

## U.S. government should end aid to El Salvador

The United States got out of bed with one devil (in Iraq), but is still sleeping with another devil in El Salvador. The United States still hasn't learned its lesson: don't arm governments that slaughter their own people.

The United States armed Iraq as it gassed Kurdish Iraqis, and the United States is still arming the El Salvadoran military as it continues to slaughter its own people.

Since the Salvadoran civil war began in 1980, the El Salvadoran military has killed over 60,000 people. Over 40,000 of these were civilians.

The military uses a variety of methods including torture, bombing of villages and killing through the use of death squads. Amnesty International reports that there have been 20 documented killings done by the death squads this year. The Salvadoran non-governmental Human Rights Commission reports that the Salvadoran army has killed 561 civilians in the first half of this year.

No one is safe from the army. Civilians that merely speak of a negotiated settlement with the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (the rebel group that battles the

**Irwin Tang**  
Columnist

government, known as the FMLN) are red-tagged by the death squads.

Even the churches are not immune. The Acatlactal Battalion of the army murdered and mutilated six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper, and her daughter last year. President Alfredo Cristiani admitted that the army was involved, but with a little push from President Bush, U.S. aid to the El Salvadoran army kept flowing south, into their bloody hands.

The U.S. government presently sends about \$1.4 million a day to the Salvadoran government and their military. Over the last 10 years, the United States has given about \$4 1/2 billion worth of aid to the Salvadoran government. About \$1 billion of it has been military aid. The U.S. government funds, supplies and trains the Salvadoran military. In fact, the battalion that murdered the six priests had received training from the U.S. Green Berets two days before the

murders.

Why does the United States continue to send aid to the Salvadoran government with no strings attached? I pressed House Republican Joe Barton on the issue. I fear his thoughts may be prevalent in Washington, especially in the White House. He basically replied that the Salvadoran government is fighting the FMLN, the other side of the civil war, and thus should be allowed to do whatever they want. Civilian slaughter is simply an unfortunate side effect.

Sorry, Joe, but that is not good enough. Let us consider the situation in El Salvador and come up with a more peaceful approach:

- The impoverished people of El Salvador have only become poorer as a result of the last 10 years of civil war. Only 10 percent of the rural peasants have potable water. Another year of civil war could cause further famine, deeper economic collapse and more mass exodus. Another year of war could break El Salvador's spine once and for all.

- The military continues to fight both the civil war and the war on civilians. It is out of control. The

government can not or will not control the military. There is no independent judiciary system to try human rights offenders (and consequently, there hasn't been any one convicted). The more civilians the army kill, the more people join the FMLN; and war flames fly higher. The military will not reform on its own; it must be forced to reform.

- The FMLN is not even close to dead. The U.S. and El Salvadoran governments insist that the FMLN is on its last legs, but in reality, the two sides are in stalemate. In peace talks, the FMLN insists on reform of the Salvadoran army; that is the one thing that they will not budge on. If the military is not reformed, then the FMLN will not put their arms down.

The United States must take a stand for the El Salvadoran people. Instead of taking the side of the government, the United States should take the side of peace and human rights for all.

First, the United States should stop all military aid to El Salvador until the killing, torture, beatings, bombing, and generally corrupt behavior stops and the military is both controlled by the people and accountable to an independent judiciary.

Second, the United States should encourage peace talks and push aside to give up sensible concessions as military reform and greater land reform from the government and complete cease-fire and destruction of all weapons from the FMLN. The United States could threaten the government with reduction of aid if they are too stubborn on reform. The United States could offer aid to the country as a whole if peace is achieved, this would pressure both sides.

The war-sick Salvadoran public sees that a negotiated settlement is the best solution. They would apply even greater pressure to both sides once they see that peace is possible and that the United States wants peace.

The United Nations should also be invited to play a bolder role as mediator. The U.N. has already worked some of a miracle this year, mediating an agreement between sides in the Cambodian civil war.

'El Salvador' is often translated as 'Saviour of the World.' The saviour needs saving. But in order to save the saviour, America must stop sleeping with the devil.

*Irwin Tang is a junior political science major.*

### Mail Call

#### 'Honors-only' policies unfair

EDITOR:

Well, after three years of attending Texas A&M and promising myself I'd write a letter to the editor about one thing or another, I've decided to finally do it. This is in response to the latest 'honors' policy announcements.

