

Mail Call

Freedom shouldn't be condemned

EDITOR:

I imagine that I'll be seeing lots of Ayatollah letters for a couple of weeks. I just have a couple of questions to ask all you people who think that *The Battalion* shouldn't have printed the June 9 advertisement referring to this offensive individual as "His Holiness," "the great leader"

What would have happened if *The Battalion* had said, "No, we won't print that advertisement. It's improper. It's immoral. It's indecent. It's wrong."

What would the people who weren't given their freedom do? How dare you people become offended at *The Battalion*, and more importantly, at the United States of America for allowing all of us the right to say what we want to say, and to believe, or not believe, whatever we want to.

James Bennet Saxon

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.

A battle of wages, wills

The proposed increase in the minimum wage is caught up in a battle of wills, a political fight, an economic dispute and — coming last in line in typical Washington fashion — the real needs of those on the lowest rung of the wage ladder.

President Bush, his veto upheld, has the best political position and the preferable minimum wage proposal. When the powers-that-be get around to a compromise, it should look a lot like what Bush proposes.

The president announced early on his intention to veto any minimum wage increase

that boosted the hourly wage to the \$4.55 in 1991. Bush said that quick a rise would cost as many as 400,000 jobs and lessen opportunity for entry-level jobs. This turned into a battle of wills, and Congress passed the bill anyway. Bush, on a trip, didn't even wait to get back on the ground — he vetoed the bill in Air Force One.

The minimum wage has been a political dispute for decades. The Democrats are using the bill to forward their claim that Bush favors the rich. Bush says he is protecting jobs. Economists differ only on how many jobs a minimum wage increase will eliminate,

but Bush is undoubtedly right that many thousands would be off the payroll.

The Earned Income Tax Credit proposal being discussed has merit. It would cut taxes for low-income households and could produce cash payments. There is a lot of room for compromise in the various figures.

Somewhere in here the needs of the low-income worker need to be taken into consideration. Eliminating 400,000 jobs is not the way to help. Bush's proposal would be of some benefit while doing the least harm.

— Houston Chronicle

Pitiful programming plagues our children

What ever happened to "Land of the Lost?"

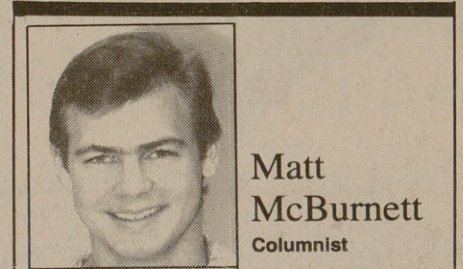
The ruthless individuals responsible for the loss of all the great kids shows and their subsequent replacement with today's pitiful programs should be given a life sentence of watching continuous reruns of "Man from Atlantis."

Now that summer is finally here, I am free to do something I haven't done in years — watch television. I always flip on the boob-tube at 10 p.m. to keep abreast of current events via the news. Hey, it's easier than reading the newspaper.

But now I have time to actually relax and watch the television for entertainment. "Star Trek" comes on every week-day. "The Six Million Dollar Man" is even back. Obviously, times have changed for television, though. Today, six million dollars would hardly buy Steve Austin a pacemaker.

No change in television can compare with the total downfall of children's programming. While thumbing through the TV guide, I saw no "Speed Racer", no "Lost in Space" and very few of the shows that made TV great when I was a kid.

In the days of my youth, I planned most of my time around the "neat-o" cartoons and kids shows that were scattered throughout the day. Early morning had "Popeye" and "The Three Stooges" to offer. Today's kids are treated to such classics as "Care Bears" and "Snorks." At 7:30 a.m., if one is lucky enough to be within range of indepen-



Matt McBurnett
Columnist

dent Houston stations, he has a choice of watching "Ghostbusters" on channel 20 or "Real Ghostbusters" on channel 26. Boy, what a dilemma!

Even more important to the average youth is after-school programming. Back in elementary school, my buddies and I would postpone our fierce "kill the man with the ball" games until after our favorite shows.

We could not live without our daily doses of "Gilligan's Island," "The Jetsons," "The Flintstones" and, in my very young days, "Ultraman." Kids of today can still catch some of these classics if they sift through the other garbage that occupies most of their television time.

