

OPINION

Black History Month should interest all

February is Black History Month, a time to commemorate the contributions of black Americans to this country.

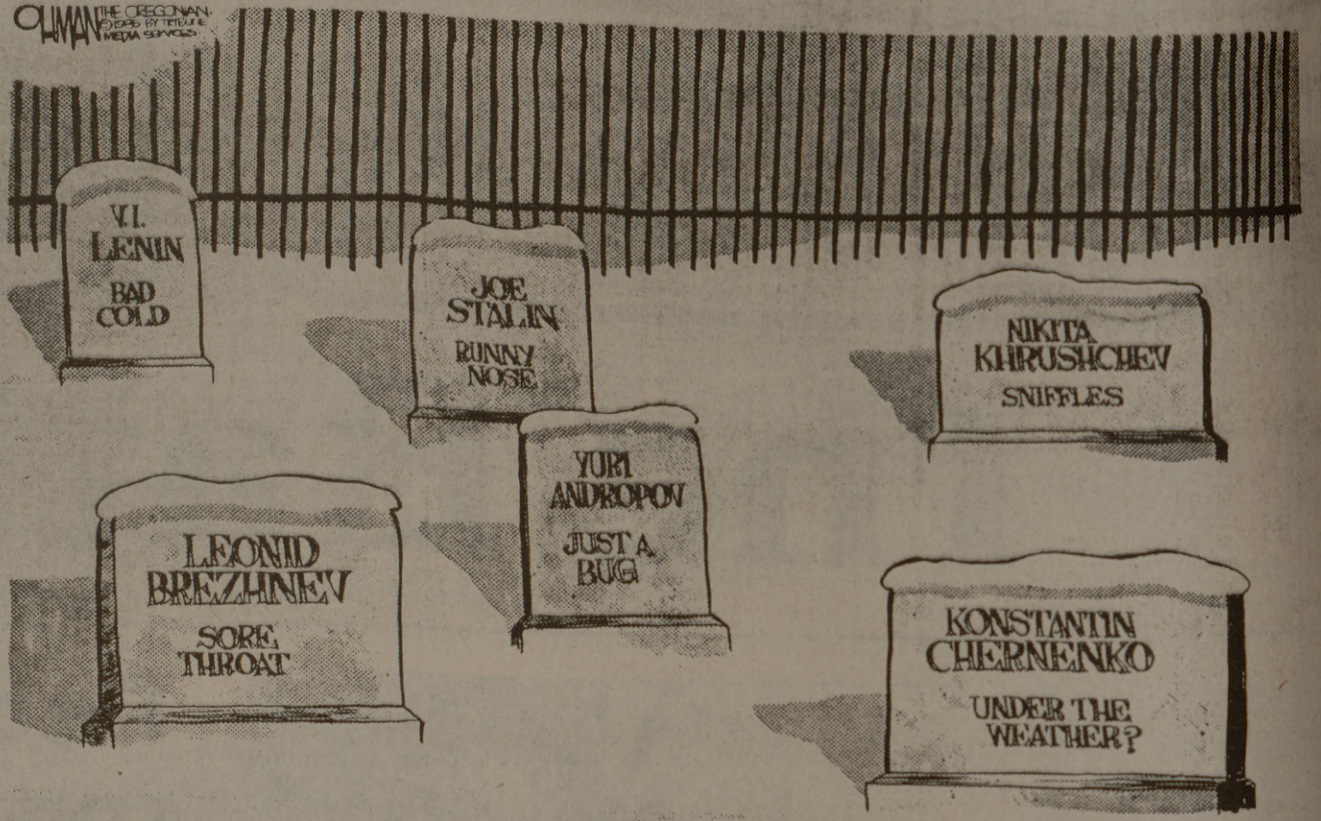
Texas A&M's Black Awareness Committee is celebrating Black History Month with the theme "Unfolding the Past, Paving the Future." BAC has events scheduled throughout the month.

Black History Month is not just for blacks. It is for all Americans, all people interested in history, culture and people.

Although only a small percentage of students and faculty at A&M are black, this month's events should not be restricted to such a small audience. The Battalion Editorial Board encourages everyone to participate in Black History Month.

A university is a place for broadening horizons. Learning goes beyond classrooms and books. And an education from one viewpoint alone is no education at all.

The Battalion Editorial Board



Is the right to bomb constitutional right?

By ART BUCHWALD

Columnist for The Los Angeles Times Syndicate

I dropped in on a "Right to Bomb" anti-abortion meeting the other night.

The speaker was holding several sticks of dynamite as he addressed his small but fervent audience.

He said, "Now the purpose in blowing up abortion clinics is to show the country we're serious about saving unborn lives."

There was loud applause.

"Everyone talks about anti-abortion, but nobody does anything about it. The 'Right to Bomb' movement believes that marching and silent vigils are a waste of time, and the only way people will listen is if we make a loud explosion."

The audience laughed.

"Bombing abortion clinics is just another way of saying that we revere human life. We want to make our blasts so loud that every congressman and Supreme Court justice will hear them and know the 'Right to Bomb' people means business."

Loud applause.

"Blowing up bricks and mortar is nothing compared to killing millions of babies," the speaker said. "But if we don't prove the end justifies the means, we have no right to call ourselves profilers."

