

EDITORIALS

Ethics in Texas?

Government has cleaning up to do

Two years ago, Ann Richards' promise to restore ethics to state government encouraged many people. However, recent developments indicate that the Texas government still needs a lot of work in that area. In the last two weeks, the media have exposed the blatant lack of integrity of Lena Guerrero, chairwoman of the Texas Railroad Commission. Guerrero claimed a bachelor's degree from University of Texas when in fact she lacked 19 hours, including a government class that she failed twice. One of Guerrero's campaign brochures falsely claimed that she was a member of the Phi Beta Kappa honor society. On the other hand, Guerrero's Republican opponent for the position, Barry Williamson, has worked as an independent oilman, and his father-in-law is an important figure in the Texas oil business. Given the fact that the Texas Railroad Commission controls intrastate commerce which includes the transport of oil resources, a Williamson victory could present a conflict of interest. It seems that no candidate can demonstrate the integrity that voters deserve. And even after the Guerrero revelations, Governor Richards still endorses her appointee, campaign promises notwithstanding. Government cannot operate efficiently and effectively when its bureaucrats behave unethically. Voters must continue to demand the highest levels of integrity from their representatives and leaders. They must demand the same from leaders' appointees. When these elected and appointed officials fail to exhibit ethical behavior, voters must signal their intolerance of governmental ineptitude and unprofessional behavior with their votes and their voices. And those leaders, eager to maintain their authority and power, will respond. Until then, Texas voters will continue to vote for the lesser of two evils and will continue to be confronted with later revelations of impropriety.

Free trade agreement

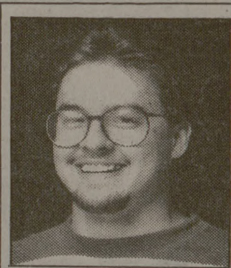
A step in the right direction

Bryan-College Station businesses and even Texas A&M students stand to benefit from the free trade proposal currently being debated before Congress should the United States, Mexico and Canada become partners in a joint trade market. Many Bryan-College Station merchants long ago recognized the positive economic aspects of the North American Free Trade Agreement. As a result, great strides have already been made in introducing their products to Mexican businesses. Many self-promoting businesses have already started the practice of sending representatives to Mexico to establish relations with Mexican business interests. The passage of the free trade proposal allows area businesses with initiative to increase their trade and by turn increase job opportunities and capital flowing into the region, thereby directly improving the lives of all Brazos County residents. Especially now that the future of the European Community is on shaky ground, the Free Trade Agreement stands to be the largest trading bloc in the world. Business opportunities abound for Texas as a whole and Bryan-College Station in specific. Even our University is planning ahead with a scheduled summer 1993 opening for a Texas A&M University Center in Mexico City that will include office space reserved for conducting business in Mexico. Among other things, the center will serve as a liaison between Aggies here and those already in Mexico. The numerous Bryan-College Station business efforts made in anticipation of the passage of the trade proposal stand as an example to all, but much more stands to be gained by those who are willing to focus on the possibilities and work towards them. The North American Free Trade Agreement is an opportunity for progress not only across our country, but in our own community.

Perot not yet a historical footnote

Candidacy may have big effect on presidential race

Ross Perot's name may still turn some people's stomachs, but it appears he will return to the presidential race within a week. And why not? The need is apparent; his campaign is prepared; and the race is ripe.

