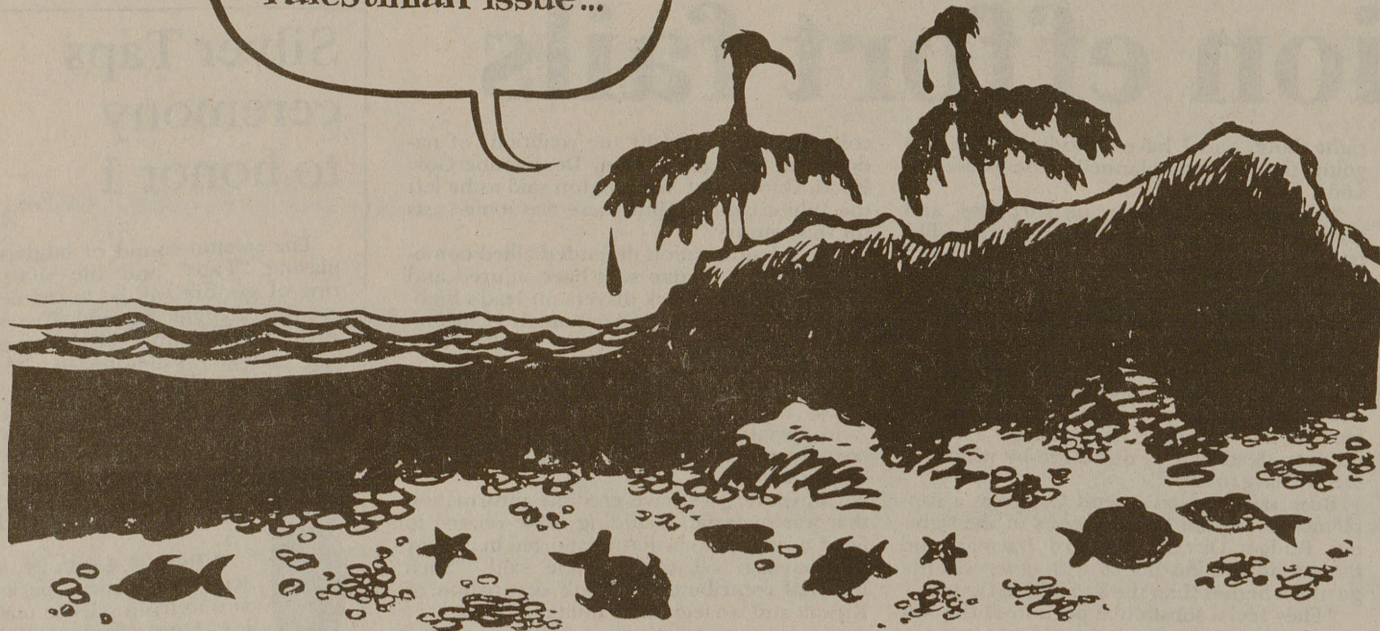


...tell me again how this will help reach a settlement of the Palestinian issue...



Remember events preceding war Bush makes necessary decision

In reply to Faith Short's letter on demanding our government find a peaceful solution to the gulf crisis, do you not think our government tried? Must I remind you of the sequence of events leading up to this unavoidable and regrettable situation?

After the invasion of Kuwait in August, the United Nations agreed to employ economic sanctions against Iraq. The sanctions were having no effect nor would they ever have had an effect on Iraq, regardless of their longevity. The bottom line was money and religious ties.

Businessmen from numerous countries were shipping supplies to Iraq throughout last fall against the



policies of the United Nations and their own governments. Also, the Islamic religion was and still is divided on whether to support Hussein.

Some Islamic nations don't support Hussein, but some do. Those Islamic nations supporting Hussein were sending supplies to Iraq. Need you ask more about the effectiveness of long-term economic sanctions?

Do you think Hussein would have stopped with Kuwait? How many people are you willing to sacrifice before sanctions would have taken effect? Our government is not dealing with a sane and rational man. Hussein turned on his own people with nerve gas. It is beyond me why Iraqis still support him, except that it is evident from news media they hate the United States more than they do Hussein.

Alicia Riley

Reader's Opinion

This entire situation is analogous to World War II with Hitler occupying Europe and maliciously torturing the Jews. The United States was neutral until Hitler occupied most of Europe and almost eliminated the Jews.

Many more people died because we waited to take action while Hitler gained in strength and committed genocide. Today, the United States is mostly blamed for the Holocaust because we did wait and allow these abominable acts to go on in Europe during that time.

