

Opinion

Student Senate program helps children, shows Aggie hospitality



RICHARD PADDACK

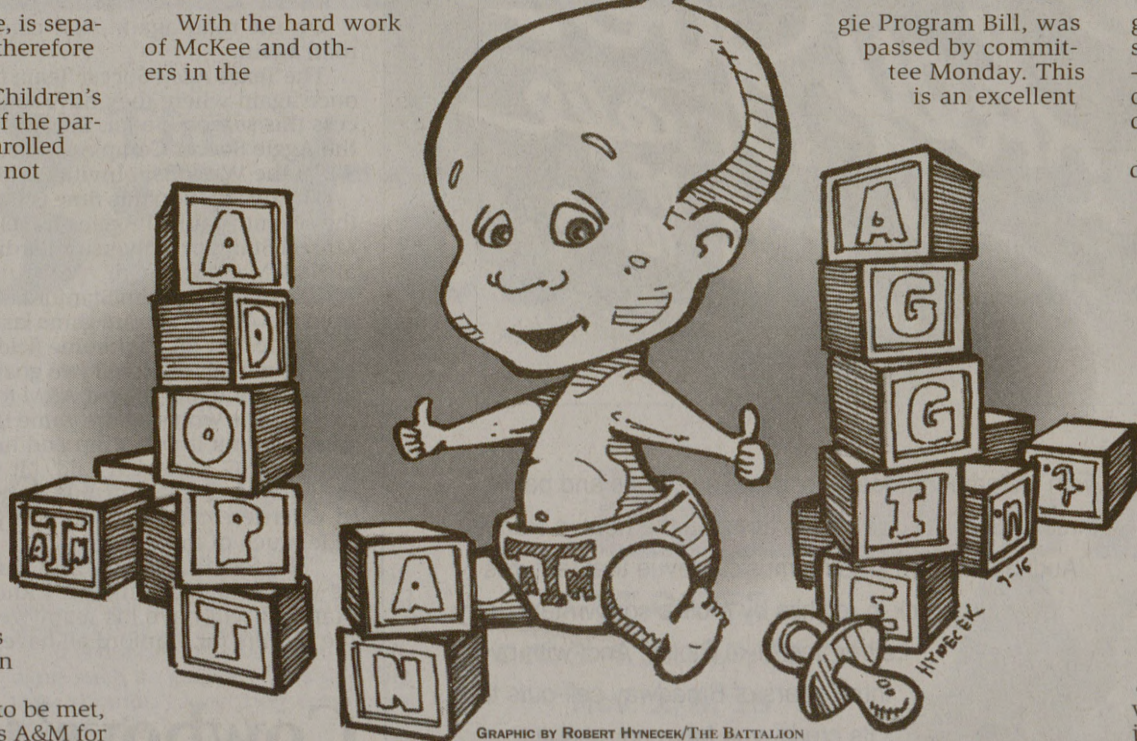
again the Texas M Student Sen- has stepped up for the greater Aggiekind. The completion of the Children's Center, students, faculty can continue classes and at A&M, confi- their little ones are in good d close by. s to the undying support of the senate and the Student Govern- association, the new high-quality e facility is now within reach of need of financial assistance. ycare was instituted by A&M ed its doors on Aug. 31. Children's Center provides high- are while utilizing the academic s of the University, and the stu- culty and staff will benefit from such as convenient hours, an location, and part-time care," abeth McKee, a student senator or animal science major. ew baby-undergrad playland con- classrooms, two offices, a kitchen ouse, a huge playroom. Monday, the Children's Center ed as far as funding goes. hugh the daycare center carries

the Texas A&M University name, is sepa- rate from the University and is therefore required to raise its own funds. This makes it tough for the Children's Center considering a majority of the par- ents who have their children enrolled are students. Most students are not making the professional wages necessary to pay the center's monthly fees. Although the fees are steep, they are comparable to other daycares in the area, providing the same care. The fees at the Chil- dren's Center range from \$360 to \$475 a month for children ranging from infants to pre-kindergarten. "The Children's Center offers subsidies to low-in- come families in need of fi- nancial assistance who would not otherwise be able to af- ford child care," McKee said. The center has set guidelines for those who need assistance in paying for tuition. "In order for these subsidies to be met, the center must go beyond Texas A&M for financial assistance," McKee said. "These subsidies are crucial for students with families, so that they might have the op- portunity to finish their education."

