

Opinion

Another Sgt. York?

A recent study by the Office of Technology Assessment found that President Reagan's Star Wars defense program was ineffectual in protecting the American population from a Soviet nuclear attack. The report was the latest in a series of strikes against the Strategic Defense Initiative. So why does Reagan insist on pumping more money into research?

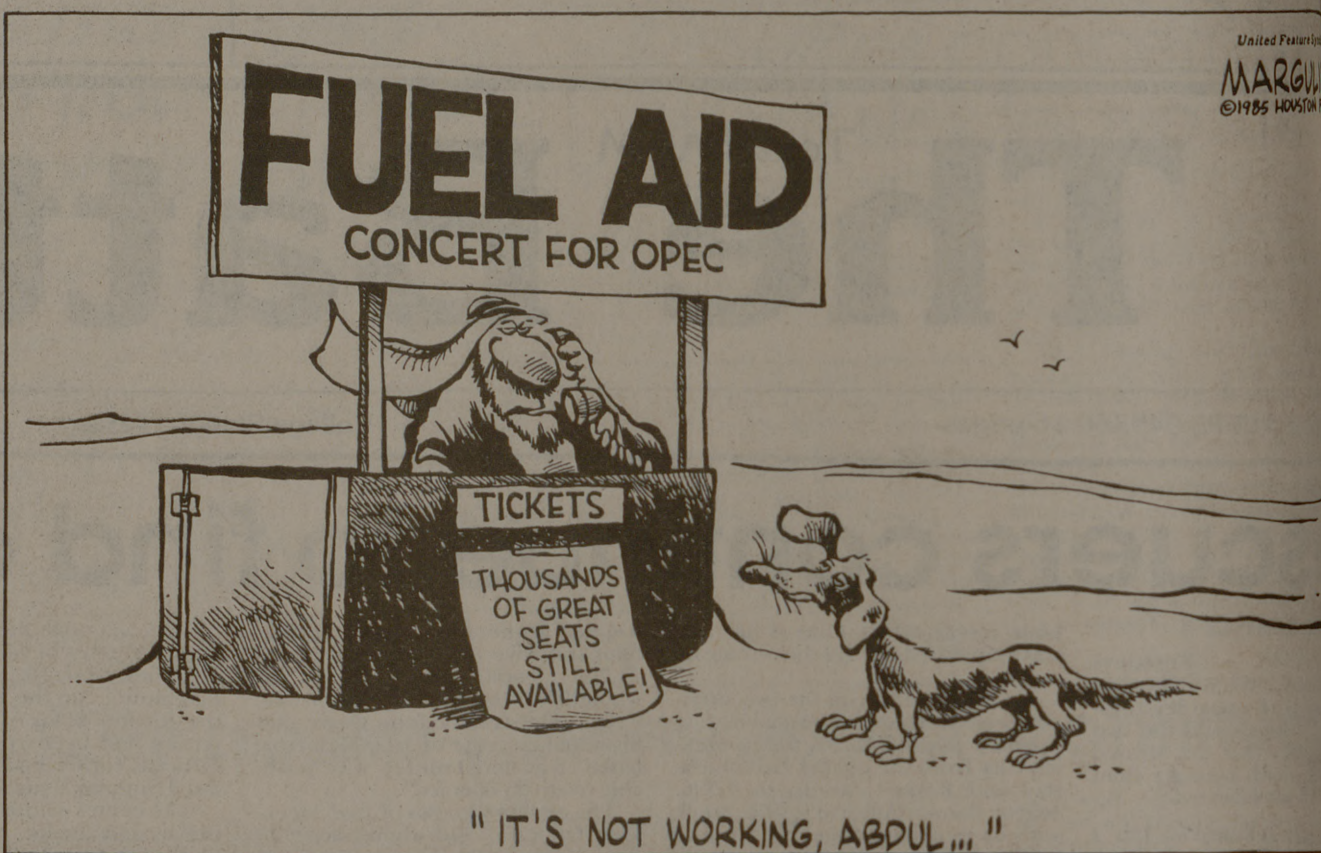
The study found that Star Wars would not protect the entire country from a nuclear attack, although it would "substantially increase" our defense capabilities under certain conditions. Despite the myriad technologies used to make SDI a comprehensive missile defense system, it fails to achieve its goal.

Star Wars was planned as a means of protecting the nation — the whole nation — from a nuclear assault. If it's not going to do that, Congress should invest its money elsewhere. Many other systems could "substantially increase" our defense and still be an effective bargaining chip with the Soviets.

The SDI program has been a constant thorn in the side of the upcoming summit between Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. Why should we allow a system which won't do what it is designed to do stand in the way of a vital diplomatic meeting?

In America, if a product isn't reliable, we don't keep spending more money on it. We either work out a better plan, or we go on to something else. After wasting almost \$2 billion on the Sgt. York gun, Congress should have learned its lesson about bad investments.

