

Opinion

Without 'serious' solutions, drug problems will continue

In French and Spanish the word "serious" has a meaning that doesn't correspond with any of the synonyms given for that word in English. It means responsible, reliable, trustworthy, reflective. The other day, James J. Kilpatrick, who is a serious man, made an unserious suggestion about how we should deal with dope traffickers. It repays hard attention to the meaning of the word to understand its ramifications in the current situation.



William F. Buckley Jr.

What we ought to do, Kilpatrick said, is catch a bunch of dope traders, try them, convict them and then hang them in public squares.

Now if you heard that kind of talk from the mouth of, oh, the early or even the middle George Wallace, you would smile and say, there he goes again, the same man who suggested the best way to deal with protesters standing in the way of a bulldozer is to bulldoze them.

But Kilpatrick really means it. It is an expression of great offense and also a concrete recommendation. He has heard described, and he has witnessed, the tortures experienced by those taken in the biological and psychological death agonies of drug consumption. It is agony whether you go on to die or whether you go on to live. Kilpatrick's point is that if there ever was justification for executing a murderer, there is justification for executing those wanton

murderers who distribute narcotics that cause worse pain by many leagues than any pain experienced by the mugger's pistol shot.

Now 10 days ago we saw almost exactly that happen in Malaysia. The executions were not, to my knowledge, public, but they may as well have been, given the attention they received in the world press. Two Australians, caught with merchandise quantities of heroin, were tried, convicted and, after due process using up almost three years, hanged.

There was the usual outcry from the anti-capital punishment set and even a few others, but the government of Malaysia stood its ground, pointed out that there were signs all over that place warning potential drug merchants of the fate that would befall them. It is of passing interest that the local equivalent of the American Civil Liberties Union, which opposes capital punishment, announced that drug merchandising was a crime so heinous that opposition to capital punishment officially was suspended when applied to that crime.

But Kilpatrick's suggestion is not serious. It is not responsible. It is not reputable. It is not viable. Why? Because it is absolutely predictable that it will not happen.

This has nothing whatever to do with the entirely different question: Should it happen? If tomorrow I needed to vote yes or no on a national plebiscite, "Shall we adopt the Kilpatrick Proposition?" I would unflinchingly vote yes. And after, oh, a couple of hundred hangings, there would be a sharp decrease in the merchandising of drugs. It wouldn't cease, any more than crime in great Britain ceased when they used to hang you for stealing sixpence. But in modern Amer-

ica, death sentences are taken much more seriously than they were 200 years ago, when executions were commonplace and public floggings a regular feature of city life.

There are still a lot of people out there who maintain that there are no figures to sustain the proposition that capital punishment reduces the incidence of murder. Well, let that one go. But it would be hard to find anyone who would dispute the conclusion that a lot of public hangings would dry up the assembly line of drugs passing under the eyes of the American public on a vibrant street corner.

But this is not going to happen. We are too frozen, institutionally, in our views about executions, let alone public executions. So then, why make the suggestion? If it were done in the spirit of fantasy ("One day they passed a law . . . the next day, the consumption of drugs dropped by 90 percent"), that would be one thing. But Kilpatrick was being—in the American usage—serious. But not serious in the continental sense.

Coke consumption is up 600 percent in many American cities. In Pakistan, the morning paper advises us, the growth of poppies is up 400 percent over last year. A lot of that stuff is destined for American blood vessels. And we can't stop it, and aren't stopping it. We are subsidizing a criminal class, overflowing our prisons, corrupting the police and the courts, depleting our reserves of detectives and judges, and accomplishing nothing. Either bring on the scaffold (which we aren't going to do), or legalize (which we probably aren't going to do). We can, then, look for more of the same. Much more of the same.

Copyright 1986, Universal Press Syndicate

Mail Call

'Murder' leaves bank stumped

EDITOR:

Maybe it's me, maybe I have become a bit petulant lately, but when I saw that the tree in front of University National Bank had been cut down I had a feeling of loss and anger. One tree probably doesn't mean much to a town that burns down a forest in an annual salute to pyromania, but it meant a lot to me.