Besides, time was not on our side. Rumors of not only chemical but especially nuclear warfare being used by Iraq filled the air.

Of course, our uncertainty on Iraq's technological sophistication forced a timetable. Not that technology can't be bought for the right price.

If we didn't act according to an appropriate timetable, the war most likely would have been bloodier later with the introduction of nuclear warfare and the increased strength of Hussein. After the annihilation of thousands of people, the protesters would have asked our government, "Why didn't you take action sooner?"

As a result, the United Nations, not Bush, imposed a Jan. 15 deadline on Iraq to remove its troops from Kuwait. Between the declaration and conclusion of the deadline, many political figures visited or talked with Hussein to persuade him into a peaceful resolution. These figures included the head of the U.N., President Bush, President Mikhail Gorbachev, Secretary of State James Baker, several heads of state from countries such as France, etc. The list goes on and on.

As a last resort, troops gradually were being sent to the gulf to prepare for the Jan. 15 deadline and the possible outbreak of war. During this time, much debate was going on in both houses of Congress on whether to give Bush the authority to act. Let's keep in mind these officials that were

debating on Capitol Hill are the ones "We, the people" elected to represent us and our best interests.

Finally, just weeks before the deadline, Congress came to the conclusion to give Bush the authority to act, after many countries already had come to the same conclusion — that war was imminent. Also, let's keep in mind presidents in the past did not look to Congress for support before acting. Bush did.

Then, the deadline was upon us and no action had been taken by Hussein to withdraw from Kuwait, despite the long time period given to withdraw and the intervention of numerous political figures from different countries. So war was declared.

I agree our troops are "not inanimate objects to be used and abused at the President's convenience." However, our tax money does pay to train them to defend our country and democracy.

The armed forces long have been scape goats for people who are uncertain about what to do with their lives. The troops overseas now are there on a volunteer basis. For one reason or another, these men and women signed a contract with the government.

If you do not think when you sign that piece of paper enlisting in the armed forces that you are making a commitment to this country and to the possibility of war, think again.

I believe in a peaceful solution as much as the next guy, but I also believe in being realistic. A person should gather all the facts and make the best decision, not hoping for the impossible. Bush did this. He gathered all the facts and all the advice he possibly could.

He made what he thought was the best decision. We only can ask for our leader's best. A president is human, too. He will hopefully make mostly good decisions during his time in office. However, he will also make mistakes. Only history can tell and only time can heal all wounds. I applaud Bush, and I pray for the safe return of our troops.

Alicia Riley is a senior electrical engineering major.

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.

Diversity of thought marks strength

EDITOR:

This is in response to B. Jon Traylor's letter in the Feb. 4 edition of The Battalion. He begins with "Normally I am unprovincial and very open-minded toward the opinions and ideas of others," and concludes with "If you don't like it (America), leave! We don't need you." Are such self-contradictory statements really unconscious?

Jon, the United States was built by people driven out of their homelands by attitudes like yours. Diversity of thought is our great strength, not our weakness. Nothing lasts forever and that includes the United States. Maybe you'll be there at the end Jon, blaming everyone but yourself.

Hats off to Tracey Burns for the letter "Listen to Others Views." Maybe nationality will triumph over emotionalism after all.
Pat Wright '90

Does 1st Amendment justify 'the itch'?

EDITOR:

I realize the war in the gulf overshadows the topic of my letter. However, I will not feel better until I've expressed my resentment toward "the itch."

In past semesters, some of the comics have been a bit degrading to certain members of groups or sexes. At other times, they have been stereotypical displays of uninformed, repressed artists. But the opinions the cartoonists in The Battalion have are rightly justified (or students have justified for them) by the First Amendment. The Jan. 22 printing of "the itch" has no reason or support from the First Amendment.

Besides the fact that it depicted a woman in a degrading position; besides the fact that it was one step above pornography; it wasn't even funny! If this strip can be justified by the First Amendment, then I am saddened by how loose its interpretation has become. Please, Nito, keep the kinky stuff to yourself or sell it to "Penthouse!"
Melisa Mrazik '93

Come on America, pick up a flag

EDITOR:

Julia Chaffe is certainly entitled to her opinions concerning Desert Storm. But after reading her Mail Call entry Jan. 30, I find a statement of facts in response is warranted.

First, please remember that the United States was born out of war, the Revolutionary War. Certainly, life isn't any cheaper now than it was then, likewise, neither is freedom. Our forefathers earned that freedom from the British. And now, we have been asked by the Saudis and Kuwaitis to assist them in restoring and preserving their freedom.