The Battalion Editorial Board



FarmAid Did it do more harm than good

The heroes of today are not Superman or the Masters of the Universe. After all, what did these superheroes do for the starving kids in Africa?



Camille Brown

Nothing. The real heroes of our day are Aid Concerts. They sweep in overnight when the world is on the edge of trauma and within days the problem has a budget.

But there are problems with our heroes. It's no secret that millions of dollars raised by Live Aid may at least partially go to waste. The money raised by the benefit sent thousands of pounds of grain to poverty-stricken villages in Africa, but a failing transportation system there prevents the food from getting to the people. That's one detail concert promoters couldn't anticipate.

The most recent Aid Concert also has a few catches.

FarmAid concert promoters had two goals in mind: raise money to directly benefit needy farmers and publicize the nation's farm problems.

It was a noble effort, but a campaigning politician couldn't have slung thicker mud into the faces of American farmers.

The FarmAid concert, because it is closely associated with the Live Aid concert, indirectly projects a poor image on farmers.

Think of Live Aid and the words "poverty," "starvation" and "tragedy" come to mind. Live Aid was a charity drive to help the helpless. America's crop farmers should hardly be thought of as poverty-stricken or helpless.

This poor image will at least subconsciously effect the healthy, wholesome image that farmers have enjoyed.

The overall affects of the concert will be damaging to the farmers' cause, even though the publicity generated by the concert may buy them some attention. In the long run, a bad image will undo the immediate rewards of fast cash and publicity.

This is not the type of aid farmers need.

Dr. H.O. Kunkel, dean of the College of Agriculture, said he had mixed feelings about the concert.

Kunkel said that while the concert put the special problems of farmers in the public light, he doesn't think the impact will be strong enough to do anything.

And, he said, "It hasn't helped the reputation of farming as a career."

The effort and concern of those ded-

icating time and money to these is something to admire.

But the planners of these gargantuan fund raisers need to be more careful. Deciding what to do with the money is not the only problem that should be dealt with. It only takes an imagination or a transportation failure to turn the success of these fund drives. Promoters need to think through implications of such an event before they are engulfed by its fame.

We're in an age where an image means the difference between winning the presidential race or losing it. In an age where a flip of the dial on the Headline News channel will bring plight of America's farmers and the aftermath of disaster in Mexico into a living room for the price of a two-minute commercial break during "Cagney & Lacey".

We're in an age where casual associations are easily made, such as Live Aid with FarmAid, by the headline readers of America.

That means more attention must be taken when planning a major event to ensure that a well-established reputation is not damaged.

Camille Brown is a senior journalism major and a columnist for The Battalion.

Mail Call

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.

Saving the dorm trees

EDITOR:

This letter is not in response to anyone else's letter, it doesn't gripe at anyone, and it doesn't complain about anything. It's just a bit of good news and a compliment to Texas A&M.

On Monday morning, September 16, I was in the hall talking with the custodian of our dorm, Linda Martinez, who informed me that the 60 foot tall pecan tree in our backyard was to be cut down because it drips sap onto the postal trucks that park under it. Neither I, nor Linda, nor the others in the hall thought that that was a sufficient reason to cut down a tree of that size. We called the Forest Science Department and determined that the pecan tree was probably about 120 years old.

Not knowing where else to start, I got on the phone to Tom Wellington, Assistant Coordinator of the North Area. Tom referred me to the Director of Grounds Maintenance, Gene Ray, who explained that the tree was coming down by request of the College Station Postmaster because it was an electrical hazard.

Ray said that he was under the direction of Charles Cargill, Vice President for Operations. I called Cargill's office and left word with his secretary to have him call me as soon as he could. Fearing that the work crew would be there any minute with their saws, and with strong encouragement from my peers, I put in a call to the office of the Vice President for Student Services, Dr. John Koldus, who also was going to call me back when he became available.

Within five minutes, Cargill returned my call and listened to my story. He said that he had been out of town and that he appreciated our concern. He promised to make an immediate call to the Physical Plant to check on the situation. Right after hanging up the phone, Koldus returned my call and got to listen to the lengthening story.

He said that he would be happy to follow up on the story with Cargill. About 30 minutes later, Cargill called back again and told me that we could relax because he had issued an order for no one to touch the tree until he could personally investigate it. Well, I talked to him on Wednesday afternoon and he said that the tree was to be trimmed back, to reduce the electrical hazard, but not cut down. He added that if my call to his office had been 24 hours later, the tree would have been axed.

The members of the Hotard Hilton all wish to extend our gratitude to Linda Martinez, Tom Wellington, Gene Ray,

Dr. Koldus, and most of all to Chuck Cargill for all of their help and cooperation in this matter.

Often, at a large university like TAMU, students feel like little more than a number in some computer. This event proves that each and every student can have a profound effect on what happens at this university if he/she puts his/her mind to it. The administration of Texas A&M really does care what the students have to say — all we have to do is say it.

