

in the present context, as the issue is the greater than 60 percent loss of purchasing power by TAs and AIs over the last 10 years.

It is rather unsettling to hear Mr. Thomas agree that we are indeed exploited by our employer, yet in the same breath seem to deny our right to redress (or fair labor practices.) And in point of fact, the Legislature's recent efforts on our behalf are only a token measure: \$27/month more for this assistant instructor.

I believe we have the right to maintain our purchasing power from year to year and that TA/AI demands are therefore reasonable. And if, as Mr. Thomas suggests, the problem is that our employer has too much power, it is our duty to try to increase our power. I suggest that joining the UEU is an appropriate first step.

David Coberly
Economics

Statements in error

I would like to correct some inaccuracies in the series that recently appeared in *The Daily Texan* having to do with the legislation currently before the University Council concerning a new sequence of required English courses. Mr. Herring states in the article on Monday, Feb. 23, that I consider this proposal a move to "help alleviate ... 'functional illiteracy' among college students." I am also quoted as saying that the Hereford-Sledd study of 1976 "shows that many students cannot write a coherent sentence, cannot express themselves on paper and cannot read."

Both of these statements imputed to me are seriously in error. I never made them, and I disagree with both. I am all the more disturbed by them since I spent almost half an hour of my long interview with

Mr. Herring denying statements like these. This interview preceded Mr. Herring's article by almost five days. In fact I referred Mr. Herring to recent studies made in 1979 and 1980 by Drs. Stephen Witte and Lester Faigley which support the notion that students in E306 improve significantly in writing and in reading skills. Other studies by Barbara Schwartz and Susan Burton, from the library staff, show that the freshmen also improve significantly in the use of library techniques. Further, I don't believe that the second statement imputed to me above is even justified by the Hereford-Sledd report. And I took pains to point this out to Mr. Herring also.

I believe that the students who come to our university are far from being "functional illiterates"; and I further believe that the composition teachers in freshman English are doing better than an average job. Both of these statements can be supported by solid empirical evidence.

James L. Kinneavy
Department of English

Excited anticipation

I can only with great excitement and expectation wait for the next issue of *UTmost*, for therein will I find that other students of Dr. Dumbrowsky's felt him to be their favorite professor. It is true that he is mediocre and absent minded (he once looked at the roll and thought that I was the teacher and he the student), but his kind — those who riddle meaningful questions with light while denying meaningful existence — shall inherit the University and bring it to new glory and esteem.

Peter Dombrowsky
Mathematics