

Opinion

The Battalion

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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.

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Pay now or later

Insurance companies in Texas now can require applicants to take an AIDS test, but the new rule poses serious ethical problems — and brings up the question of who will pay for AIDS victims' health care.

The State Board of Insurance last Wednesday decided to let insurance companies require the testing but barred them from discriminating against applicants by trying to discover their sexual preference. The board also left undecided both how those who test positive will be notified and whether they'll receive information on the virus.

The insurance companies left no doubt that those who test positive for the HIV virus will be denied coverage. But people who have HIV don't necessarily develop AIDS; at most, they should be included in a high-risk group and be forced to pay higher premiums, like those who have a high risk of developing cancer or heart disease.

The cost of caring for AIDS patients is indeed high, and if insurance companies must face those costs alone, premiums will increase for everyone. But in the end, we all pay anyway: When AIDS victims can't get insurance coverage, the cost of their care will be paid by the taxpayers in the form of government assistance. That fact should make everyone look for a better solution.

— The Battalion Editorial Board

Mail Call

Poor A&M representatives

EDITOR:

As my boyfriend and I walked to our car after the t.u. game, we witnessed one of the biggest disappointments in our college career here at A&M. We noticed three freshman CT's walking behind a non-student t.u. fan and his wife. After overhearing their plan to steal the man's t.u. hat, we decided to stick around to see exactly what was going to happen and maybe even prevent such a trivial, childish "military" maneuver.

When one of the "boys" raced up behind the couple, who were minding their own business, and ripped the hat away while running into the woman and almost knocking her off her feet, my head bowed with embarrassment. Since the three boys ran off, we didn't have a chance to find them and chase them down, but we did notice that the man and woman just shook their heads and continued toward their car. As seniors and with graduation just around the corner, it disheartens us to see this type of action. Maybe next year when we play t.u. at Austin, you three "boys" will be walking along, minding your own business (which I doubt) and someone will return the favor. It just makes us wonder what type of image people have of our University. And with people like yourselves, who by being in the Corps are supposedly leading and representing our friendliness and camaraderie, I wouldn't expect outsiders think highly of us at all!

Susie Cook '88
Bill Uzelmeier '88

We are the champions

EDITOR:

The Texas A&M football team will make its third consecutive trip to the Cotton Bowl, and I think it is about time we received credit for having a championship team. Everytime our Aggie football team wins I find someone saying, "It was just luck." Well, my words to them are, "Strike three and you're out!" After three straight Southwest Conference titles, luck has been ruled out! Besides, luck does not run in twos and threes. So face it, you doubters, we are champions (WHOOPIII!)

Damacia Inman '88

Principles, not pettiness

EDITOR:

It has come time for us to learn the difference between a right and a privilege. The refusal to afford Mr. Gorbachev the "right" to address a joint session of Congress was not a trampling of constitutional rights as The Battalion Editorial Board suggests, but in reality, the highest affirmation of the freedoms with which our Creator has graciously endowed us. Barring the Soviet General Secretary from the seat of our national legislature, a sanctuary of liberty, is not an act of "pettiness," but an act of principle.

The Editorial Board states that according to the First Amendment of the Constitution "everyone is entitled to have and express his opinion even if that opinion meets with the disfavor of the majority." I agree wholeheartedly. Mr. Gorbachev must and will have ample time to share his view of the world with us — on our three major television networks and other primary media of information. It would be a tragedy to allow the heir and guardian of an ideology which has engendered so much misery, oppression, and carnage to speak in the same chamber where the greatest defenders of freedom have stood. Let us not forget Stalin, who executed millions in the name of that ideology. Let us not forget how the Soviets have repeatedly and brutally crushed Eastern European uprisings for freedom in East Germany (1953), Hungary (1956), Czechoslovakia (1968), and Poland (1981). Let us not forget that one-third of the Afghan people are now refugees because of the barbarity of the Soviet occupation forces. We must NEVER forget.