With the hard work of McKee and others in the

Aggie Program Bill, was passed by commit- tee Monday. This is an excellent

goal of 50 percent subsidies, enabling several families — students and faculty — who could not have afforded the facility before, to utilize the new Chil- dren's Center. The program is designed so that donors may sponsor a child enrolled in the Children's Center. The donors will then be responsible for providing at least a minimum percentage of the child's tuition. The program will be carried out by Texas Aggies Making Changes in conjunction with a liaison that will be appointed by the Student Senate Internal Affairs Committee. Since the beginning of the school year the Student Senate has made some great strides to improve Texas A&M and the re- sults have been positive. With their recent efforts in or- ganizing the new Adopt a Future Aggie program, the senate is defi- nitely leading by example. Any orga- nization on campus is eligible to adopt a future Aggie. In the caring words of Sally Stuthers, "Sponsoring just one child can make all the differ- ence in the world."



GRAPHIC BY ROBERT HYNEX/THE BATTALION

Student Senate, a plan was devised and a bill was passed. The bill is called Adopt a Future Ag-

opportunity for Aggies to help out Ag- gies. If all goes as planned, the new program will help to meet the center's

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ent witnesses still carry blame



MANISHA PAREKH

ice Iver- will er go on date or e from ool. ice Iver- never ex- the joy in love. never get or have children. ice Iverson never even ed her eighth birthday. 25, 1997, Iverson was n the women's bathroom rrimadonna Casino by er and a female employee. d been missing for several and when she was finally t was too late. partially clothed body in in a bathroom stall, d slumped over to one rensic pathologists dis- that Sherrice had been strangled and molested. ck muscles had been point of tearing. Her tissue showed signs of tion and hemorrhaging. on was only seven. es like this make the public lunteers will with pain. They wonder and of savage world this is. ke Iverson's make people if anyone can protect the rom heartless predators. that is probably the sad- rt about Sherrice Iverson's omeone could have pro- r, saved her. Only he ot to get involved. as not any of his business. e said. my Strohmeyer, 19, plead- y to sexually assaulting angling Sherrice Iverson, before his Sept. 8 trial. tors had a strong case Strohmeyer, including his sion and a video surveil- ape showing him enter the m with Iverson during a

game of hide-and-seek. The tape also showed that minutes later, Strohmeyer's friend, David Cash Jr., entered the bathroom for a short time, then left the scene. Cash did not try to stop Strohmeyer from harming Iverson. He did not alert security personnel that he had seen Strohmeyer force Iverson into the bathroom stall, or that Strohmeyer had threatened to kill the girl. And after Strohmeyer confessed to Cash that he had as- saulted and murdered the girl, Cash still did not tell authorities. He went on to spend a fun- filled day in Las Vegas with Strohmeyer and then returned home to Los Angeles. Jeremy Strohmeyer was sen- tenced to life in prison without possibility of parole. He will never be a threat to any child ever again. For his cruel act, Strohmeyer will never be a free man again. For his inaction and disregard, David Cash is attending his first se- mester at Berkeley. Because Neva- da has no "Good Samaritan" law, Cash can not be charged with what is most certainly a crime. He has told reporters his only regret is that his best friend is behind bars. He feels no sympathy for Iverson; he did not know her or her family. He does admit that the death of Iver- son has impacted his life: he said it was easier for him to pick up girls. Who is the true monster here? Jeremy Strohmeyer was direct- ly responsible for Iverson's death, and for that, he feels remorse and guilt. Strohmeyer is paying the price for his crime and, in some small way, making restitution for the horrible deed he committed. Defense attorney Leslie Abramson told reporters that Strohmeyer "believes he is to blame. But I think if we want to prevent this in the future, we have to look farther than that be- cause he was not a bad seed." How true. Strohmeyer is a crim-