I turned on our set recently and was shocked to discover the total trash today's youth must suffer through. The first thing I noticed was some cartoon figures roller-skating around California. Naturally, I asked a friend what we were watching. He replied, "I think it's called 'Hollywood Teenage Mutants from Hell.'"

Eventually I found out he was combining two of the latest examples of kid

show garbage, more specifically, "Beverly Hills Teens" and the obviously fulfilling "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles."

Monday, I resigned myself to watching an entire episode of this "Beverly Hills" dribble. I began watching the show at 3 p.m. and fell asleep five minutes later. Have no fear, though! It came on again at 4 p.m. It was the worst. Moon Unit Zappa herself couldn't compete with the outdated valley lingo used by the so-called Beverly Hills teens.

After watching this episode, I gave up on afternoon cartoons and reached for the handy TV guide once more. I thought there might be a slight chance that some Saturday morning cartoons had remained sacred. But then I saw it — NBC's newest jewel: "Gummi Bears."

At that point, I began asking myself questions. Do kids watch this trash? Is there some mysterious link between breakfast cereals, video games and cartoons? I wondered what happened to the old programming.

Recruiting should be open to all groups

The Corps of Cadets is a viable and vital part of this university and will remain so.

However, the recruiting practices of the Corps are, in my view, suspect. I question not so much their techniques, but rather when and where the recruiting takes place.

On the main day of the new student conferences this summer, the freshmen are greeted by a math assessment test, an honors presentation and finally a Corps of Cadets presentation. The new students are virtually a captive audience for this presentation. The freshmen are probably free to go if they choose, but nobody tells them so and few freshmen realize they can leave.

Then that evening, before the traditions program in Rudder Auditorium, many Cadets try recruiting incoming freshmen to be in the Corps. I have no problem with the Cadets who are recruiting. They feel strongly about their organization and would like other good students to join. Also, they're just doing what they volunteered to do.

What I find objectionable is that the Corps gets special privileges to recruit incoming freshmen that no other A&M student-based organization receives.

The case can be made that it is vital for those interested to enter the Corps before the start of school because of different housing and the fact that the new students in the Corps must attend freshmen orientation week.

Yet this argument is shaky, because I find it hard to believe that any significant number of students coming to A&M have not heard about the Corps and already made up their mind as to whether they intend to join. After all, when you first hear of A&M, you also hear of the Corps of Cadets.

Due to the five new residence halls along with other factors, this is the first year in many that all the freshmen who request on-campus housing have had their requests honored. Many of the students have already signed housing agreements to live on campus and thus have decided, in writing, that they will be living in civilian residence halls. So

Timm Doolen

Assistant Opinion Page Editor

they have in effect decided not where they want to live, but that they want to be civilians.

I don't see how the Corps can expect too many of these incoming students suddenly change their minds and join the Corps. Nonetheless, assuming that of the freshmen who eventually join the Corps make their decision to join at the new student conference, that is only about 360 students of the projected 7,000 but over 6,500 students sit through the Corps presentations with little interest.

There are two options I see as solutions to this conflict. The first is to allow the Corps to have an official sanctioned presentation during the freshmen conference. They can have a table at the MSC and they can add a booth at the resource tables in Rudder Exhibit Hall, which most of the new students visit during the conference. This way, the Corps is free to recruit, but not in front of a captive audience filled primarily with students who have already made up their mind.

The other option is for Student Affairs to allow time during the conference for the Corps of Cadets to recruit individually along with other significant student organizations. I'm sure the Interfraternity Council, Student Government, the MSC committees and other student-based organizations would like to recruit incoming freshmen into their programs, especially if they were given a captive audience. But I can't see any organization a captive audience and would rather see a time set where all the major organizations are allowed to talk individually with those students who are interested in that particular organization.

With either solution, we end up with the result of the Corps of Cadets getting adequate representation, but not having students captive for up to 45 minutes when most of them are at best different to the presentation. To insure fairness to major student organizations, the opportunities for recruiting are going to have to be changed.

H.U.D. Housing Development

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(USPS 045 360)

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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.

The Battalion is published Monday through Friday during Texas A&M regular semesters, except for holiday and examination periods.

Mail subscriptions are \$17.44 per semester, \$34.62 per school year and \$96.44 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request.

Our address: The Battalion, 230 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843-1111.

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 77843-4111.