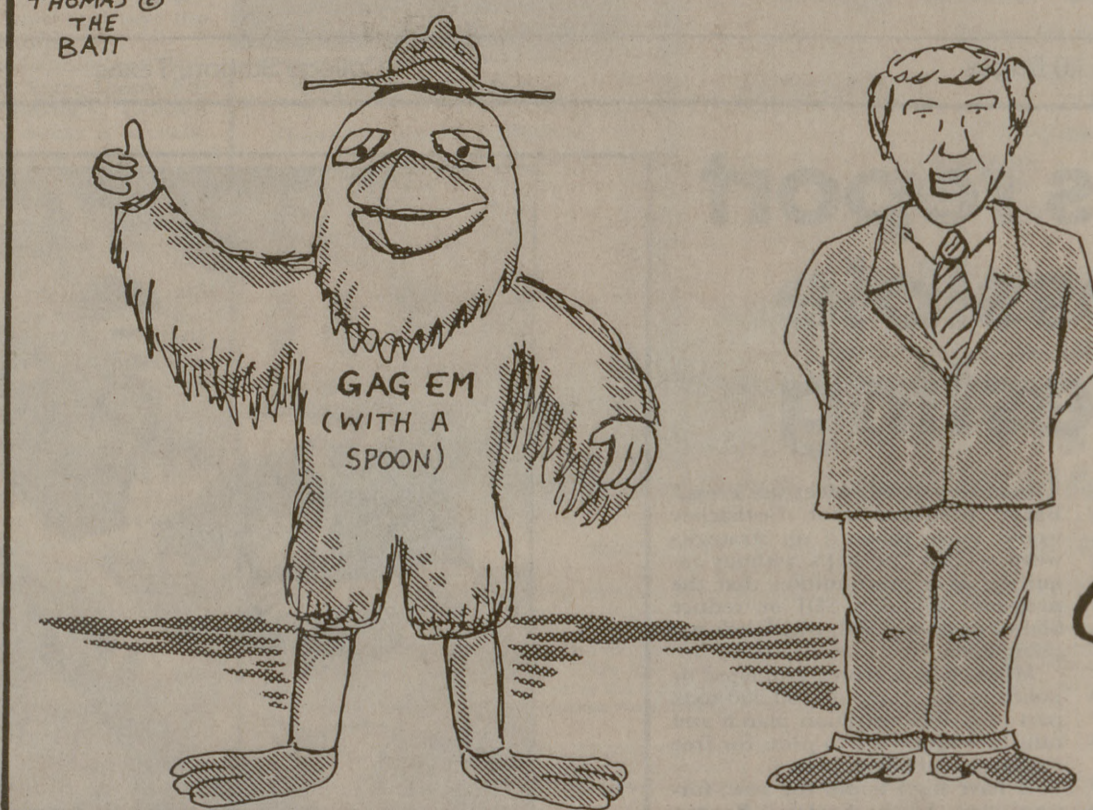
To address Congress is an honor reserved exclusively for leaders of nations that recognize those "certain unalienable rights" God has granted to all those born on this planet.

Such an honor must not be accorded to a man who presides over an empire of subjugated peoples, no matter how charming and harmless he may seem.

Cory Ortigoza '90

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 classification, address and telephone number of the writer.

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THE
BATT



JACKIE SHERRILL PRESENTS A+M'S LATEST MASCOT: THE DIXIE CHICKEN!

SDI: Say goodbye to the moon, hello to intelligent amoebas

It is the future. Ron Reagan Jr. is in his 10th term as President of the United States. Japan owns 93.6 percent of the North American land mass; Taiwan owns Minnesota and New York City. The Strategic Defense Initiative is now a reality.



Mark Nair

And an alien spaceship glides slowly toward Earth. Its mission is to decide whether or not the Earth should be admitted to the Society of Friendly Planets. Its mission is one of peace. Its mission is one of generosity.

"Slow ahead, Mr. Zexo," says the Captain. He looks carefully at the video image of Earth.

"Yes, sir," says Mr. Zexo, the navigator. The ship slows.

The Captain paces across the expansive bridge. He is worried. Something bothers him. He looks at the screen again.

"Mr. Piddly," says the Captain, "get me the historian. Something bothers me."

"Yes, sir," says Mr. Piddly, the communications officer. He gets the historian.

The historian arrives on the bridge. He is an old officer, and he walks with a slight limp.

"Yes?" asks the historian.

"Historian," says the Captain. "What are those huge metal objects orbiting Earth? They seem to be artificial satellites of some kind."

The historian observes the satellites orbiting Earth. He looks interested. "Sir," he says to the Captain. "Those orbiting devices are what is commonly known to Earthlings as the Strategic Defense Initiative. SDI for short."

"Purpose?" asks the Captain. The Captain knows much about Earth military matters, except for SDI.

The historian adjusts his glasses. "Sir, SDI is meant to protect sovereign territories from a nuclear missile attack from another sovereign territory. It is composed of a system of orbiting platforms and satellites that 'shoot down' missiles as said missiles enter the outer-atmosphere on their way to said enemy territories."