Don't get me wrong—I'm not some kind of tree fanatic who thinks every tree should be saved no matter what the reason. However, I do respect nature. I can see why someone would cut down a tree if it was dying and became a hazard. Somehow in my mind it would have been easier to accept the loss if University National Bank cut down the tree because it was dying—just like it is easier to accept a death if the person died of natural causes. But when someone is murdered, death is hard to accept.

I called University National Bank to find out why they had cut down the tree. The first woman I talked with said, "We no longer felt the tree enhanced the bank's appearance." The second woman I talked with was more honest: "The tree blocked the bank's sign and people would complain that it dripped on their cars. We thought the tree was hurting our business."

We're not talking about some sapling here—the diameter of the tree trunk was over two and a half feet. In fact the tree was probably older than the bank.

The tree served a purpose—it enhanced an area that is mainly asphalt and concrete. It gave refuge to wildlife. It added shape, color and form to a cold sterile environment. All that is left is a stump—a stump that symbolizes a quintessential act of vandalism.

Michael Bolton

Additional comic relief

EDITOR:

I propose that *The Battalion* print the comic strips *Doonesbury* and *Bloom County*. It shouldn't cost too much and it would be money well spent.

While it is true that one can read *Doonesbury* and *Bloom County* in *The Eagle*, having them in *The Battalion* would make them more accessible. Also, I believe that *Doonesbury* would make a good addition to the opinion page.

Like the usual conservative opinion letters, these comic strips should provide good comic relief when reading *The Battalion*.

Stephen Flowers-Chavez
Physics

EDITOR'S NOTE: While we agree that *Doonesbury* and *Bloom County* would be nice additions to *The Battalion*, *The Eagle* is permitted by the cartoon syndicates to have exclusive rights to the features.

Shedding some light

EDITOR:

Since early June I've been observing many room lights on in closed dorms. I called the Housing Office a month ago and they said they would take care of it. Last night (July 16) on my jogging route I counted:

- a) 148 lights on out of 184 rooms in Moore Hall.
- b) Some lights on in Puryear Hall plus a large window air conditioner on in a double room in the north end that contained trash—no bed, desk or chairs—just trash!
- c) A large office near Moore with its light on and a sign on the door stating, "This office is closed until August 19."
- d) Lights on in locked restrooms at Kyle Field (maybe since the end of football season).

If the person in charge of the keys will call me at 693-4444, I'll be happy to turn off the lights and air conditioner for them. That way I'll feel I will be accomplishing two beneficial things at the same time.

I know that you can't teach students to turn out lights, but it shouldn't be expected too much to ask adult employees to help eliminate waste.

Apparently none of these people remember the early 1970s when we had to have a special supplemental appropriation from the Texas Legislature to pay the University's utilities bill and purchase expensive diesel fuel during natural gas curtailments to run our electrical generators.

Let us hope that the upcoming special session of the Legislature doesn't hold any hearings on our campus at night. If they do, it might shed a little too much light on some of our problems.

Bart Braden

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.



"FRONTRUNNER LEE IACocca HOLDS A COMMANDING LEAD WITH 73 PERCENT OF THE DENIALS ISSUED SO FAR"

Growth of store-shelf smut result of idle ignorance

Smut has been unleashed on the unsuspecting masses of America. Luckily, I have seen the light, and I can help you see it, too.



Loren Steffy

In the beginning, there were girlie magazines—pictures of women without clothes, proliferated to the innocent and impressionable public from behind the counters of 7-Eleven stores. But then came our savior, Attorney General Edwin Meese, to purge society of this exposure to unnatural nakedness.

But it was not enough. Smut, like Satan himself, comes in many forms. Rock 'n' roll, long known to be the favorite source of entertainment for Lucifer, went into the publishing business. That's right, not only was the ever-unknowing public being seduced by rock albums—from which, in the nick of proverbial time, we were saved by Tipper Gore—but now we even had rock magazines.

Worse yet, they were shamelessly displayed in family settings such as Wal-Mart. But Jimmy Swaggart delivered us from this fateful pursuit.