The speaker continued, "The most important thing in blowing up an abortion clinic is making sure that your bomb works. Every time you set off a dud, you give aid and comfort to the criminals. Now are there any questions so far?"

A teenager got up. "I never made a bomb before. How do you do it?"

"After the formal meeting we will break up in study groups and our instructors will show you. It's quite simple once you get the hang of it."

A man raised his hand. "Suppose an

innocent person gets killed when the bomb goes off?"

The audience booed the question.

The speaker smiled. "Naturally we hope no one gets hurt, but we have to expect some casualties when we're doing the Lord's work."

"Amen," we all said.

The next question from the floor was, "When we build our bombs where do we place them?"

"Before you leave tonight we will give you a list of the abortion clinics in the neighborhood, and you can choose the one most convenient to your home."

"Suppose two of us want to blow up the same clinic?"

"All the better. Two bombs are better than one."

More laughter.

"If we get caught will the 'Right to Bomb' movement provide legal services?"

"We certainly will. Our lawyers are on 24-hour standby and ready to plead each and every one of you 'not guilty,' no matter what the charge might be. But our goal is to get a law passed legalizing all abortion clinic bombings. If we can't get it through Congress we'll work for a constitutional amendment."

The audience got on its feet and broke into song. "All we are saying is give bombs a chance."

The speaker raised his hand to quiet the crowd and said, "Let us pray for life."

We all bowed our heads.

After the prayer the groups went to their assigned bomb instructors to learn about explosives, fuses and timing devices.

As I left to get my coat a man said to me, "What did you think of the meeting?"

All I could reply was, "Dynamite."

LETTERS:

More constructive ideas needed for peace

EDITOR:

Thank you for your courageous and constructive editorial on arms control and Star Wars development (The Battalion, January 18). It was well thought out and offered one realistic American approach to the present stalemate.

So much of the arms debate today turns on some outdated assumptions and expectations. For example, the delivery systems and Star Wars issues are expensive red herrings that divert us from the actual problem.

In truth, the Star Wars defense, the MX missile system, and the B-1 bomber are already obsolete for all practical purposes because of the advances in nuclear bomb technology itself. It is folly to believe now that missiles and bombers are the only viable delivery systems. Why? Because modern nuclear bombs are incredibly compact. Port cities like Houston, New York and Los Angeles could be leveled by a weapon or weapons brought into port in a small part of the hold of a freighter flying, say, some third world flag.

So how about inland cities and towns? No problem, at least not for a determined first-strike foreign power or technologically-minded terrorists. A modern nuclear bomb, armed and ready for demolition, would fit neatly in the back of a station wagon.

For some reason, both our own Pentagon and the Soviet military establishment seem shockingly oblivious to these facts. (If you question my description of the size of modern nuclear weapons, check out the publicly available mockup diagrams of MX MIRV warheads.) The Star Wars anti-missile system, darling of Defense Secretary Weinberger, would be completely ineffective in detecting such simple "delivery systems" as I have described.

Because of the disastrous consequences of anyone's all-out first strike, I don't think such an attack is as likely as a

nuclear weapons detection or delivery system accident. There are just too many nuclear weapons (60,000 of them at last count, theirs and ours) — and as time goes along, just too many opportunities for error.

We must face the dismal possibility that the President and Weinberger aren't terribly interested in arms control. There seems to be a perverse thread in humanity that actually feels comfortable with the wild, expensive buildup of armaments and weapons systems far beyond any sensible level of need.

However, I can't say we're doomed quite yet. There are still people devoted to finding out and telling the truth about nuclear reality, security and vulnerability — and still people of goodwill, courage and imagination who can develop workable ideas such as the one in your editorial. It's possible we can have a secure nation and a world liberated from the threat of the Sword of Damocles that hangs over everyone's head.

Part of that hope lies with courageous journalists willing to tell the truth even when it's not popular, to offer suggestions based on carefully gathered information, and to encourage political leaders and technologists to think and act realistically about these things. Keep it up!

Richard Polese
Bryan, Texas

Battalion Ed Board provokes discussion

EDITOR:

In response to Leon Luxembourg:

1) He is confusing the editorial page, clearly labeled as "opinion" with the overall coverage The Battalion tries to give.

2) I don't see how affirmative action imposes on my rights, and I speak as a white, Anglo saxon, heterosexual male. The way affirmative action is supposed to work is, that institutions, especially those with past records of discrimina-

tion are supposed to make extra effort to recruit minorities and promote them. At Texas A&M, presumably this includes encouraging blacks to attend and encouraging women to join the band. Luxembourg and I are still allowed to apply.

3) One reason people turn to crime because of economic pressures. Most likely causes of the dropping rate of crime are the relatively smaller number of teenagers and young adults, who account for most crime, and the improving economy. Tougher attitudes in federal and state courts might also be involved.

4) I have never heard of a connection between "pro-choice" and "pro-torture animals" groups. Indeed, today's liberalism seems more likely to be involved in protests against cruelty to animals.

5) I cannot agree that protesting apartheid is just a "liberal stupid cause." May I suggest that anyone who does not feel self-righteous when discussing the policy might envy South Africa for keeping a majority of their people in their place?"

I don't often agree with the editorial board, but I credit them with what they're trying to accomplish — provoke discussion on campus, and challenge the reader's opinions.

Steven Marzuola

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The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Communications.

Letters Policy

Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must be signed and must include the address and telephone number of the writer.

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