

# Opinion

## Time to slay Goliath

The national debt is approaching 2 trillion dollars. America's trade deficit is projected to reach \$150 billion dollars by the end of 1985. To help slow our economic troubles, Congress is attempting to pass protectionist legislation. But keeping foreign goods away from our shores will do more harm than good to our economy.

Protectionism basically means placing trade restrictions on imported goods. Such restrictions harm the economies of developing nations because we aren't pumping our money into their economy. As a result, these same countries can't afford to buy American exports, which harms our already endangered economy.

Foreign imports are blamed for stealing manufacturing jobs from American workers. Many people feel other countries are being unfair by charging high tariffs on American goods or by not importing them at all. Such "unfairness" is a minor economic loss when compared to our overall export shortcomings.

As long as the deficit remains in its current out-of-control state, the trade value of the dollar will remain high in the world market. As long as the dollar remains high, many countries will refuse to buy American goods.

To compete with foreign trade, we must get a grip on our runaway debt. Instead of working on more than 300 bills that would limit the sale of foreign goods, Congress should pass legislation curtailing government spending and bring our Goliath-like deficit under control.

The Battalion Editorial Board



## Decreased defense spending key to social prosperity

About the time John Lennon was shot I was beginning to appreciate many of the things he stood for. He couldn't fathom war. He couldn't comprehend how countries could fight each other when both sides had numerous internal struggles. He couldn't understand how countries in which thousands of people were starving could afford to spend millions of dollars to buy guns.



Loren Steffy

The problem hasn't gotten better in the five years since Lennon's death. The world spent almost \$700 billion on weapons this year. But increased weapons expenditures has a partner in rising statistics — the world unemployment rate increased by 500 million as well.

At the same time the nations of the world are making war, or preparing for it, they also are breaking new records in unemployment rates.

Obviously, just because the figures rose at the same time doesn't mean unemployment occurred because of an increase in defense spending. But a decrease of 8 or 10 percent in military spending could curb disease, illiteracy and hunger.

Studies in the United States and Western Europe have shown that high spending in military equipment increases inflation, sucks up natural resources, causes setbacks in technological development, hurts the standing of living and generally does nasty things to the economy.

Out of thirteen nations surveyed between 1960 and 1979, the United States ranked first in defense spending but only eleventh in gross national product growth. Other studies by economists such as John Kenneth Galbraith and Seymour Melman found that reduced military spending boosted the economy and generated employment.

The common arguments in favor of defense spending usually come in two varieties:

- A strong defense is necessary to ensure protection from enemies.
- Defense contracts create jobs in the private sector.

True, a strong defense is necessary to protect a nation from possible attack by its enemies. But if your enemy can wipe your country off the map thirteen times, and you can eliminate his twelve times, what difference does it make?

True, defense contracts do create jobs — about 75,000 for every \$1 billion invested according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The Bureau also found that the same amount of money invested in civil engineering creates 110,000 or 112,000 jobs in consumer goods production. One billion dollars invested in education would produce 187,000 jobs.

If defense spending were reduced and government expenditures were increased in other types of production, more jobs would be created.

For developing countries, reduced arms expenditures could mean even greater benefits. Developing nations get

more than 80 percent of their weapons from NATO. The money the average developing country spends on one F-16 fighter could equip 7,000 classrooms.

Most of the world's population is in developing countries, but so is the largest number of unemployed. These nations, which have a lower growth rate than developed ones, spend a much larger portion on their GNP for military expenses.

Even in nations such as Ethiopia, where thousands of people starve daily, much of the government spending goes to the military. India spends an average 5.9 percent of their GNP on military, but only 2.8 percent on education and 1 percent on public health care.

If developing nations are ever going to develop, they need to divert more of their funding to programs aimed at upgrading the quality of living.

This doesn't mean that no money should be spent on national defense, but the amount of money diverted from the world's defense budget and put towards other programs would hardly be noticeable.

Man has been fighting man as long as there has been man. It's time to stop our militaristic ways and concentrate ourselves with the social well-being of the peoples of the world. Spending \$700 billion on weapons while 500 million people are out of work is a harbinger of disaster.

Uneducated, sick and impoverished people can't help their country develop socially, politically or economically. Through quality education, health care and jobs a country can provide a better defense than any number of weapons could.