Second, doesn't Hussein resemble another dictator of the 1940s? A man who relentlessly killed and conquered to get land that didn't belong to him? What if the world hadn't acted then?

Third, those who think this war is just over the price of oil are gravely misled. If we allow this insane dictator to attain all of this key territory, plus allow him to achieve full nuclear capabilities, then we'd better pray for peace.

Finally, if the power indeed lies in the hands of the people, then our government is doing what the majority feels necessary. Support continues to rise everyday. Also, if our troops are to be successful, they have to have the support of the American people. That's what the troops really want. If we Americans can't give them support, then we are truly headed for "another Vietnam." Come on America, throw down your demonstration signs and pick up a flag.
Kerry Freudenberg '91

We oppose policy forcing troops to fight

EDITOR:

We are writing in response to Vikki Batten's letter of Jan. 31. We are aware most troops do not see those of us who oppose the war as supporting them personally. They, and Batten, are mistaken. We oppose the policy that forces these troops to kill and die for unclear reasons.

Americans have a responsibility to assess our government's actions and policies and to speak out in opposition when we believe the actions and policies are wrong. This responsibility to do more than just follow does not evaporate, even in the difficult times when the government orders our friends and families into war.

Many Americans believe U.S. troops are in the Middle East because of misguided American foreign policy (a policy based on violence that helped arm Saddam Hussein for more than 10 years and that is currently arming other tyrants).

Believing this, we must oppose the policy and the war precisely because they endanger U.S. troops and the security of America's democratic institutions. Bad foreign policy can destroy the country we cherish.

We know that many troops see our opposition to the present course as lack of support for them, but not voicing our opposition would be a failure of our part to uphold our responsibilities as "We, the People."

It is disturbing to see that some supporters of the choice to go to war, such as Batten, would undermine our democratic society by making pseudo-patriotic demands. She implies all true patriots must not only care about the troops as living beings, but must also support, or at least not vocally oppose, a policy many of believe is wrong.
Brendan Wyly '88
Accompanied by 24 signatures

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.

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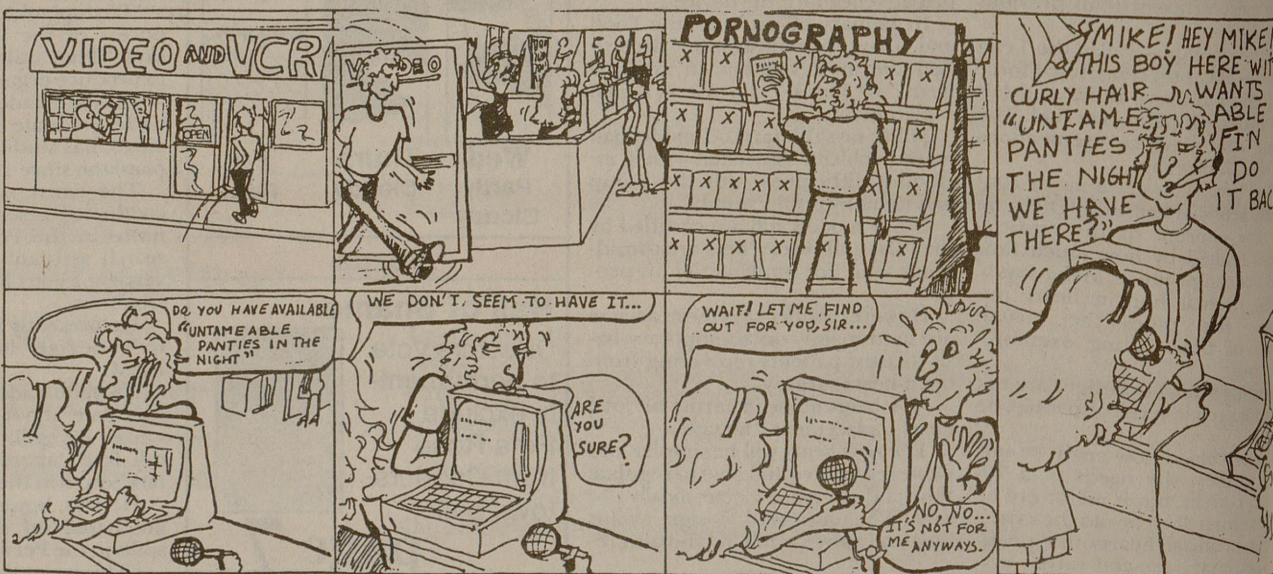
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the itch



by Nito