

We'll only reach Utopia through actions of love

Mitch Snyder had just hung himself the day before. He had worked hard during his life for a good cause — helping the homeless get back on their feet. And yet he killed himself, leaving no note to the world, no final word.

I had been working, trying to help an old homeless woman I had met. Her daughter and husband had abandoned her long ago, and she was completely impoverished, without Social Security or anything else. I was trying to help her, but things were not working out. In a moment of despair, I contemplated my own suicide, knowing I would never go through with it. How would I do it? Different from Mr. Snyder, I knew. My suicide would serve a purpose besides death. It would be a public event. I would make the whole world notice. And I would leave a final message, the

Irwin Tang
Columnist

most important words of my life. It would go something like this:

Sisters and Brothers of the World, Please love one another, and please extend your love to our other kin — the animals and plants of our Mother Earth. Work for happiness, for yourself and all others.

Know all others as you know yourself. Understand them in order to love them better. Know their pain, pleasure, desires and needs. They will be different, but love them nevertheless.

Know your actions, for they are you. Do not blind yourself from your actions or nonactions. Even the most miniscule

action can have huge effects. Every vote you cast, every purchase you make, every second you sit idle, every group you join, every job you take, every hour you work at that job, every thing you give

And if you must hurt someone, hurt yourself. If you must exploit someone, exploit yourself. If you must oppress, oppress yourself. Feel the pain of your hatred so that others don't have to.

Irwin Tang

P.S. I know I am not Jesus but from the cross or Mohammed or message from Allah. I am not fasting or Dr. King looking over mountaintop. I am just a man who to do good during some of my com hours. You have no reason to take words as anything more than mine. Nevertheless, please heed my Please.

I never killed myself, and I never So, I make my final plea my first of this school year. Love, please.

Payment received for this column will be donated to the United Nations Children's Fund. Further payments for columns will also be donated to various humanitarian organizations.

Irwin Tang is a senior political science major.

Know your actions, for they are you. Do not blind yourself from your actions or nonactions. Even the most miniscule action can have huge effects. Every vote you cast, every purchase you make, every second you sit idle, every group you join, every thing you give and every thing you take has ramifications both good and bad, some devastatingly bad and some miraculously good.

and every thing you take has ramifications both good and bad, some devastatingly bad and some miraculously good. Let us be a good species, to our own and all others.

Know that pain, and resolve to end it, in yourself and all others.

We have not reached Utopia yet. The only way to reach it is through actions of love. Let us work towards it.

Mail Call

Bike lanes, route nothing but joke

EDITOR:

The bicycle lanes on campus are a joke! The University puts white paint on the streets and calls the area between the paint and the curb a bike lane. These "bike lanes" are full of holes and cracks and the pavement is frequently uneven.

The only bigger joke than the University bike lanes is the bike routes in College Station. These routes are streets with signs that have pictures of bicycles on them, which is the only difference between these and other residential streets. That is, their surfaces are rough, cars park on both sides of the street and there are stop lights at every intersection.

The purpose of bike lanes and bike routes is to improve automobile traffic. Parking, Transit and Traffic Services and College Station are only paying lip service to bicycle safety to maintain the appearance of concern.

Martin Ebel
graduate student

PTTS, go back to the drugstore

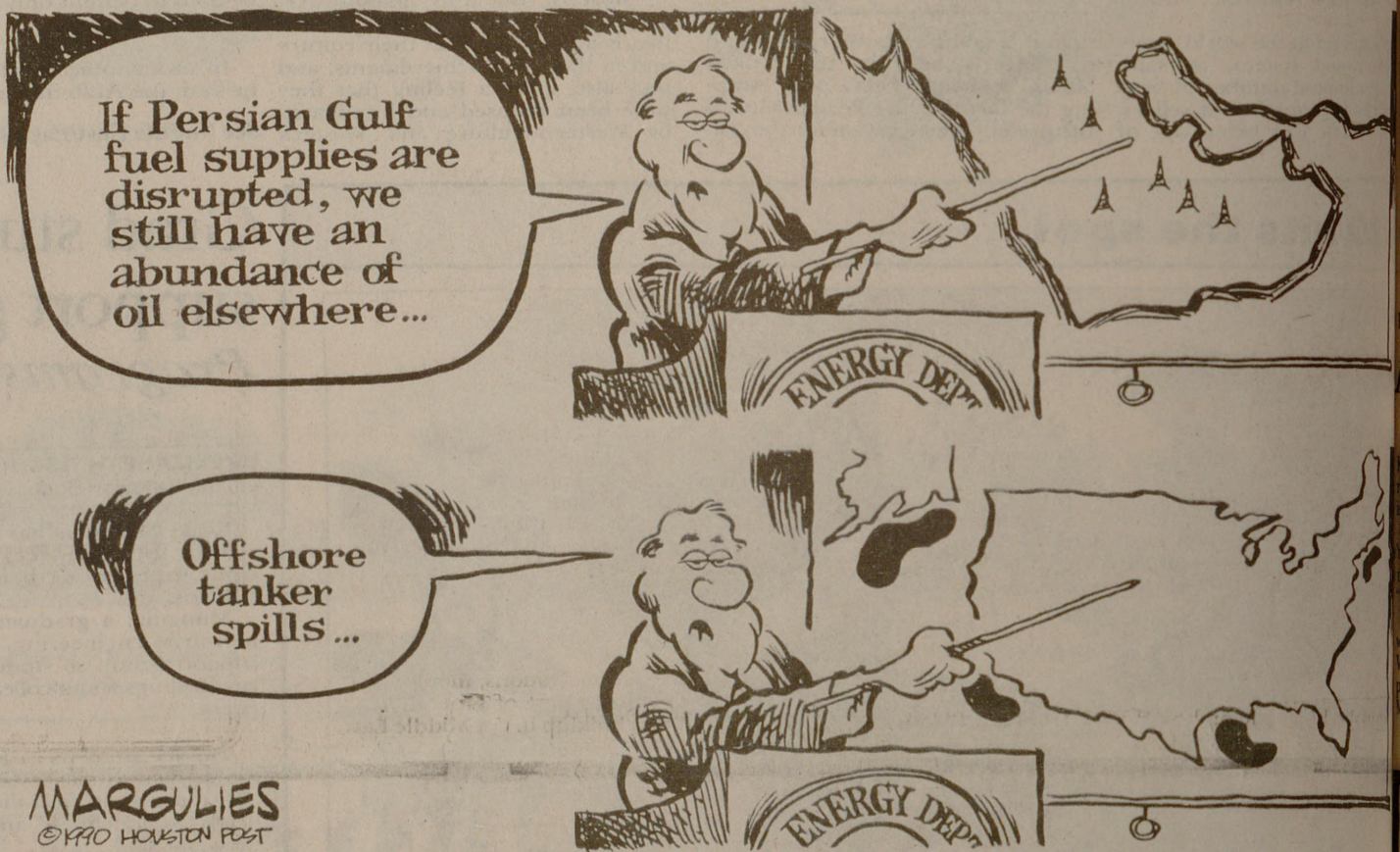
EDITOR:

