and to enhance the self-esteem of all its members. Faculty, staff and students should be aware that any form of harassment and any form of illegal discrimination against any individual is inconsistent with values and ideals of the University community."

The second paragraph states, "Individuals who believe they have experienced harassment or illegal discrimination are encouraged to contact the appropriate offices within their respective unit."

The policy continues by naming the offices that handle grievances from faculty, staff and students.

Faculty senate member Larry Hickman represented the gay and lesbian campus community when he protested policy changes would cause "unqualified disaster."

Without specific reference to sexual preference in the policy, campus homosexuals believe they are no longer protected against wrongful discrimination. Gay and Lesbian Student Services has called the policy "useless."

They feel exclusion of the words "sexual orientation" is approval of discrimination against gays and lesbians.

Legal experts tend to agree that no state or federal statute prohibits discrimination against homosexuals. Hence, the University offers no protection to gays and lesbians by using the phrase "illegal discrimination" instead of listing specific minority groups.

Fearing uninhibited persecution, gay faculty and students have fought vigorously for revision in the direction of the previous, more explicit wording. They have rallied, written letters and met with state and University officials. Some have even talked about filing a

lawsuit. Despite protests heard from A&M's gay community, the new anti-discrimination/anti-harassment statement better serves the needs of this University.

The new policy is more eloquent and inclusive. It defines the University's stand more clearly while offering greater protection to every individual on campus.

While mistreatment of gay people may not fall under "illegal discrimination," they are still protected from "any form of harassment."

The 1990-91 University Regulations forbids "threatening or intimidating another individual" as well as "obscene or threatening phone calls."

A separate policy statement declares Texas A&M and all its programs will not exclude individuals on the basis of "race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin or educationally unrelated handicaps."

Notice the absence of "sexual orientation." Also under last year's regulations, the Students' Rights Appeals Panel could not hear complaints except those dealing with cases of "illegal discrimination."

The new policy wording does not change the University's stance; the statement unifies and clarifies it.

Associate Provost William Perry has said he believes "the new wording to be stronger than the old wording because it does not limit ... the groups of people who might be discriminated against."

"It provides protection for everyone," insists A&M's Dr. Murphy Smith, an associate professor of accounting.

Kevin Carreathers, director of A&M's Department of Multicultural Services, has said he believes the statement will not hurt the cause of any minority group on campus.

Exclusion of "sexual orientation" from the University's statement does not condone discrimination against homosexuals any more than it does any other group on campus.

No University statement, regardless of how explicit the wording, will actually change the way everyone behaves. As long as there is individual free choice, people still will mistreat others despite the consequences. The only way to change people's behavior is to change their attitudes.

University policy provides a basis for change by disallowing discrimination.

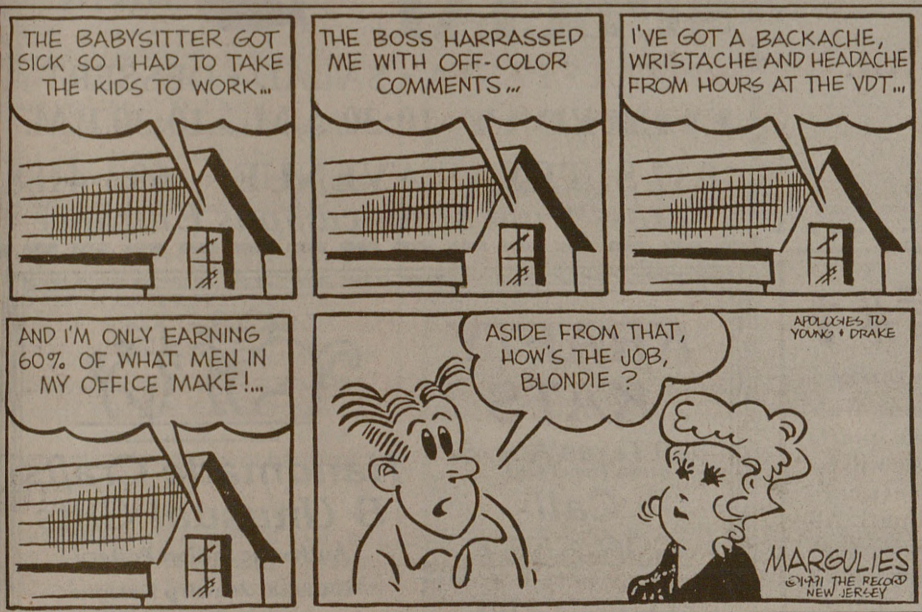
By unifying the University's stance, the new statement provides a clearer, more effective aegis against discrimination.

In Mobley's words, the revised University Statement on Harassment and Discrimination "reduces legal and interpretive ambiguities and provides a consistent basis for various other policies, procedures, rules and regulations for faculty, staff and students" while still supporting "strongly our institutional goal of an environment free of harassment and illegal discrimination."

Dwayne Purvis

Purvis is a sophomore petroleum engineering major.

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Mail Call

University limits

By Susan Maguire
The Battalion

The University's expanded Q-drop period will make Texas A&M students think about the classes they might consider dropping, but the new format will help students in the long run, said the University's registrar.

Donald Carter said Monday these changes were made to benefit the overall student population and to make running the University more efficient.

The Q-drop period for undergraduate stu-

students. The experience was one of both the GLSS and the student hole. For those who need or we are out there, we let them we are indeed here and ready to

in opinion? Express it!

Students began on the 50th class day. Any undergraduate course within this fall semester is interested in hearing from its readers. A grade of record is to the editor are welcome. Written letters must be signed and include classification, students' official transcript, daytime phone number for verification purposes. Anonymous letters will not be

The previous Q-drop period reserves the right to edit all letters for length, style and accuracy. There is no

Carter said there will appear. The previous Q-drop period may be brought to 013 Reed McDonald, sent to Campus Mail Stop 1111 or can be

25th class day, was too late. "I think it will help students

reason get into a class and "It'll help them get out so

serve them as an outreach program, as well as a group of friends to give them support and respect. Likewise, for those who were ridiculing or angry because of our presence, we also let them know "we're here, we're

queer, get used to us!"

The times of living in shame and fear as closeted homosexuals has passed.

Just because they don't agree with our lifestyle doesn't mean we should protect them from the idea of gays.

No matter what, we are going to be here. So by letting them know it, we have accomplished our goal. Closets are for clothes - we're coming out!

I'd like to thank the U.S. Constitution for giving us the right to do it, the MSC for giving us a place to do it and our fellow fightin' Texas Aggies for giving us someone to do it for.

Jeremy Collette '94