

# Opinion

## This vote's for you

Once more, it is Student Government election time, and once more, we at *The Battalion* are offering our annual endorsement for student body president.

After interviewing all the candidates — all two of them — and evaluating the credentials they offered, we have decided to endorse Mr. Jay Hays for student body president.

Mr. Hays demonstrated knowledge of Student Government goings-on and outlined interesting plans for his administration. Although both candidates have been in Student Government for quite a while, we are confident that Mr. Hays is the candidate qualified for the many pressing demands of the president's job.

Of course, this is merely the opinion of the editorial board, and we encourage you to listen to the candidates for yourselves. There is no way that we can attempt in an editorial to describe the platforms and goals of the candidates. You, as voters, will have to hear them for yourselves and then make a responsible choice.

The Battalion Editorial Board

## Mail Call

### To cheat or not to cheat

EDITOR:

This letter addresses a classified ad that was in *The Battalion* on Thursday, March 24. The ad was in the "Wanted" section of the classifieds and said, "Urgently Need Ghostwriter for four page Philosophy Paper \$\$\$ Call XXX-XXX-XXXX after 6:00 p.m. \$\$\$" (I have changed the original ad by replacing the phone number with X's.) The question that arises in my mind is one of ethical obligations *The Battalion* has to the University. Should a university newspaper publish advertisements that condone students to cheat? By permitting the printing of this advertisement *The Battalion* is condoning plagiarism by the students of Texas A&M.

In the recent past, *The Battalion* has had multi-part stories on cheating, and the Student Government organized the "Cheating Awareness Week." In addition to these recent events, The Aggie Code of Honor states, "Aggies do not lie cheat or steal, nor tolerate those that do."

I realize the advertisements are done by a private company, but shouldn't the student-run *Battalion* Editorial Board monitor the ads that appear in the student-run newspaper? As a student of Texas A&M, I question the sincerity of *The Battalion* reporting, when contradictions such as these arise. *The Battalion* should establish a position and follow it in all areas of its publication.

Timothy King '90

One more time, just for grins: The student editorial board of *The Battalion* is completely separate from the professional advertising staff, which determines what ads will be accepted for publication. We can't influence their advertising decisions, and they can't influence our reporting.

### Those who wait may wait too late

EDITOR:

This letter is in response to the article entitled "Where is the racism in professional baseball" in the March 24 issue. After reading the article, I must compliment Mr. Dowdy on his knowledge of sports history. Yet, with his examples to support his belief that blacks may not be very good team managers because of their "lack of experience" and in time, blacks would be given the opportunity to manage a team when they (blacks) become more marketable in the "Applicant Pool," Mr. Dowdy revealed the reason why Mr. Jesse Jackson took the actions that he did.

You see, Mr. Dowdy, good things do not always come to those who wait because those who wait, may wait too late. It is time for a change Mr. Dowdy, and we (blacks) cannot sit back and let time alter the social beliefs of others or to provide limiting opportunities that are only offered to keep us quiet. All I am saying, Mr. Dowdy, is that if you do not like what is going on and you want to change it, then you must speak or you will not be heard.

Margie N. Bass '89

### We are all going down together

EDITOR:

I find it rather disturbing that the majority of the student body is so apathetic to the world around them. I'm referring mainly to the people who think the apartheid shack is an eyesore. Next time you're outside, look beyond your cellophane bubble. Do you see the billboards? Do you see the telephone lines? Our whole "civilization" is an eyesore. And as we squander our limited natural resources on frivolous tokens of the American way, we shall respond to the consequences with hindsight. If this student body is the representation of what we have in store for the future, we might as well pass our lease on this planet to the next organism that crawls out of the primordial slime. Just call me Casandra, because the truth is always what we wish it to be. We are all going down together. Yodellyheehoo.

Andrew Migliore '88

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.



## Lies, disinformation and untruths

Ken  
Hendrickson  
Guest Columnist

On a campus such as ours, the free and open exchange of opinion is a highly valued privilege. As important as such freedom is, fundamental as is the right to self-expression, nonetheless the demagogic, the demonstrably untrue, the deceitful must not be allowed to enter unchallenged the realm of rational political discussion.

In one sense, I write this column with great hesitation. Brian Frederick, merely by his access to print, stands victoriously over the opening of any debate with him. Through his column he sets the tone and agenda of discussion and therefore forces what should be reasoned and reasonable political analysis to mire itself in untruths, manipulated statistics and slanderous racist drivel.

To begin, Frederick's column on South Africa (March 22, 1988) is full of inaccuracies and half-truths. Racial strife is not rampant in Nigeria. Factional in-fighting and political pluralism exists, violence accompanies some of it, but to say that "racial strife" is "rampant" is ridiculous. Ethnicity is not "race," nor is political affiliation or religious preference. To assert otherwise is not to state reasonable opinion but to propagate racist untruths.