inal, a murderer and a very sick man, but he is not a bad seed. At least in the end, he admitted his guilt and accepted punishment. Can that be said of David Cash? Cash and his lawyer argue that he did nothing wrong. He was not the one who murdered Iverson. But Cash's silence allowed Iverson to die. Cash's inaction al- lowed his friend to take the life of a little girl. Legally, Cash did nothing wrong. But as a human, his inaction is indefensible. Many students at Berkeley have taken up the cause of Sher- rice Iverson and vowed to make Cash's life miserable. More power to them. Even though Cash can argue that he did nothing wrong, his peers know that he did nothing right, either. And they do not want a person who lacks the sim- ple decency to help a fellow hu- man in need to be amongst them. David Cash may not have com- mitted a crime according to the laws of Nevada, but he did commit a crime against humanity. And for that, he should pay a stiff penalty. Congressional lawmakers are trying to make sure that other David Cashes pay the price for their inaction. Rep. Nick Lampson of Texas is trying to get the "Sherrice Iverson Act" passed by Con- gress. The act would require states to impose criminal penalties on witnesses who fail to report sexual crimes against children. It is a start. Unfortunately, it comes to late to help Sherrice herself. In the mean time, Cash be- moans the public sentiment against him. He claims that he should be allowed to get an edu- cation. He was just an innocent bystander. He just wants to get on with his life. That was probably what Sher- rice Iverson wanted also.

Manisha Parekh is a junior psychology and journalism major.

MIKE LUCKOVICH ATLANTA CONSTITUTION



Aggies' character not tied to address

In response to Len Callaway's Sept. 15 column: Len Callaway's column "Aggie against Aggie" failed to point out that there are some in Hart Hall who do not participate in imma- ture acts of stupidity. In fact, many are ashamed of their fellow residents' behavior. I do not wish to justify the acts of those who disrespected one of the greatest traditions in the world, but do not judge our character and integrity by the "jackassery" of those students we are forced to share a resi- dence hall with. You cannot judge a man's char- acter by his physical address or the actions of his peers. If a journalist acted immaturity, I would not judge all the journalism majors by one moron. That is not just. There is still Aggie Spirit in Hart Hall. There are some of us who still follow the Aggie Code of Honor and who are not alcoholics, smokers or hecklers. Above all, there are some who will not tolerate being viewed negatively for being forced to live with barnyard animals. It is true, student rivalries do hurt campus unity, but please acknowledge that not all of Hart is heartless. Van W. Gardner II Class of '02

Wage increase harms workers

In response to Stewart Patton's Sept. 16 column: The assumption that increas- ing minimum wage will help the poor is unfounded and misguided. I am currently a minimum wage worker, and when I was looking for a job for the first time, I had a very difficult time. The main reason was businesses could not afford to hire me at the new minimum wage. When I did find a job, the higher wage did not help me since prices were raised with minimum wage. Raising minimum wage will only speed the increase of inflation. President Clinton insults the public when he presents a minimum wage increase as an effective solu- tion to poverty in America. Instead of white-washing the problem, Clinton should examine why poverty is a problem, and then search for a solution. Jerilyn Gragg Class of '01

to read the front page story about state GOP candidates. It had no dissenting viewpoint whatsoever. The story proclaimed that Rick Perry, candidate for lieutenant governor, was a Republican, an Aggie, and a former yell leader. So what? Garry Mauro, Demo- cratic candidate for governor is an Aggie and was a yell leader. John Sharp, Democratic challenger to Rick Perry is an Aggie, a former member of the Corps of Cadets, and former student body president. By writing its pep-rally piece for the Republicans, *The Battalion* neglects the voters of Texas A&M. Our University deserves balanced and fair coverage of issues which shape our future. Jack Harvey Class of '99 Accompanied by 14 signatures

