

EDITORIALS

Editorials expressed in The Battalion are those of the editorial board and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Texas A&M administrators, faculty or the Board of Regents.

Memory of Challenger disaster encourages quest for knowledge

On this, the fifth anniversary of the Challenger disaster, let us pause to remember the space explorers who perished that day.

Like each astronaut before them, the Challenger crew risked their lives to gain knowledge of space for the United States and the world. Let us hope their sacrifices will not be in vain. Tighter safety procedures have been implemented at NASA so a disaster like it does not happen again.

Christa McAuliffe, the only civilian on the Challenger that day, was to have been the first teacher in space. To many Americans, she embodied the spirit of U.S. space exploration.

We ask NASA to continue its work so her final lesson — that we must create enthusiasm for knowledge in children — will not go unlearned.

The Battalion Editorial Board

Horrors of war make media coverage crucial

War is hell on the home front, or so the song says. And it's true. Few of us don't feel the stress of the war.

If you are one of the lucky ones that haven't had friends or family members shipped out, it still is impossible to avoid the horror of this war.

Media coverage is making this war hard on all of us. Though no taxes have been invoked to support the war, there's been no rationing of products and there's not even the huge increase in gasoline prices most people expected, its effects have touched everyone in this country.

When there began to be such a resurgence of nostalgia about the Vietnam War and there were all those movies and T.V. shows about the "Vietnam experience," my mom told me she just wouldn't watch those shows or pay money for those movies.

She had seen enough body counts and news coverage on T.V. while it was actually happening to last her for a lifetime.

I didn't think much about that until now. I wake up to morning news conferences about our casualties and targets. I read how many Scuds were intercepted and how many hit and where on the front page of my paper. There are now as many war updates as traffic reports pouring out of my car radio.

And the horror is fascinating. It's like driving by an accident on the road and not being able to keep from looking.

I hardly walk in my door before I turn on CNN and sit down on my couch. I don't want to miss anything and get behind.

Of course, the media have been drawing a lot of critics since the war coverage started. There is more coverage of this war, certainly more constant coverage, than in any war before this.

That includes the Vietnam conflict, when my mom's interest in jungle warfare was completely satisfied.

The most common complaint about the coverage is that it is going to endanger our missions, give away our targets or make the Iraqis better able to reach theirs.

But there's very little chance that American media will give any of our secrets away. Not only is this war



Ellen Hobbs
Columnist

getting the most coverage of any military conflict in history, all information that comes through the media has to pass a more stringent security clearance than any in history. The chance of our secrets getting through the military censors is extremely slim.

A more realistic fear to have about this coverage is that when we go to ground warfare and the casualties escalate, we're going to have to watch the real horrors of war, and we'll be able to see more of the awful things our family and friends will see while they're out there fighting.

True. I'm scared of that, too. But we won't see the faces of our soldiers in agony — not only is it unethical, but the military censors won't allow it.

We may, however, see horrible things that we'd rather not be watching.

But we need to see it. We've gone to war, we've sent our soldiers there to fight and we need to see what they have to go through. We need to remember that war should be an absolute last resort; and while it may be hard to be patient and try to find ways to avoid war, war is so bad that it must be our only choice before we fight one.