How can the RHA director of facilities announce the 24-hours visitation of Eppright and Wells halls with a straight face? By stating that the reason for this privilege is because the residents are 'responsible adults' is the same as stating all other Aggies are irresponsible. If you, 'Mr./Mrs. regular Aggie', are not insulted, you should be. I can't believe that with all the official calls to end racism and separatism on the A&M campus, a university policy can so blatantly provide privileges to one group of students and not the other.

And another thing, who are these 'honor students' taking over one of the female residence halls so that they can receive more personal, one-on-one attention from their instructors. Don't all of us deserve this attention?

How can anyone deny that this elitist treatment of honor students is unfair to all of us? I just hope something's done about this before the next headline reads, 'Sbisa Declared Honors Dining Hall.' Who knows what's next.

Kevin Ault, '91

#### Middle East peace plan naive

EDITOR:

Irwin Tang's column regarding a peace plan for the Middle East was extremely naive. Saddam Hussein is not a man to be trusted. Before Iraq invaded Kuwait, Hussein publicly stated that he would not invade Kuwait; and just like with Hitler in the late 1930s, the world was stupid enough to believe him. Tang's plan would have Hussein voluntarily destroy all of his chemical weapons along with his nuclear plants that are working on producing enriched uranium and plutonium for bombs. He's a maniac. You can't reason rationally with an irrational person. While Hussein may say that his goal is to unite all Arabs, it is obvious from his actions that his plan is to dominate the entire region.

Tang's plan coupled Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait with Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territory. The two situations have absolutely no connection. Israel should immediately withdraw all forces from the occupied territories, but not as a result of negotiations with Hussein. Hussein invaded Kuwait because he needed the money that their oil fields would generate since he was broke after fighting a war that he started with Iran for 10 years, not to unite the Arabs.

Israel's occupation of the Palestinian homeland is just as bad as the invasion of Kuwait, but they are simply not connected. Israel's reasoning for occupying the land is totally illogical. They say because their ancestors lived in the area, they have the right to take the land and subjugate the

people who live there. That's like me going into London and saying that the whole city belongs to me since my ancestors lived there in the 1600s. It simply makes no sense.

Finally, the United States must immediately force Hussein to leave Kuwait, and if possible, force him from power using whatever means necessary. It is estimated that he is within five years of developing a working nuclear bomb. He already has missiles that are capable of striking a long distance, and it is obvious by looking at his past actions that he will not hesitate to use his nuclear weapons when he develops them. The man is crazy and must not be allowed to become more powerful.

Mike Bryant, '90

#### Pro-choicers want 'liberty' to kill

EDITOR:

I can't help but to reply to Jim James' comments at a Pro-choice Aggies meeting as reported in The Battalion on September 5. The headline says it all. "Candidate equates pro-choice with liberty." I agree. Liberty alone is probably what pro-choicers are all about. There is more to our constitutional rights than liberty alone. The liberty of an individual should only be exercised so as not to interfere with the liberty of others. The fellow that has mutilated college students in Florida is an example of choice gone mad. It is a gruesome domination of one weak individual by another more powerful one.

I think it is quite ironic that in the same issue of The Battalion as the report on Mr. James' talk there is an article about surgery performed on a fetus still in her mother's womb but three and-a-half months before her natural birth would take place. This baby (we call it that when we want it) could have legally been killed by abortion. If late term abortion accounts for only eight to 10 percent of all abortions, which is a figure accepted by both sides of the issue, over 160,000 late-term abortions are performed in the United States yearly and over 400 daily.

Maurine McLean of Feminist for Life of America addressed our need to understand both life and choice at Aggies for Life's meeting which was held on the same night as Mr. James' talk. It would have been nice to see both sides represented in this paper, but The Battalion didn't show up.

Michael J. Bradham  
graduate student

EDITOR'S NOTE: An interview with Maurine McLean appeared on the front page of Monday's Battalion.

#### 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 or sent to Campus Mail Stop 1111.

## Six-year NAACP member refutes negligence claims

As a six-year member of the NAACP, I have a few problems with yesterday's column by Larry Cox. First, it is implied that the Association has been woefully negligent in their responsibilities toward African-Americans. I advise you to do research into the results of the past national convention. Then you will find what programs and initiatives are taking place in our community to make us a stronger people.

I could tell you myself, but perhaps you will show the same emphasis to research the tasks of the NAACP as you did in penning its downfall.

Second, is it really true that this was a 'self-serving non-solution' intended as a ploy for attention? I beg to differ, Mr. Cox. Before I go on, I pose to you a question: Are you even a member of the NAACP? I hope your reply is yes, because if not, you have a very minimal number of avenues to gather information about the Association.

