

OPINION

Reagan's trade embargo too late

A week ago Congress refused President Reagan's proposal to send aid to the revolutionaries in Nicaragua. Wednesday, Reagan announced that he is imposing a trade embargo against the Nicaraguan government and denying access to all Nicaraguan commercial airlines and flag vessels.

Reagan also is abrogating a 27-year-old friendship treaty between United States and Nicaragua, in lieu of the Sandinistas' "aggressive activities in Central America."

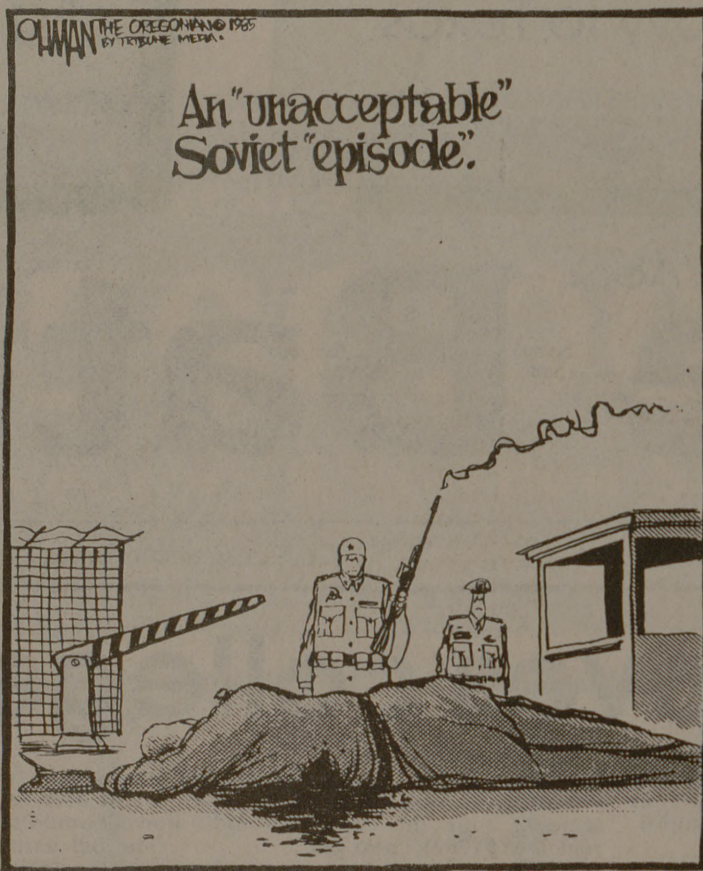
But Reagan's actions have come too late. The trade embargo might be appropriate retaliation for the actions of the Nicaraguan government, but they should have been imposed before Reagan brought his proposal to aid the Contras before Congress.

Until now, Reagan has been contradicting himself by maintaining official recognition of the government in power and still supporting revolutionary forces within the same country.

Leftist aggression has been present in Nicaragua for quite some time, and although Reagan attributed his latest action against the Sandinistas to President Daniel Ortega's recent visit to the Soviet Union, the news of Soviet-Nicaraguan ties is nothing new.

If Reagan wanted to effectively show strong support for the Contras, he should have made his position with the Nicaraguan government clear from the beginning.

The Battalion Editorial Board



Is containment a lost cause?

WASHINGTON — This is the most important congressional moment since May, 1947, when Congress supported U.S. intervention-through-aid on the anti-communist side in the Greek civil war. Congress thereby transformed from a theory into a policy. If Congress now kills aid for the anti-communist side in Nicaragua's civil war, if Congress forbids even modest financial support for a mass movement prepared to do the dying to prevent consolidation of the second Soviet satellite in this hemisphere and the first on the North American continent, the evisceration of containment will be complete.



George Will

are saying the "dove" things: that the United States "drove" the Sandinistas into Soviet clutches. But in their first two years, the Sandinistas received more aid from the United States than from any other country — five times more than the Somoza regime received in its last two years. (Someone should calculate the value in 1985 dollars of the aid France gave the American Revolution. It was, I will wager, much more than \$14 million.)

During the Vietnam War, people eager to believe were encouraged by Hanoi to believe that South Vietnam was experiencing a "indigenous peasant revolt" and that the ferment in Indochina was only cosmetically communist. The Sandinistas deny their American protectors the comfort of that pretense. The Sandinistas do not deign to disguise their Stalinism at home, their "socialistic solidarity" with the Soviet Union and its other clients, their "revolution without borders" against neighbors.