Black Africans do not "flock to South Africa to find a better life." South Africa has since 1948 followed policies specifically designed to eliminate black citizenship in that country. It has forcibly established the Bantustans, designated areas of black "independence," and forcibly removed black South Africans to them. These areas, representing the least developed and least desirable agricultural districts in the country, are declared independent black nations. With no means of supporting themselves and their families, the inhabitants of such "countries" are by design forced to seek employment in South Africa on racist, South African terms. By the wranglings of bureaucratic boundary generations they find themselves "foreigners" in their own country and as such, subject to curtailments of their basic rights. The fact is that many of the "homelands" created by the government but not yet "independent" are fighting their exclusion from the country.

Apartheid has not "largely perished." While it is true that such trivial restrictions such as park bench discrimination and separate water fountains have disappeared, this in fact represents a streamlining, not dismantling, of racist government. Job reservation for whites has been lifted because there are simply not enough whites to fill the positions of South Africa's industry. Even so, blacks allowed to train and work above the unskilled or menial level are subject to the same pay as all other unskilled labourers and are categorically precluded from any participation in management.

As for the passes, which used to restrict movement and employment, these have been replaced by race identity cards.

The voting rights of Indians and so-called Coloureds represent only the faintest reflection of the full political rights those groups once possessed in South Africa's Cape Province. Dilution of representation and separate and subjugated access to parliament make Indian and Coloured participation in South African government a pathetic sham.

Finally, the ANC is not "communist infiltrated." The U.S. Department of State estimates that less than half of the ANC's National Executive Council has any connection whatsoever with the South African Communist Party. The State Department, based upon black opinion with South Africa and the Bantustans, finds no reason to believe that any ANC-sponsored post-apartheid government would suffer communist domination. Nelson Mandela himself is an anti-communist.

But more than a simple exposure of Frederick's blatant inaccuracies, this column must address the even greater tragedy represented by Brian Frederick and those like him. In all his assertions on the nature of black South Africans, Frederick reveals an unquestioning acceptance of the propaganda spread by the South African government itself. Racist sociologists such as the academically rejected Pierre van de Berghe, indeed the South African Department of Information, describe the South African situation nearly verbatim in the same terms as does Frederick's column. Is this coincidence? Through his writing Frederick has given credence to the misinformation of a government that during both World Wars harbored individuals and groups working towards the realization of the most repugnant of Central Power and Axis Power ideals and goals. It is a government that allows the active, legitimated political participation of groups organized upon nothing less than the "philosophical" foundations of Nazism. It is a government that illegally traffics in nuclear and non-nuclear weapons technologies and thereby threatens world peace. It is a government that supports terrorism and political assassination against its political opponents. It is a government that daily kills, wounds and arrests its citizens, both black and white, who dare to speak out against it. South Africa as it exists today is a racist, hate-founded police state and offers nothing of redeeming value to the world or its own citizens.

South Africa is the subject of sanction and isolation from the entire world community. Conservative western leaders such as Britain's Margaret Thatcher and President Ronald Reagan, along with leaders of more liberal views, agree that racist oppression in South Africa must end. There is no question of the reprehensible nature of South Africa

and its policies. Yet this is the government whose viewpoint Frederick has by allowing such unsubstantiated ignorance to masquerade as opinion, *Battalion* have so blithely and unswallowingly. This is the hatred and they have supported.

Finally, we the public must consider what we expect from our news media. In an open society, we should demand that freedom of expression does not find itself replaced by the freedom to propagate lies, to mislead and to accuse the criminal. We should hold the implementers of the public voice responsible for the rights and freedoms our society extends them. Just as it is the right of individual Americans to harm to one another, neither is it the right of our own journalists and opinion-makers to do malicious or intelligent harm through the irresponsible abuse of their right to be heard.

To this end, I suggest *The Battalion* print a retraction of those assertions Frederick's opinion column that has proved to be false. The right to opinion does not confer the right to untruth. Additionally, I challenge Brian Frederick to produce the sources from which he wrote his column and to delete them and the conclusions he drew from them in an open and public forum of myself. Finally, for having abused the right of access to a free media, for flagrant disregard shown for public liberties and the truth by the publication of the Brian Frederick column of March 22, I propose that both Frederick and the editorial staff who published his column resign from their positions and include in their written resignations public apologies.

The time has come to face down untruths and misrepresentations of as are represented by Brian Frederick and his writing. We cannot allow the dissemination of hate propaganda to protect itself in the name of freedom of expression. Students and faculty of Texas A&M, all readers of *The Battalion*, the lies for what they are and let reason prevail.

Ken Hendrickson is a graduate student in history studying South African black resistance movements. His column has been accepted as a statement of opinion by the Nicaraguan Students Association, the African Students Association, Students Against Apartheid, Puerto Rican Students Association, General Union of Palestine Students and the Arab Student Association.

Editor's note: The opinions of columnists and guest columnists expressed in *The Battalion's* editorial page are opinions only. These opinions do not necessarily reflect the opinions of *The Battalion* editorial board, *The A&M* University administrators, faculty or the Board of Regents. This information is printed every day in the editorial policy at the bottom of this page of *The Battalion*.

## BLOOM COUNTY



## The Battalion

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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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