The Captain looks very interested. The historian continues. "However, seeing SDI in an actual activated mode is quite interesting."

"It is interesting," says the Captain.

"Incredible how a planet of civilized inhabitants actually must resort to efforts like this." The historian coughs. "Each country has its own SDI system. Notice the sovereign statements painted on each satellite. There must be at least a million orbiting protection devices out there. Amazing that we consider these humanoids advanced and intelligent."

"But surely, historian," says the Captain, "these Earthlings have strived for a greater good. I know, from my history lessons, that they once constructed a permanent orbiting space station. Surely, this is indicative of a truly advanced civilization."

"The space station was destroyed by the SDI system, sir."

"Well, at least the leaders of each sovereign territory are concerned enough about their people to protect them from destruction. That, in itself, is commendable." The Captain smiles.

"Sir," says the historian, "the SDI system is archaic. It does not protect against missiles that stay within the atmosphere, and its protection against the other types of missiles is, to say the least, negligible. The governments spend billions on these orbiting devices, sacrificing more immediate goods for their peoples to insure this purpose."

"Fascinating," says the Captain. "But,

there must be some good qualities that these Earthlings possess. They can't be completely stupid."

"Sir," says the historian, "do you remember that Earth is supposed to have a natural satellite, called the Moon, orbiting the planet?"

"I remember that from my history lessons."

"It was destroyed by SDI," says the historian. "And, Captain, do you remember that the planet is supposed to contain seven continents?"

"I remember."

"Australia is no longer there. Destroyed by the Vatican's SDI system."

"Incredible," says the Captain. "They actually are that stupid."

There is silence on the bridge. The Captain paces again, his hands behind his back. The historian, old and tired, sits on the floor.

"Keep out of range of the satellites, Mr. Zexo," says the Captain. "We don't want to be shot down."

"Yes, sir."

The bridge is silent once more.

Ensign Palver rushes onto the bridge. He waves a small piece of paper in the Captain's face.

"Captain," says the Ensign, "this is in. We have determined that there is a group of quasi-emotional amoebas on the surface of Neptune."

"Amoebas?" asks the Captain. "Wonderful! That is who we will ask to join our Society of Friendly Planets. Finally, we encounter intelligent creatures! Mr. Zexo, take us out of here."

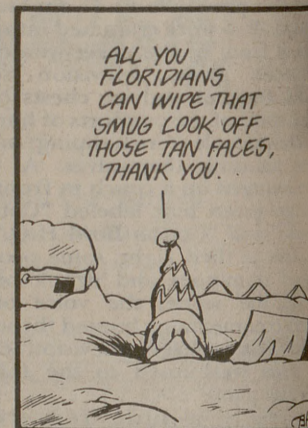
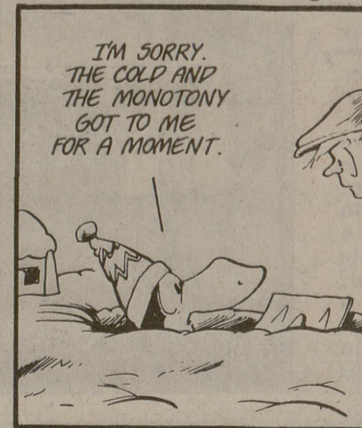
"Gladly, sir."

The alien spaceship turns and glides away. Once again, mankind is left to fend for itself in the great, empty universe.

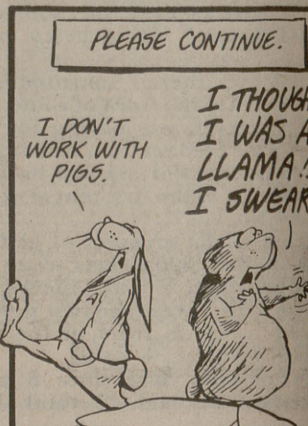
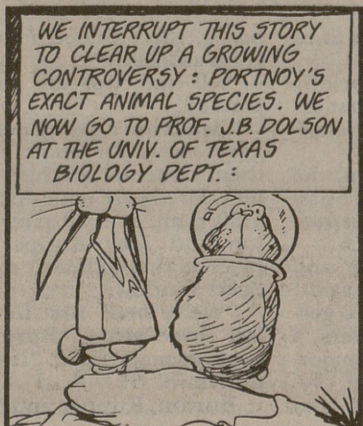
And that is the future.

Mark Nair is a senior political science major and a columnist for The Battalion.

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by Berke Breathed

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