In 1947, Congress had fresh memories of the terrible price paid because of nonresistance to Hitler at the time of the re-militarization of the Rhineland. Today the historical memory of many members of Congress consists entirely of Vietnam and its putative lessons. But congressional management of U.S. policy toward Central America — too little aid, too late; pursuit of the Chimera of negotiated Vietnam with a regime that does not believe in splitting differences — is a recipe for another Vietnam: another protracted failure.

Surely the Americans who should talk least about negotiated liberalization of the Sandinista regime are those Americans who, by trying to destroy the Contras are removing the only serious pressure on the Sandinistas.

Nicaragua's communist president, writing in the New York Times, says U.S. support for the Contras is "contrary to American values." That is an odd complaint from someone who proclaims his detestation of American values, and it is an ignorant charge, given the long history of U.S. support for resistance to tyranny.

Today there are anti-communist insurgencies in Afghanistan, Angola and Cambodia. Americans opposed to the Contras favor, in effect, a declaration of indifference to the only force that might

enable Nicaragua to join Portugal, Spain, Turkey, Argentina and Honduras on the list of nations that have formed tyranny to democracy.

Mikhail Gorbachev hit the ground running — right at Pakistan, threatening reprisals if Pakistan continues to facilitate aid for the Afghan resistance. Congress spurns the Contras, how will Pakistan resist Soviet pressure. Congress will not countenance support for the Contras, the increasingly true voice of the United States will have ceased resonance in South Africa, Philippines and other places where freedom is at issue.

It is said that an optimist is someone who believes his future is uncertain. Timor about democracy, and not democracy in Central America, will be irrational if, six months after a landslide reaffirmation of a President, Congress acting in the name of fastidiousness, moves the keystone of his foreign policy: support for democratic revolution.

George Will is a columnist for Washington Post

Art is for everyone

As I was walking along the hills in front of the architecture building yesterday afternoon, looking at all the brightly colored student projects, I spotted my roommate and her boyfriend. Her roommate, an aerospace major, asked me what all this #*%#! was. Art, of course, Kendall.

Patti Flint

more than one medium. And whatever way is chosen, the value of the work is decided by its popularity or salability.

"Art for the masses" seems to be advocated for most people who have a knowledge of art, but believed by few. The only involvement of the "masses" that they snobbishly believe possible consists of the guys who load the paintings on the truck and drive them to the museum.

This is where arts committee differs from others in the arts community: they really believe in art for the people.

Although most people will never have any interest in the abstract expressionists, the fauvists or any other movement in art, some might like to make kites or furniture or pottery. These may not appeal to the more esoteric element, but simplicity has it's own virtues.

So Kendall, just because you don't like something, doesn't mean it's not good. Or art.

Patti Flint is a senior journalism major and a columnist for The Battalion

LETTERS:

Editors ignorant of the true word of God

EDITOR:

The Battalion's editors pride themselves on their ability to make students think. But what is the purpose of the thought process? Is not the purpose of thinking to arrive at a conclusion and then to act upon that conclusion? Does it not then follow that for our actions to be sound and right, our conclusions must be soundly based upon truth? It is evident that if we act upon conclusions not based on truth then those actions will be wrong with potentially disastrous results. Thus, it appears that our goal for utilizing the thought process is to arrive at truth that our actions may be successful.

Jesus said, "Out of the abundance of a man's heart, the mouth speaketh." This could be extended to "... the hand typeth."

Editors, though you claim to be moral, "conservative" (whatever that means) citizens, what you continually write is truly in your hearts. It is quite clear from your editorials that you do not support the standard of the word of God which is the only reliable measure of truth I have ever found.

Thus, as you disregard or are ignorant of the truth that God has revealed to us, your undermine the very basis by which right actions are affected and invite erroneous conclusions which will lead to wrong actions with dangerous consequences. Just consider what happens in a battle when a commander makes a decision based upon erroneous information and acts upon that decision.

Thinking for the sake of thinking is not enough; we think to act. As conclusions, upon which we can act. As actions based on erroneous conclusions often lead to disaster, our goal must be to avoid disaster and have success at what we set our hands to do.