The *Battalion* encourages letters to the editor. Letters must be 300 words or less and include the author's name, class and phone number. The opinion editor reserves the right to edit letters for length, style, and accuracy. Letters may be submitted in person at 013 Reed McDonald with a valid student ID. Letters may also be mailed to: The *Battalion* - Mail Call 013 Reed McDonald Texas A&M University College Station, TX 77843-1111 Campus Mail: 1111 Fax: (409) 845-2647 E-mail: batt@tamvm1.tamu.edu

Coverage neglects Democratic Aggies

In response to Sept. 14 "GOP hopefuls host rally" article: We expect *The Battalion* opin- ion page to promote the Republi- can agenda, but we were shocked

Federal police cause lawlessness

Under the guise of making Germany safer for Germans, Adolf Hitler built one of the most efficient police forces in history. Hitler's police were basically army units responsible for "law en- forcement." With the same mis- guided aim of making American streets safer, local and state law enforcement agencies have abdicated their roles to federal law enforce- ment agencies in order to create a centralized police force. The FBI, for example, routinely takes ownership of criminal cases they have no legal claim to. Apparently, federalism has a different meaning today than it did to Alexander Hamilton, John Jay and James Madison. As an increasingly political or- ganization, the FBI feels entitled to handle cases such as "hate" crimes that are local matters and not a part of any conspiracy. Some argue this national ad- ministration of serious crimes brings more efficient law enforce- ment. Totalitarianism, however, is the most efficient legal system, but it has not been adopted. The federalization of police is more than national organizations aping local jurisdiction. Local units also subscribe to the philo- sophy that more power brings bet- ter law enforcement. The SWAT team is a good ex-

ample of a more general issue: policing at the local level shifts from patrols and community co- operation for the apprehension of criminals to midnight raids and dictates from above — hauntingly similar to Kristallnacht. Granted, the use of SWAT teams is justified in extreme cases, but its use raises serious questions. Crime has risen, not declined, since the start of the federal ap- proach to law enforcement. Our society is more, not less, afraid of crime now than it was before the advent of centralized local police. Even the president is so afraid of bodily harm that he has his own palace guard stationed around the clock to protect him from injury. Any elderly German will tell you he felt no safer as a result of gun control and the foundation of Hitler's military police units. A casual glance at the mace canisters and car alarm controls attached to so many college students' key chains will tell you all you need to know about the effectiveness of American law enforcement today. Even more troubling than the federalization of police is the atti- tude that a suspect is presumed guilty before he is judged innocent. God help the citizen who is in the wrong place at the wrong time. The SWAT team will break down his door, haul him to jail, and subject him much psycholog- ical and physical discomfort be- fore any sort of charges are brought against him. If an individual is lucky enough to avoid such dishonor,

he will be judged guilty by the media before he is brought to trial and declared innocent. Even the innocents are not spared from this assumption: no college student can walk around campus unmonitored by the ever- present "security" camera. The security camera sends the message to the observed that no one can be trusted. It states the fact that our society is more concerned with the accumulation and reten- tion of wealth than the individual rights of citizens. Perhaps the most ominous facet of American law enforcement is the way in which it is conducted. Telephone tapping, national and state identification systems, video surveillance, data matching, police information systems and medical record databases all illustrate that the mechanisms for authoritarian- ism are already in place. America is not very far from the founding of a thought police that uses universally distributed information to track down and persecute perfectly innocent Americans. The struggle for law enforcement has become one of safety vs. equality. Sadly, many Americans would gladly purchase a little temporary safety at the price of their freedom. To paraphrase Samuel Adams, anyone who loves wealth or tranquility more than the strug- gle for freedom and liberty is not a true American. Josh Maskow is a sophomore computer science major.



JOSH MASKOW