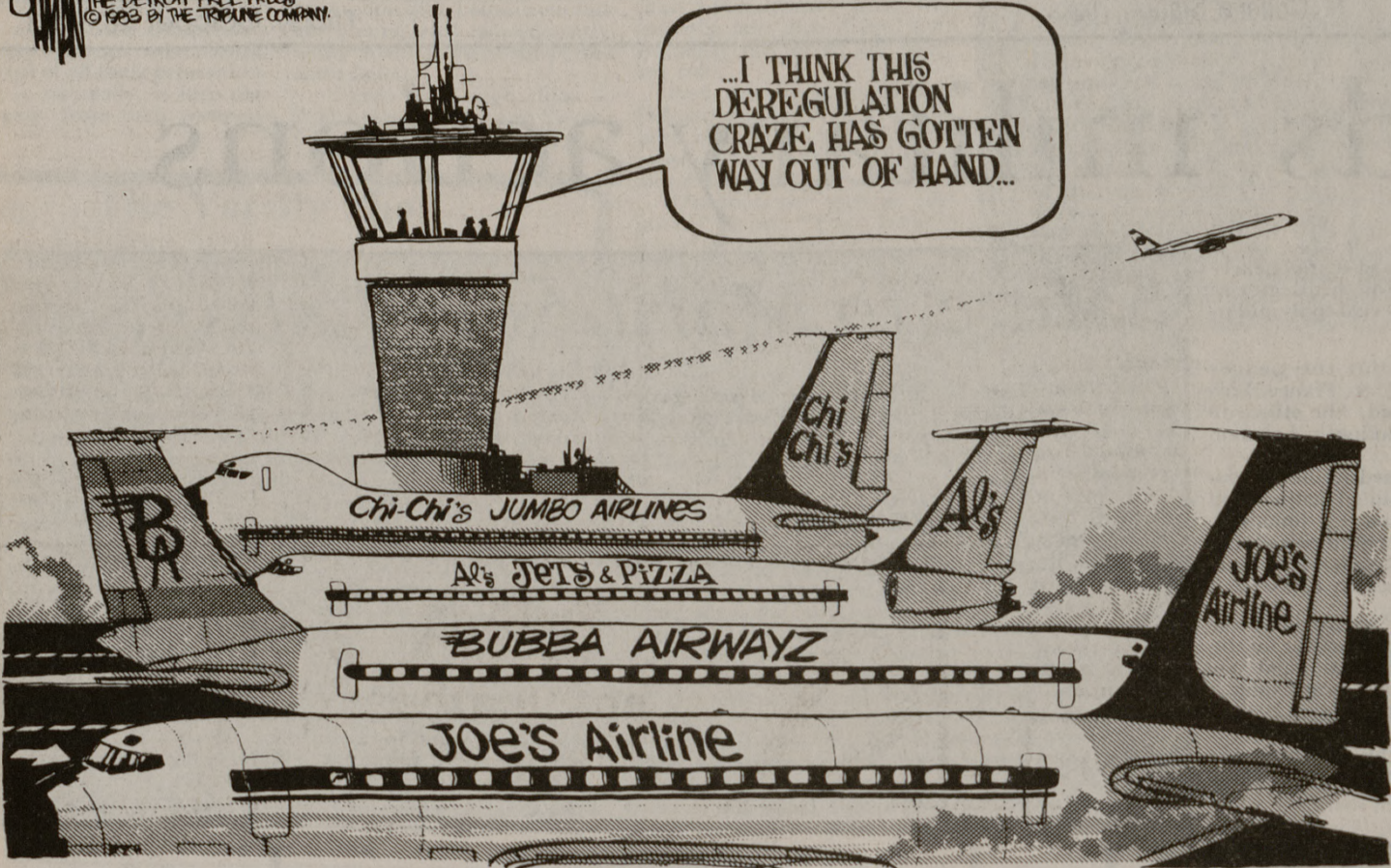


# opinion

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## When will we ever learn

I am a child of our times — times of uneasy peace.

My first-hand knowledge of war is limited. I am naive, having experienced neither the patriotic fervor of a nation on fire with a cause nor the disillusionment of a people that has seen its ideals twisted, bloodied and trampled in the dust with the bodies of its defeated troops.