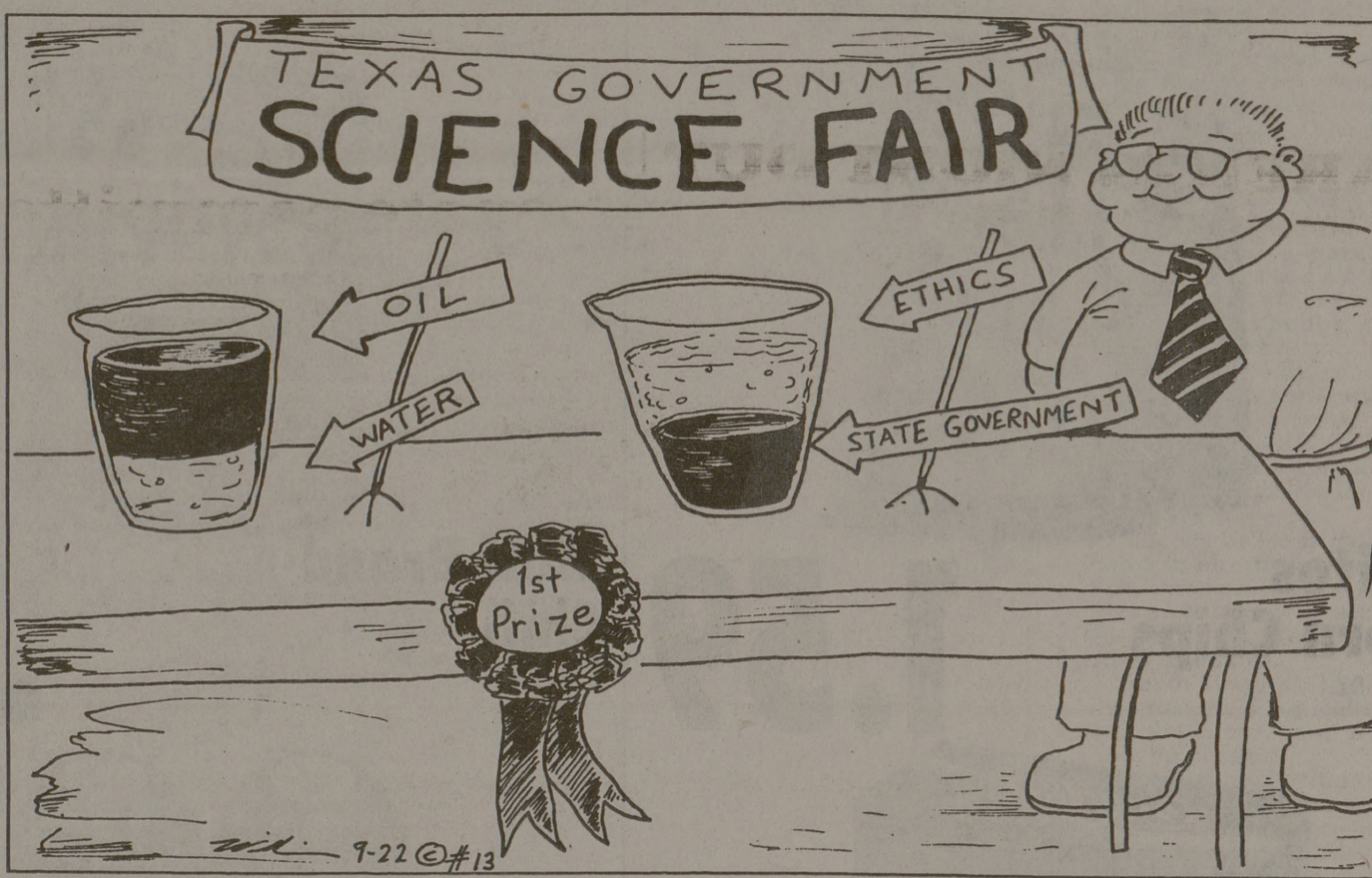


DWAYNE PURVIS
Columnist

Since Perot's withdrawal, the race has returned to politics as usual. While Republicans bludgeon the Democrat ticket, Democrats respond with vague promises of prosperity and greatness. The two camps can't even agree on a debate format. The purpose of Perot's spring campaign, ostensibly, was to restore common sense and decency to presidential politics. Since Bush and Clinton appear to have ignored the Perot ideals of common sense and decency and have continued with the status quo mudslinging and issue-dodging of presidential races past, Perot can justifiably reintroduce himself as the solution to the same old problems. While both official candidates offer plans to spur the economy, neither has produced a detailed and workable outline to reduce the federal deficit and the federal debt, two pillars of Perot's aborted campaign. Being known as a man of his word, Perot seems bound to re-enter the race after Friday's announcement that his name will appear on ballots in all 50 states. If Perot does decide to return, his campaign could be in full swing very quickly. Like a swimmer bent over the starting block, Perot's campaign was poised to dive into the race when he abruptly retracted in July. The campaign had printed signs and bumper stickers. It had established a volunteer infrastructure. It had even produced a television commercial that was never aired. Perot had gained enough experience on the campaign trail to have worked out many of the bugs. By the time he withdrew, voters were familiar enough with Perot to feel like they knew him, but the "knight in shining armor" dropped from the race as media attention began to sour, and some said he would not be able to

return. Today, however, the billionaire's paperback platform continues to top best seller lists. With the release of this plan, Perot gave voters a clear idea of his position, unfettered by the trappings of partisan politicking and vague abstraction. Opinion makers now know where Citizen Perot stands and therefore can offer better coverage of Candidate Perot. Meanwhile, the other two campaigns have failed to shore up the core support to resist a Perot challenge. Polls show that among those supporting each candidate, relatively few are firmly committed. The large portion of fringe supporters offer possibilities to building a third party campaign. Conveniently spared three months of partisan attacks, Perot seems to have an excellent foundation from which to resurrect his campaign. When he does throw his name back into the hat, almost anything could happen. I think he will fare well but will fail to garner a majority of the votes. While Clinton and Bush continue pummeling each other, voter skepticism grows. A renewed Perot campaign could draw the same enthusiastic response in October that it drew in April and May. A renewed campaign could take on the "knight in shining armor" aura that it had in the early spring as Perot emerges anew with a moral mission, an uncommon sense, and an unselfish patriotism. (Not to mention bundles of media attention.) The other two campaigns will suffer as Perot's builds. His traditionally defined conservatism coupled with his commitment to change and his strong moral appearance will draw away many moderates that had turned to Bush for safety or to Clinton for hope. By the time Nov. 3 rolls around, Perot will own a good portion of the vote. No candidate will win a majority, throwing the election into the House of Representatives where members will vote strictly along party lines. However, the strong showing of this maverick outsider should shake things up enough to redefine the American political landscape and help open the doorway for third parties in future elections.