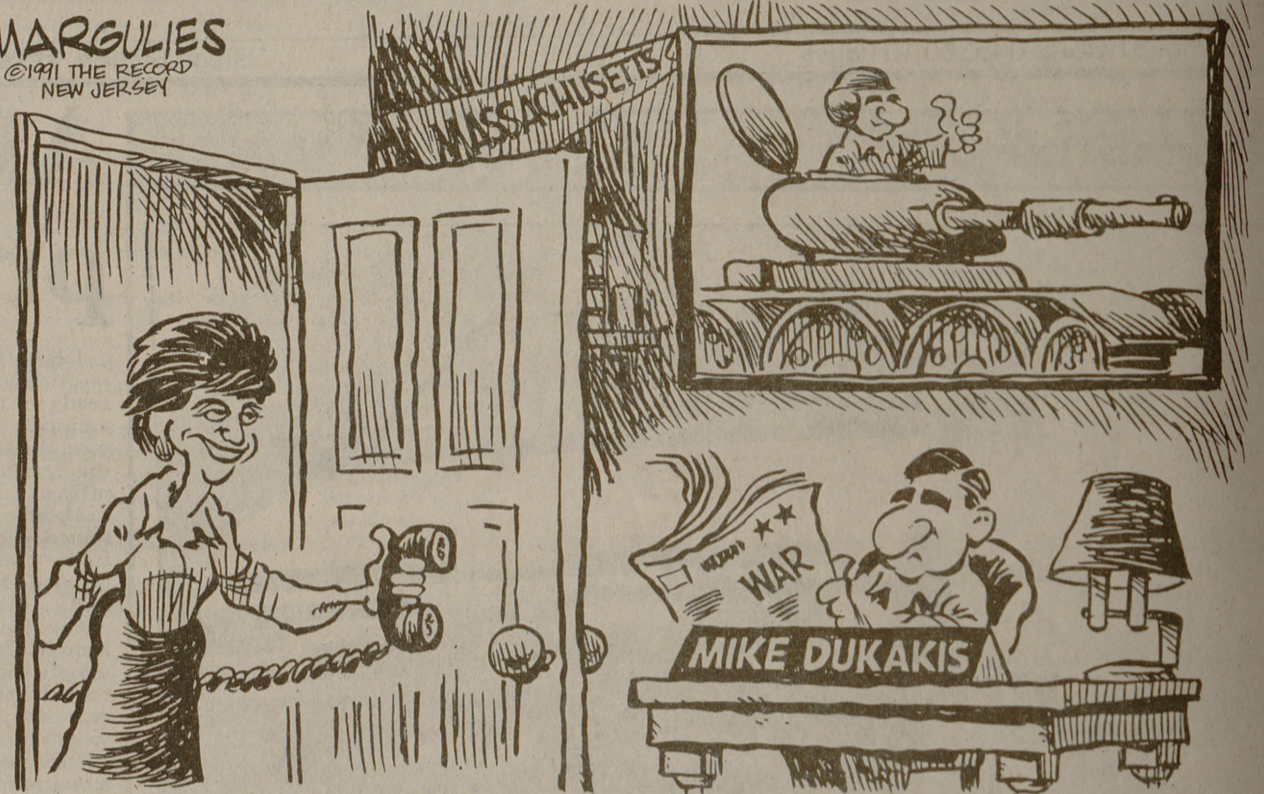
I want to thank the media for reminding me, and everybody else in the United States, how bad war is — even though I don't want to see it.

Because maybe if we see it, next time we'll do more to avoid it.

And after this, I think I will have seen enough war in the media to last me a lifetime.

Ellen Hobbs is a senior journalism major.

MARGULIES
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NEW JERSEY



"It's George Bush... He wants to know if you'd like to go for another ride in a tank?..."

MAIL CALL

The Battalion is interested in hearing from its readers and welcomes all letters to the editor. Please include name, classification, address and phone number on all letters. The editor reserves the right to edit letters for style and length. Because of limited space, shorter letters have a better chance of appearing. There is, however, no guarantee letters will appear. Letters may be brought to 216 Reed McDonald or sent to Campus Mail Stop 1111.

Support brothers from overseas

EDITOR:

Like everybody, I have followed the events in the Persian Gulf with concern and fears about their repercussion in our daily lives. As president of the International Students Association, I have had the opportunity to meet fascinating people from every single part of this global village; and among some of my best friends, there are those whose families, history, friends and background are in the gulf region.

I have worked, partied and participated in many events with Arab students, and through that contact, I have learned to respect deeply their culture and heritage. They have showed themselves as cordial, sincere and respectful friends, hard workers who are proud of their homelands, full of history and wonderful traditions.

We are all living through hard times. Many people from many nations are suffering from the anguish of having friends or relatives in the front lines of combat.

Those same feelings are shared by the Arab students, who have everyone and everything they love under the constant threat of attack. The current events are not their fault; nevertheless, they, too, are paying for it.

On behalf of the entire international student community at Texas A&M, I would like to express our full support to these friends and students who, like all of us, share this unique campus.

As an Aggie, I would like to ask the support of the entire student body toward their Aggie brothers from overseas.

I have asked some of my good friends to cosign this letter. More than ever, we need to stay together, creating new bonds that will help us to face any challenge.

Please remember, we all are human beings, no matter what race, color, nationality or religion, and we all pray for the end of this war.

Juan Ignacio Corujo
ISA President

accompanied by 14 signatures

Respect innovative cartoonist

EDITOR:

On Jan. 21 and 22, Nito's comic strip "the itch" displayed extremely early child sexuality and violent adulterous acts. These sexual abhorractions are explicitly beyond the capacity of any sane mind and the comprehension of any six-year-old girl, or are they?

The repugnant, obnoxious and insidious exhibition of pornographic material made the tears flow down our faces, not because we were appalled, but because we just couldn't stop laughing.

We are ecstatic to read something so hilarious in The Battalion. The only other article that comes close to the outrageous humor in "the itch" is Police Beat, where people get arrested for spitting lima beans and exposing themselves to rusty poles.

Mail Call also can be quite humorous when people like us write in condemning the narrow-mindedness here at Texas A&M.

A previous letter, which made a pathetic attempt to downgrade the comic ingenuity of Nito, epitomizes this narrow-minded attitude that threatens free thought today.