Jimmy knows about music. He's kin

to Jerry Lee Lewis and Mickey Gilley, so how much more does he need to know? Jimmy lashed out at Wal-Mart, comparing the musical smut to real live porn. Before you could pass the platter, Wal-Mart began yanking rock albums and magazines—32 publications in all, including that bastion of evil, *Rolling Stone*.

Another attempt at smut-on-parade is being thwarted by the Rev. Don Jackson in San Angelo. Brother Don is lobbying the city council to ban Harlequin romance novels, *True Detective* magazine and TV soap operas. The reverend is calling for the removal of all material he considers pornographic, but the city council, a legislative arm of the devil, is slow to see the light.

And you probably think that finally society is safe. Ed, Tip, Jimmy and Don have, after all, worked to make store shelves safe again.

But I tell you, brothers and sisters, it is not enough! It is no longer enough to ignore the dissemination of evil that has infiltrated our society's marketing arenas. If you see a piece of merchandise that offends, don't go to another store, or even another aisle. To do so is to invite damnation! Stores must be made safe, and it is up to you, brothers and sisters.

Inventories must be acceptable to all or none. No longer shall we tolerate free

trade and unchecked displays of items such as wrestling magazines, products of feminine hygiene (known to promote desires for illegitimate children) and beef jerky, whose mere name, let alone appearance, can lead to frightening spinal disorders in children.

But it is up to you. Demand the item be removed from the public's grasp. Picket without mercy, until these retailers of the devil clear their havens of smut. The public demands freedom of choice, but look what they choose. Magazine circulations speak for themselves: *Penthouse*—5 million copies a month; *Cosmopolitan* (the female equivalent)—3 million; *Rolling Stone* (Satan's entertainment monthly)—861,000.

We have successfully fought two out of the three. But, like a hydra of hell, when we cut off one head two more crop up to take its place. I'm speaking, of course, of *Reader's Digest*.

It's the largest circulating magazine in this great country (with a readership of about 17 million), yet its despicable content is virtually ignored. This proves the public has no ability to decide its own purchasing habits. Don't let the small size fool you, brothers and sisters, Lucifer comes in small packages.

The word "sex" appeared 345,697 times in the last 5,784 issues, according to my informal survey. This publication is known for its condensed books, but I

say they should be called condemned books. They do not show women how to clean toilets or men how to mow the yard. Sometimes there is no mention of God. The jokes, though usually pure, are not funny—at least to true believers.

A typical article, "How I Cut Off My Hand With a Chainsaw and Still Built a Log Cabin in the Bronx Without Any Fingers," gives readers the message that life is wonderful and positive, and that through determination man can accomplish anything. Stronger satanic propaganda has never been written. Vile publications such as this want us to believe their message to distract us from our true purpose. But life cannot be wonderful until we rid our country of this despicable blight.

Don't think this devil's digest is alone. Look, for example, through the smut-filled pages of *National Geographic*, which prides itself on being an educational publication. Education of what? The lifestyles of people who disobey the Lord by not wearing clothes? Our society doesn't need to be subjected to pagan cultures. This is not education, it's indoctrination! The depiction of diverse and deviant cultures and peoples is obviously designed to lure the unsuspecting reader away from our own great society.

And we must not forget newspapers, brothers and sisters. They cause the impressionable public we are sworn to pro-

tect to confront Satan's work daily. They cover events of evil and throw them in our faces. Worst among them is the *Christian Science Monitor*, whose name lures us near, but whose content warps our very spines.

Pick up your signs and start picketing, brothers and sisters. We have much work to do.

Loren Steffy is a senior journalism major and the Opinion Page editor for *The Battalion*.

The Battalion

(USPS 045 960)

Member of

Texas Press Association

Southwest Journalism Conference

The Battalion Editorial Board

Michelle Powe, Editor

Kay Mallett, Managing Editor

Loren Steffy, Opinion Page Editor

Scott Sutherland, City Editor

Ken Sury, Sports Editor

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 Journalism. The Battalion is published Tuesday through Friday during the Texas A&M summer semester. Mail subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester, \$53.25 per school year and \$55 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request. Our address: The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald Building, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843. Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station TX 77843.