Purvis is a junior petroleum engineering major



MAIL CALL

Sportswriter should back football team

Dear Mr. O'Brien — Whose side are you on anyway? It seems that in a time when Texas A&M University is having a hard enough time keeping our students united, our sportswriter could write a positive column about our Aggie team, which happens to be 4-0. Whether or not the Aggies have the fifth best team in the nation is not for you nor I to decide, but hell, they've been working their rear ends off for months now to get to this point, let's give them some credit. They have been challenged four times, three of the four on the opponents' turf, and walked away triumphant every time. I realize it is your job to report the facts, and the facts aren't always as pleasing as everyone would like, but please, let's not condemn a coach and his team for "finding" a way to a perfect record.

Trent Bishop
Class of '93

Battalion coverage slights minorities

We feel that The Battalion's coverage of the Hispanic Presidents Council (HPC) "Unity Rally" was both incomplete and inaccurate. HPC does not only consist of the Mexican American Engineers and Scientists (MAES), but it is also represented by the Committee for the Awareness of Mexican American Culture, Hispanic Business Students' Association, Kappa Delta Chi, El movimiento Estudiantil Chicanos de Aztlan, and Omega Delta Phi. The Battalion's failure to recognize each of the organizations comprising HPC was unfair to those groups which had invested time, energy, and effort into the "Unity Rally". Second, the quotes used by The Battalion in describing the rally failed to reflect the spirit of the event. A reading of the quotes in The Battalion's article implies that HPC's concerns are internal as opposed to external. On the contrary, the "Unity Rally" was not intended to insult or denounce an existing apathy of institutions. The "Unity Rally" had hoped to convey 1) the importance of Unifying A&M's Hispanic students on campus into a collective voice, 2) the numbers and demographics reflecting the inadequate representation of Latino students at Texas A&M, 3) the issues (i.e. litigation, academic diversity, education policies based on free market as opposed to social ideologies), 4) the

tribulations of a Chicano student at a predominantly White institution and 5) the resources which can be used and improved so as to promote positive change amongst the Latino students at Texas A&M. Our last concern deals with the fact that the news media continues to either ignore or distort the realities of the Latino's political situation. The Battalion, itself a microcosm of the news media, has performed no differently in its coverage of Hispanic politics at Texas A&M. When the politics of the mainstream leadership councils are an issue, such inadequacies are not apparent. For instance, when the first student government meeting of the year was held, The Battalion was both quick and efficient concerning its coverage of the event. The politics of the minority students, however, do not seem to warrant the same respect. This is particularly true of Latinos, who are too frequently regarded as invisible entities. Again, we must reiterate the point that this is what HPC's rally had intended to address; the fact that the Latinos at Texas A&M are united— not to wake ourselves up from a political lethargy but rather to inform the mainstream that we as a group will not tolerate being ignored.

David P. Sanchez
Class of '94
President, Hispanic Presidents Council
accompanied by 12 signatures

A&M suffers from political intolerance

Since I am an English exchange student who is only going to be at Texas A&M for one year, some people may feel that I have no right to comment on the nature of your presidential election campaign. However, what I was a witness to while standing in line waiting to hear Dan Quayle speak on Tuesday has caused me to put pen to paper. I was patiently waiting in line when a man carrying a sign which was obviously not in favor of the Bush/Quayle campaign began to walk up and down the opposite sidewalk. Admittedly, this sign did not contain the most constructive criticism of Bush that has ever been seen, but that is no excuse for what followed. A police car had been cruising up and down the road keeping an eye on the crowd when two men who had been standing in line flagged them down and presumably complained about the sign. The man was then instructed to move on and to refrain from displaying his sign. Is this a one party campus where no dissent is tolerated? A similar thing occurred inside the G. Rollie White Coliseum. Some people who had managed to evade the rules laid down by the College Republicans had managed to get a pro-Democrat sign in — however, this too was quickly suppressed. I thought, being a political science

major, that the First Amendment was supposed to protect people's right to free speech. In order to maintain a healthy democracy, opposing views must be heard. It is to be hoped that Dan Quayle does not think that the rest of the nation will be as receptive to him as Texas A&M.

David Stead
Exchange student

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