It takes a mature mind to be able to laugh at our society's darker side and still realize the gravity of such "real problems." It is unfair and shallow to attack the character of the cartoonist on the basis of his innovative comic strip, not to mention attacking The Battalion.

Please narrow-minded people, write in and condemn our kind so we can laugh some more.

Paul Fierro '94

accompanied by two signatures

War arouses patriotism

EDITOR:

I am truly sorry the United States could divert Saddam Hussein's evil tactics only by war, but it is great to see how the vast majority supports the war and the servicemen and women risking their lives. Unfortunate though the war may be, it has aroused in us a great spirit of patriotism as well as a serious concern for the innocent lives that already have been and will be lost.

I do have one wish, however. It seems that in moments of crisis, we all become less selfish and think more of our fellow men and women. We all should become as concerned about the innocent lives lost in the United States due to drunk driving. Thousands of innocent people lose their lives every year due to the carelessness of those who drive drunk.

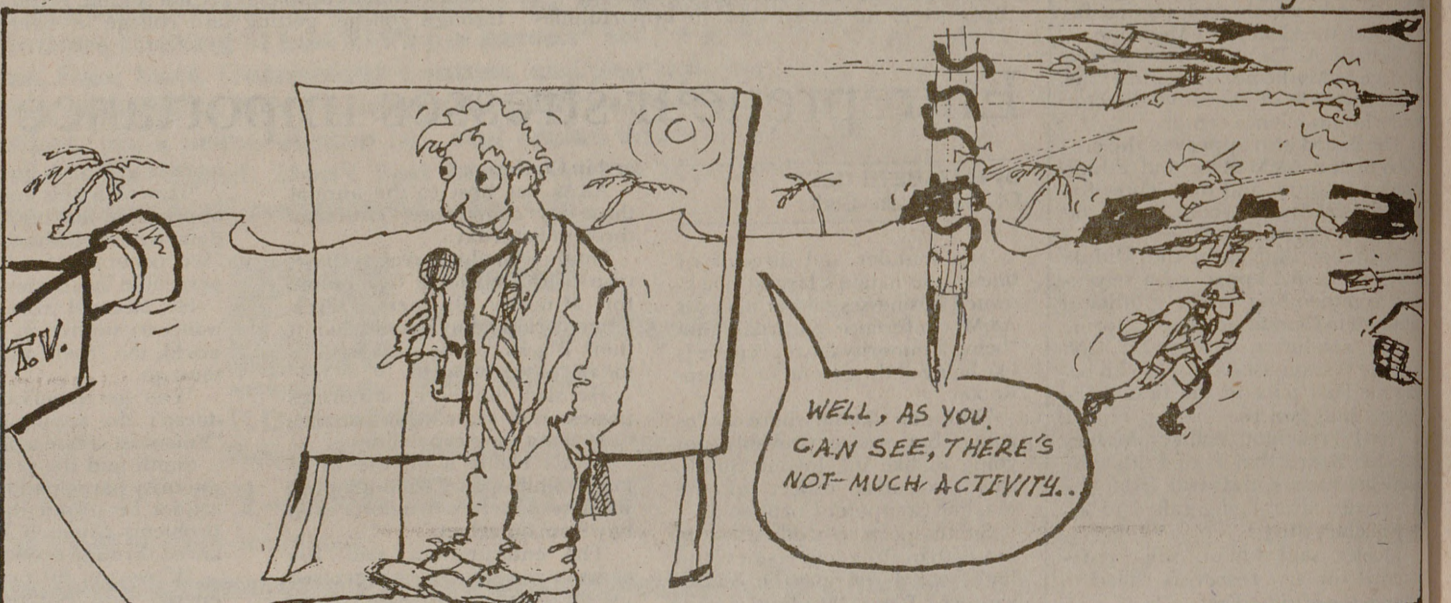
Let us remember all the servicemen and women fighting for us in the Middle East and pray for their safe return. But when this war is over, let us not lose our concern for the lives of innocent people — let us become serious about doing all we can to prevent deaths due to DWI in the United States.

It would be sad to see a young serviceman or woman escape death in Saudi Arabia only to meet it on the highway at home. The war in the gulf will end. Let us not forget that we have one another to fight.

Wendy Lawrence '93

the itch

by Nito



WELL, AS YOU CAN SEE, THERE'S NOT MUCH ACTIVITY...

The Battalion

(USPS 045 360)

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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 is published daily, except Saturday, Sunday, holidays, exam periods, and when school is not in session during fall and spring semesters; publication is Tuesday through Friday during the summer session. Newsroom: 845-3313.

Mail subscriptions are \$20 per semester, \$40 per school year and \$50 per full year: 845-2611. Advertising rates furnished on request: 845-2696.

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.