Once again that merry band of pranksters over at the Department of Parking, Transit and Traffic Services is exercising what they believe to be wit by including a packet of aspirin with the parking permits. It occurs to me, however, that a tube of K-Y Jelly would be more appropriate.

Dan Venglarik, '91

Have an opinion? Express it!

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. There is no guarantee that letters submitted will be printed. Each letter must be signed and must include the classification, address and telephone number of the writer.



International force helps chance for Iraq solution

The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait has united the world like never before. At the time of writing, a multinational force stands watchful guard in the desert defending the Saudi border against possible Iraqi aggression. Tens of thousands of troops, mostly American, are pouring in every day into Saudi Arabia.

Although the number of troops from other nations is negligible as compared to the massive American buildup, their very presence is of great importance. Two key factors are working in America's favor: the support of most Arab governments and the end of the Cold War. Such a buildup would, for instance, have been unimaginable 10 years ago. Right now, the dice are loaded in America's favor, but for how long?

This question is, of course, not easy to answer. It is, however, likely that the Soviet Union will not interfere in any way, even in case of a full-blown conflict. It has too many problems at home, and besides is in desperate need of Western economic assistance. "Friendly neutrality" would be a good term to describe its attitude in the weeks ahead.

Sarang Shidore
Columnist

The Arab states are, however, an entirely different case. It would probably be accurate to say that the Arab leaders are more keen to support the United States than the Arab masses, and there lies the crux of the problem.

Most Arab leaders have been pawns in the superpower rivalry for so long, that they can no longer identify themselves with the Arab cause. In Egypt, Hosni Mubarak is seen as little more than an American stooge. He faces a strong challenge at home from the Muslim Brotherhood, a disciplined political grouping with wide popular support.

The Gulf states with all their oil wealth have been governed by monarchs, who for years have done little but protect their own interests as well as American interests (in that order). The Arab masses, especially in the have-not states such as Jordan and Egypt, have benefited little from the

wealth of the desert. The Emirs with their Swiss bank accounts and opulent lifestyles simply cannot identify themselves as leaders of the Arab people.

Syria's Hafiz Assad has been a regional pariah for so long that he can hardly claim to be an Arab leader. Finally, the wily King Hussein of Jordan commands respect, but is certainly no strongman. In contrast, Saddam Hussein with his austere personal lifestyle appeals to the masses as one of their own.

The age-old Palestinian question has added yet another dimension to the crisis. With a hawkish, uncompromising government at Israel's helm, Palestinians have lost all hope of gaining their rights through diplomacy.

Tired of decades of unfulfilled promises from the Emirs, they see Saddam as the only one who can give them the military muscle they so desperately need. He has been quick to exploit this advantage. His recent saber rattling against Israel must be seen in this context.

In short, there is a real danger of Saddam Hussein emerging as the only Arab leader with strong popular

support in the entire Middle East. And as the troops prolong their stay in the Gulf, more and more Arabs will see Saddam as one who can unite them not as Jordanians, Egyptians, or Saudis but as Arabs.

Although the number of troops from other nations is negligible as compared to the massive American buildup, their very presence is of great importance. Two key factors are working in America's favor: the support of most Arab governments and the end of the Cold War. Such a buildup would, for instance, have been unimaginable 10 years ago. Right now, the dice are loaded in America's favor, but for how long?

In fact, to this day, many Arabs resent the arbitrary division of large areas of the Middle East into nations by the colonial powers after World War I. The longing for living together as one Arab

nation is deeply rooted in them.

Risky as the deployment of troops is equally clear that Saddam is a ruthless aggressor who has had no qualms in committing crimes of the greatest magnitude. His massive use of poison gas against the Kurds and the Iranians, well documented by human rights groups, is a sign of his willingness to go to any extent to satisfy his personal ambitions.

All his assurances mean nothing. In fact, he invaded Kuwait only hours after personally assuring President Mubarak that he had no intentions of doing so. The Saddam Husseins of this world do not understand tough talk, they only respond to tough actions. The decision of the Bush administration to enforce total economic blockade and send troops are justified for this reason.

The fact that the American action has little support among the Arab people will, however, seriously hamper attempts to find a solution. The superpowers have allied themselves too long with regional leaders who have lost touch with their own people. All we now must pay the price.

The Battalion

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Adventures In Cartooning

by Don Atkinson Jr



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