The Vietnam War is a vague childhood memory to me, fleshed out with facts force-fed in history class.

The closest the war came to me was during my elementary school years, when a neighborhood store sold metal bracelets engraved with names of POWs still in Vietnam. It was just a fad, and there was no way we could really understand what the bracelets symbolized.

The only exposure I've had to the military is here on campus, living near the Quad. The cadets drill and train and polish their brass to look sharp for periodic reviews, but somehow it seems like little more than a game. I picture them holding desk jobs at military bases or doing research for the Pentagon, not lying broken and bleeding, buried in the rubble of a bombed building.

But even though my experiences are limited, I know what others say war is like. Out of all the books I complained about having to read for various history



kathy wiesepepe

and literature classes, a few facts did sink in.

In Stephen Crane's "The Red Badge of Courage," I saw a young man's disillusionment when he saw that the Civil War was not the glory and honor he had envisioned, but sweat and blood and pitiful, groaning, dying men.

"The Guns of August" by Barbara Tuchman showed me how the delicate balance of political power can collapse like a pile of jackstraws when one seemingly insignificant support is removed, as it did when international alliances crumbled and the first world war exploded in hatred, violence and death.

And "Hiroshima" by John Richard Hersey described the horrors of nuclear war — the lightning-quick burst of blinding power leaving in its wake burned and crippled corpses and bodies poisoned by radiation.

My generation is not ignorant. We have the knowledge of the past to guide us beyond our ancestors' mistakes.

Yet, here is the United States, at war. Yes, war — though no one seems to want to call it that. In Lebanon, the Marines are a "peace-keeping force." In Grenada, the U.S. troops will "restore order to a chaotic government."

But no amount of political rhetoric can cover up the ugly facts. Over 200 Americans were slaughtered in Lebanon this week. The United States, without provocation and with no threat to our own country, invaded Grenada, losing more lives in the process.

American flags are flying at half staff across the country. Major newspapers have been publishing lists of those killed or wounded in Lebanon as the bodies are identified. Marines are barricading their bases in Beirut, and troop reinforcements are on the way to Grenada.

We are at war. Didn't we learn anything in history?

## Nixon's corrupt politician image reason for opposition as speaker

(Editor's note: William Heye is a mechanical engineering major at Texas A&M. His article was accompanied by five signatures.)

by William B. Heye III

The Battalion reported several weeks ago that the Endowed Lecture Series Committee of the Memorial Student Center is considering three proposals for its 1984 lecture series. Two of these three proposals deal with arms control and each of these two involve inviting Richard M. Nixon to speak on our campus.

We appreciate the efforts of the En-

### reader's forum

dowed Lecture Series Committee to bring quality programs to Texas A&M. Such programs are educational and help enhance the reputation of the University. We oppose, however, Richard Nixon being invited to speak on our campus.

There are numerous reasons why we oppose his speaking on our campus, but the main reason is that he epitomizes the corrupt politician in this country.

Whether or not he was behind the Watergate break-in, he did resign and he did accept a pardon from the law. These are not typical actions of honest men.

We think others at this University would agree that Nixon symbolizes one of the lowest points, not only in American politics, but also in American justice.

We realize, of course that politics will always be plagued with a certain amount of corruption, and that Nixon may have been doing what all presidents do, but the corruption should not be ignored.

We feel that inviting such a glaring example of corruption as Richard M. Nixon to speak on any topic at our campus would be to do exactly that — ignore his past affiliation with corruption. It is our responsibility to oppose such an act of ignorance.

A member of the Endowed Lecture Series Committee was approached with these thoughts. His reply was that while the Endowed Lecture Series did not in any way condone Nixon's connections with Watergate, they did feel that his experience with the Soviet Union and arms control was unique and that this therefore justified his being invited to speak at Texas A&M.

In fact, his statements are echoed in one of the three Endowed Lecture proposals recently approved by the MSC Council. The proposal reasons that:

"President Nixon, having known most every (sic) world leader since World War II, and successfully negotiating several treaties with the Soviet Union (,) is uniquely qualified to address these important issues."