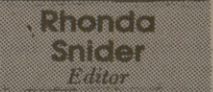
Lennon was right, nations have responsibilities to their people. A strong defense is part of that responsibility, but so is social development, education, health care, creating jobs and an increasing standard of living.

Loren Steffy is a junior journalism major and the Opinion Page Editor of The Battalion.

## Letter to the Readers

### A guide to Batt talk and other journalism jargon

Many times newspaper folk get caught up in a nether world of journalistic jargon. We have many words and phrases that we use in our day-to-day operation of The Battalion that often are understood only by those in the newspaper business.



Rhonda Snider  
Editor

Many people — and for good reason — don't understand Batt talk. The difference between articles and columns or between columns and editorials are good examples. The bewildering look on some people's faces as they stroll in the newsroom makes it apparent they are not sure to which of our 18 editors they need to talk.

To help alleviate some communication conflicts, I've compiled a list of some Battalion lingo.

**article:** An article is a news story. Reporters are instructed to make all articles accurate, fair and free from opinion. To quote from The Battalion's editorial policy: "News reporting in The Battalion shall be factual, accurate, informative and responsible. Reporters and editors have an obligation to ensure fairness and to see that all aspects of each issue are presented in all news and feature stories."

**feature story:** Features are lighter articles that are timeless and deal more with human interest topics.

**hard news:** This term is used to refer to those articles in which timeliness is of

utmost importance. These articles are usually sparked by events such as speeches, accidents or protests.

**column:** This is one of the most misunderstood items in our paper. A column is one person's opinion on something. These opinions are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of The Battalion staff (including the editor and the editorial board), University faculty and staff or Texas A&M University.

**editorial:** An editorial is the opinion of the newspaper. Battalion editorials are written by a member of the editorial board and approved by a majority of editorial board members.

**editor:** That's me. As editor, I am ultimately responsible for everything that goes into the paper. The editor is responsible for hiring and firing of the staff, and is the leader of the editorial board.

The term "editor" also is a part of the job titles of 17 other Battalion staff members. Our editors don't just edit. They organize, plan, counsel and supervise as well.

**managing editor:** The managing editor is responsible for the daily workings of the newspaper. The ME works closely with the editor to make sure the newsroom runs smoothly.

**city editor:** The city editor is in charge of coordinating all local stories. Along with her two assistants, she assigns stories that are of local interest. Have a story idea? She's the person to see.

**news editor:** The news editors are responsible for the placement of stories in the paper. They also scan the Associated Press stories and decide which ones will be used each day. The news editor is in charge of the newsroom at night.

**opinion page editor:** Deciding the contents of each day's opinion page is

this editor's primary responsibility. He chooses the columns, editorial cartoons and letters that will run each day. He also is the primary author of the editorials.

**Sports editor:** This is one editor whose title actually reflects his job. He is in charge of sports coverage and the layout of the sports pages.

**Entertainment editors:** These editors are in charge of producing The Battalion's magazine supplement, At Ease. They make the story assignments, edit the articles and decide the placement of those articles in the magazine.

**Art director:** This position used to be known as the photo editor. However, the responsibilities of this position have grown to include not only the coordination of photos, but also artwork and graphics.

We also have assistant news editors, copy editors and a make-up editor. These editors help the news editor edit stories and place stories on the pages.

One more set of titles merits explanation. The writers of our articles are distinguished as either **staff writers** or **reporters**. Staff writers are paid reporters hired to do two or three stories per week. Reporters are journalism students in an advanced reporting and editing class. These students do stories for The Battalion as part of their class requirements.

Maybe these brief explanations will give readers a better understanding of newspaper terminology, who we are and what we are doing.

The purpose of this column is to increase communication between the editors of The Battalion and the readers. If you have a question or a problem you would like to see addressed in this column, please send a letter to the editor or call The Battalion editor at 845-2647.

Rhonda Snider is a senior journalism major and editor of The Battalion.



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Member of  
Texas Press Association  
Southwest Journalism Conference

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#### Editorial Policy

The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting newspaper operated as a community service to Texas A&M at 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.

The Battalion is published Monday through Friday during Texas A&M regular semesters, except for holiday and examination periods. Mail subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester, \$33.25 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) 845-5316. 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