Once again, to everyone involved, thanks from the men of the Hotard Hilton and our tree!

Paul Hudson
President, Hotard Hilton

Incomplete art

EDITOR:

I think you have done the arts in Bryan and College Station a disservice, in last week's AT EASE. "The arts" constitute a lot more than those few things you covered — a local museum, stage plays presented locally, art exhibits, and painters...

Art is also concerned with other types of creative effort — such as wood, glass, metal and other types of crafts, like those which are often displayed by craftsmen in the local malls. Those displays are not only a vital part of the cultural scene in this area, but a living, changing museum.

Then there are the arts which are not commonly on display or for show. For example, the efforts of writers, poets, and even researchers — they're all intensely creative efforts, no less so than works displayed in museums or played out in concert halls or stage theaters.

As far as that goes, the arts can even be taken to construe other aspects of culture — the old southern tradition of courtesy and friendliness, such as that shown by strangers encountered most anywhere, by local shopkeepers and people in other service-related occupations. Or the pageantry of a home football game, when everyone dresses up nicely and spends a Saturday afternoon having a good time.

Even the way students on campus and the editorial staff of The Battalion are concerned with such international events as apartheid and nuclear proliferation... a considerable amount of effort being required for people in a small community such as this to relate to, and get involved in such events; which, without the art of caring and sharing, would have no real significance!

William H. Clark II

Here they come to Aid the day

Everytime I open the paper, someone else is getting the "Aid syndrome." First we had Band Aid, then Live Aid and then FarmAid. A concert in California is planned to aid AIDS victims — AIDSaid perhaps? Don't get me wrong, I think benefit concerts are great events which demonstrate concern for the sufferings of our fellow man. But let's not stop there; let's keep the ball rolling.



Loren Steffy

I want to appeal to musicians everywhere to pick up their instruments and start their own Aid show. Here are a few suggestions to get things going:

- StudentFinancialAid — to help destitute victims of the tuition hike.
- OldAid — for the elderly who can't get adequate health care.
- AmericAid — to pay for a national debt counseling program.
- OrangeAid — to help the Florida orange grower whose crops were stricken by the winter frost.
- LemonAid — to feed starving used car dealers.
- MaidAid — for low-income domestic workers.
- GatorAid — to save endangered alligators.
- FadeAid — for people who habitually put too much bleach in their wash.
- Lone Wolf McQuadeAid — for

viewers forced to watch bad Chuck Norris movies.

- BladeAid — a benefit concert for out-of-work surgeons.
 - AfraidAid — for people who live in constant fear of crime.
 - MarinAid — to help unemployed gourmet chefs.
 - CoolAid — to aid frostbite victims.
 - WadeAid — for people who can't swim.
 - Neutered and SpayedAid — to help oversexed cats.
 - BarracAid — for the armies of Third World nations who have trouble establishing front lines.
 - MedicAid — for injured ambulance drivers.
 - DelayedAid — for people who don't want aid right away.
 - DismayedAid — for the terminally upset.
 - ParadeAid — for protestors without a cause.
 - HearingAid — to help the deaf.
 - PersuadeAid — for out-of-work propagandists.
 - CharadeAid — for unemployed mimes.
 - PrayedAid — for struggling evangelists.
 - GradeAid — to help students on academic probation.
- After all this Aiding, the bands are going to need help too. Send your contributions now. Help AidAid.

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

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

The Battalion Editorial Board
Rhonda Snider, Editor
Michelle Powe, Managing Editor
Loren Steffy, Opinion Page Editor
Karen Bloch, City Editor
John Hallett, Kay Mallett, News Editors
Travis Tingle, Sports Editor

The Battalion Staff
Assistant City Editors.....Kirsten Dietz, Jerry O'Neil
Assistant News Editors.....Cathie Anderson, Jan Perry
Assistant Sports Editor.....Chateau Williams

Entertainment Editors.....Cathy Riely, Walter Smith
Art Director.....Wayne Grubbs
Copy Editors.....Rebecca Adams, Mike Davis, Sarah Oates, Brad Whitton, Ed Casavola, Tamara Bell, Meg Cadigan, Ed Casavola, Cindy Gay, Doug Hall, Paul Herndon, Wendy Johnson, Tammy Kirk, Jens Koepke, Trent Leopold, Mary McWhorter, June Pang, Tricia Parker, Brian Pearson, Lynn Rae Poynter, Marybeth Rohsner, Gigi Shuman, Frank Smith, Kenneth Smith, Scott Sutherland

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 administration, 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 holidays and examination periods. Mail subscriptions are \$1.25 per semester, \$3.25 per school year and \$35 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request.
Our address: The Battalion, 216 Reed McDaniel Building, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843. Editorial staff phone number: (409) 845-3310. Advertising: (409) 845-2811.
Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Battalion, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas 77843.