Ignoring the fact that the present leaders of the Soviet Union and China both came into power after Nixon resigned from office, we still disagree with the committee's reasoning.

Nixon's association with Watergate and the damage Watergate did to the credibility of the American government overshadow any accomplishments he may have made while in office.

The question is whether or not his "knowledge" is worth the price we would have to pay. We would have to tell the rest of the country that Mr. Nixon's connections with corruption 10 years ago are forgiven and forgotten at Texas A&M.

The price for his knowledge and his name seem a bit expensive.

If we invite Richard Milhous Nixon to Texas A&M, we will have accepted his past and can expect to have encouraged similar "quality" behavior from future politicians.

They will know that if they are ever connected with corruption they can be put back on the lecture circuit inside of 10 years.

### Slouch

By Jim Earle



"Would you somehow communicate to your pet that he is not getting under the covers with me!"

# Letters

## Beirut reminds vet of Vietnam

**Editor:**  
I was very sorry to hear about all of the Marines who were killed in Lebanon over the weekend. It reminds me of the Vietnam War.

When I was drafted into the army during the Vietnam War, we were told that the United States was in clear and immediate danger from the communists in Vietnam.

When I got home, I found out that every friend I had in high school had been shot in Vietnam.

What difference did the sacrifices made by the U.S. servicemen in Vietnam make? They all died for nothing.

If they start another war I know I wouldn't go. Remember, you can wind up like me finding out you don't have any friends left when you get home or you might be blown to bits, all for nothing.

I don't believe in fighting wars, but ask yourself when they ask you to fight: are they willing to use the atom bomb to really win the war if that is what it takes?

In other words, is this country really committed to winning? If not, there is no reason to get involved.

I believe we should bring the troops home now before any more of our people are killed.

I hear a lot of talk about how much money people donate to Texas A&M and I really wonder where it all goes to. I would think that Texas A&M would want to support a vet like myself until I finish my degree so that I can really go home as soon as possible.

I guess what they are trying to tell me is those who serve their country are suckers, and suckers never get any breaks. Personally, I don't take pride in the way some people treat vets, either, and I doubt they would treat you any better if you serve your country.

Dan Eggers

## What's your feeling?

**Editor:**  
I am a student at a university that is 1) world class, or 2) on its way to becoming world class. The key word is world. Hold that thought.

Having begun my fourth year here, I am convinced that all Texas A&M students are totally aware that:

- 1) The Corps has existed, does exist, and will exist.
- 2) Muster, Taps, not walking on the MSC grass, yell practice, bonfire, and saying "Howdy" are traditions here.
- 3) Highway six runs both ways.

It is very possible to go through a semester carrying a full load, actively participating in one or more organizations, maintaining a healthy social life, and generally becoming so involved in Texas A&M and college life that you don't have time to write letters to the Battalion editor.

But if you do find the time, couldn't it please be about something we don't already know?

From reading the letters on the editorial page, I see written over and over again the same views on the same topics (one through three above) that I've been reading about for three years.

How does the Texas A&M student body feel about what is happening in the world? Doesn't anybody have an opinion on Grenada? What about the massacre in Lebanon? Should President Reagan run again? Should we be in Nicaragua? How do you think you'll be affected by unemployment when (if) you graduate?

Since this remark elicited a lot of response to a letter last week, I'll ask in the hopes of doing the same: "Who cares?" I'd really like to know.

Anita Renteria

## Confrontation right

**Editor:**  
In regards to the conflict in Grenada, I am so thankful for a president who is afraid of confronting oppression and Marxism.

President Reagan was right on this problem now rather than later. There was a greater build up of backed troops in Grenada.

General MacArthur expressed aptly when he said, "I know what other men now living know and what thing to me is more revolting: once war is forced upon us, the other alternative than to apply available means to bring it to a stop."

"War's very object is victory, prolonged indecision. In war there is no substitute for victory. There are no reasons for varying reasons would be an appeasement."

"They are blind to history's lesson, for history teaches with a malleable emphasis that appeasement gets new and bloodier war. It is a single instance where the end justified the means, where appeasement led to more than a sham peace."

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Columns and guest editorials also are not subject to the same length constraints. Address all inquiries and correspondence to The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843, or phone 261.1.

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