If you really feel we are neglecting our own, reread (if you have read already) the recent list of 50 future black leaders in Ebony magazine. Go even deeper than that, and find out what the leaders of our community are actually doing. Until then, please try to avoid sardonic criticisms of our methods.

Third, do you really want to know what the late Dr. King's connection was with the University of Texas? It's the same as his connection with other predominately Caucasian campuses around the nation. He, through the power and efficacy of the civil rights movement, helped make it possible for us to go to the UTs and the A&Ms.

Jefferson Davis has no connection because he had nothing to fight for; his descendants would automatically be eligible as far as race is concerned.

Fourth, do you really want to talk about one group taking away the history of another? I think not. As a descendant of African heritage, I find my very existence in this hemisphere as an attempt by one to erase the pride and culture of another.

History speaks for itself. No one asked my ancestors if they wanted to leave their land, be brainwashed as

slaves, and be degraded as inferior human beings. I don't think we even have to go back that far. Even in recent history, no one tells the school children about the role we have played in forming this nation; they only learn the history of the dominant culture. If it were not so, why is it that the majority students even here at A&M can't tell about the details of Black history in America?

**Christopher Henderson**  
Reader's Opinion

To borrow a phrase, don't touch it. Yes, it is dangerous to have one's culture eradicated, and we've been trying to people this for the past four centuries.

Fifth, you want to know about 'hard principles'? Try exploitation, for one. Even if it were so that six percent of Southerners were slave owners, that is that 'six percent' exploited 90+ percent of the Africans that were here. And as their economy was based on agriculture, did the men of Larry Cox's great-great-grandfather's regiment work in the fields?

I don't think so, but mine did. But who lived off the results? Those of Mr. Cox.

I can appreciate, although I disagree with, your views on your history. However, I thoroughly disagree with your carping criticisms of our Association.

If you really have a problem, and aren't just searching for something to write about, I urge you to become a member of the Association. Then next year, you can travel to the convention and voice your concerns. Until such time, be careful about what you say, it could very well be mistaken.

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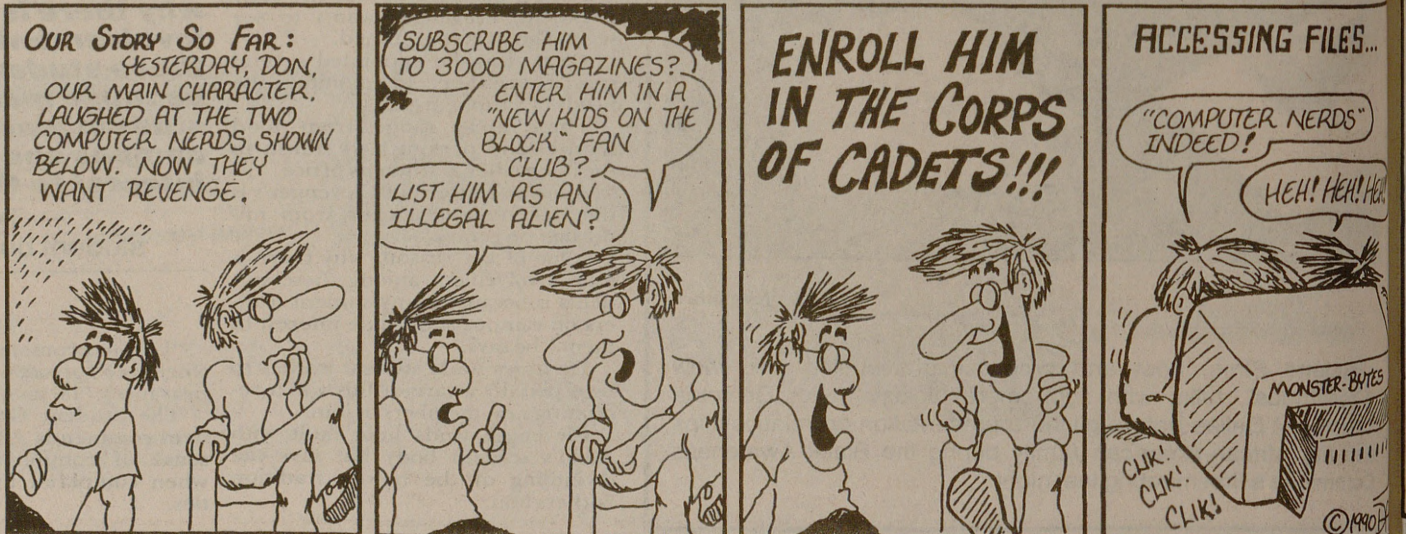
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by Don Atkinson Jr.



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