Brian Arthur Frederick

You only can get what you pay for

EDITOR:

While walking through campus the other day, I heard one person say to another, while referring to the Albritton Tower, "And this is the bell tower that is supposed to make us a world-class university. I wish they would spend our money in other ways, like the education that I am paying for." Richard Braasstead, a former student, expressed the same view in the April 1 issue of The Battalion.

First, I have been told and believe that you get out of an education what you put into it. Secondly, the arguments against the bell tower are wrong. Mr. Albritton donated the money for a bell tower, therefore, the money should go for a bell tower.

Tom Malos
Class of '88

Joe Bob is back

EDITOR:

Joe Bob is back. Your shallow one-sided denouncements against his style exemplifies the thought behind all of your editorials: life should be perfect. It will come as a surprise to no rational person that life is without a doubt, very

The Soviet Union's Sandinista agents have no more right to rule Nicaragua than Vidkun Quisling had to rule Norway. Yet the world continues to speak of Sandinista steps toward Stalinism as "failings." The Sandinistas are not somehow failing to implement democracy; those "failings" are premeditated successes.

FDR spoke of "quarantining" dictators, but an isolationist Congress resisted, until the big war arrived. If today's Congress spurns the Contras, communist dictators on four continents will know that Congress will not permit even small inoculations, let alone quarantine.

The sum at issue — \$14 million — is 12 percent of the sum (\$117 million) the U.S. government had given to the Sandinista regime by 1981. Familiar voices

imperfect. All of your "shoulds" (you should not be so prejudiced) you should not be apathetic, you should not be the stolid, passive, supine, sluggish impositors of academe (you collegiate leeches surely are, etc. . . .) are quite well founded and I agree with most of them. I commend you for your calls, although toothless, for fixing humanity. That's probably what an editorial is for — to draw attention to a problem by issuing an opinion on it in vain hope maybe someone, somewhere, heaven help us, might THINK about it and decide to fix society's problems, too, or at least his own. Then again maybe there's a lot of folks out there that don't need fixing, or at least don't want it.

Each of these statements are equally

insipid and those that agree with them are brain damaged.

Joe Bob is satire. He satirizes these deranged "thoughts" not by promoting them, but by aping them. Sure, many applaud and agree with him. All the more reason for your handwringing.

The point is that society can, and very often does, have a negative impact on a whole class of people. Whether or not Joe Bob propagates this effect is a matter of debate. I wonder what Mark Twain would think . . .

Mark L. Worth
Class of '88

The Battalion
USPS 045 360
Member of
Texas Press Association
Southwest Journalism Conference

The Battalion Editorial Board

Rhonda Snider, Editor
Michele Powe, Managing Editor
Kay Mallett, News Editor
Loren Steffy, Editorial Page Editor
Karen Bloch, City Editor
Travis Tingle, Sports Editor

The Battalion Staff

Assistant City Editors Kirsten Dietz, Jerry Olin
Assistant News Editors Cathie Anderson, Jan Perry
Assistant Editorial Page Editor John Hallett
Assistant Sports Editor Charean Williams
Entertainment Editors Cathy Riely, Walter Smith
Staff Writers Tamara Bell, Meg Cardigan, Ed Cassavoy, Ann Cervantes, Michael Crawford, Cindy Gou, Doug Hall, Paul Herndorf, Tommy Kirk, Jens Koepke, Trent Leopold, Mary McWhorter, June Pang, Tricia Parker, Lynn Rae Povec, Marybeth Rohsner, Gigi Shamsy, Kenneth Surt
Copy Editors Mike Davis, Rebecca Adams, Wendy Johnson
Make-up Editor Ed Cassavoy
Columnists Cami Brown, Marcy Basille, Patti Flint
Morning Editor John Hallett
Photo Editor Wayne Grabett
Photographers Greg Balet, Anthony Casper, Frank Hadda, Kyle Hawkins, Jaime Lopez, Michael Sanchez

Editorial Policy
The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting newspaper operated as a community service to Texas A&M and Bryan-College Station.
Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the Editorial Board or the author, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Texas A&M administrators, faculty or the Board of Regents.
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.
The Battalion is published Monday through Friday during Texas A&M regular semesters, except for holidays and examination periods. Mail subscriptions are \$16.95 per semester, \$35.25 per school year and \$35 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request.
Our address: The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald Building, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843. Editorial staff phone number: (409) 845-2630. Advertising: (409) 845-2611.
Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Battalion, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas 77843