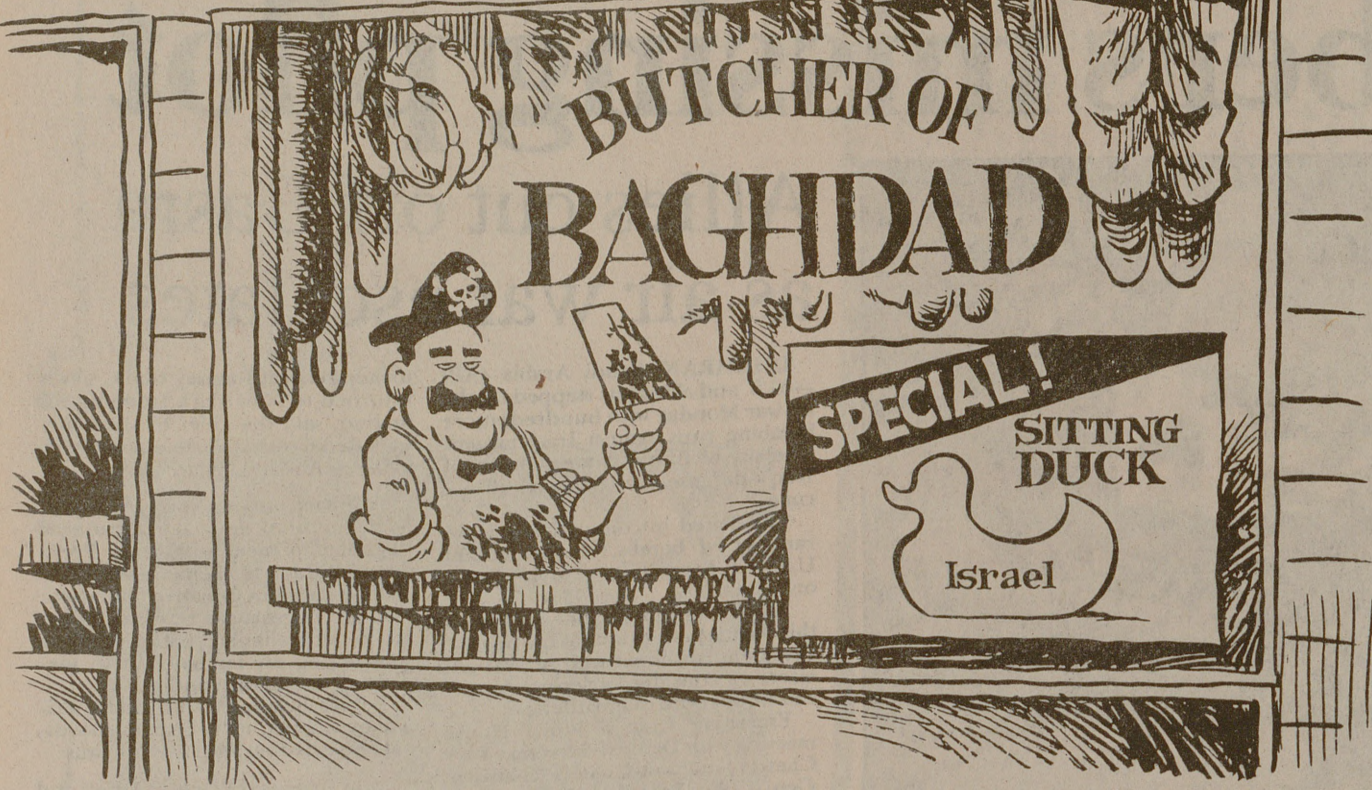


MARGULIES
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NEW JERSEY



Clearing up confusion about Iraq Economic sanctions working

In her column on Feb. 5, Alicia Riley said: "a person should gather all the facts and make the best decision." Unfortunately, she presented us with very few facts, a lot of misleading information and, in some cases, outright falsehoods.

She said "sanctions were having no effect nor would they ever have had an effect on Iraq." In the New York Times of Jan. 14, the Institute for International Economics reported that Iraq's GNP had fallen by 48 percent since August.

This figure cannot be completely confirmed, but a GNP drop of even half that amount would be a major "effect." Riley said that leaks in the embargo were making the sanctions ineffective, though she offered no evidence to support this claim.

Secretary of Defense Cheney told Congress in early December that minor leaks were occurring but that "in terms of major international commerce, we think we've been able to pretty well dry that up."

The precipitous decline in Iraq's GNP and Cheney's remarks indicate this was one of the most effective uses of sanctions ever.

Riley said, "our government is not dealing with a sane and rational man. Hussein turned on his own people with nerve gas." April Glaspie, U.S. ambassador to Iraq, dealt with Hussein as a sane and rational man on July 25, 1990.

She told him: "We have no opinion on the Arab-Arab conflicts, like your border disagreement with Kuwait ... James Baker has directed our official spokesman to emphasize this instruction."

The U.S. State Department does not dispute this transcript offered in the Washington Post of Sept. 13, 1990.

Hussein gassed the Kurds in 1988. In 1989, the Bush Administration authorized the sale of \$60 million worth of commodities with military applications, including "computers, computing equipment and avionics equipment and aircraft," according to Assistant Secretary of State John Kelly, in testimony before Congress on April 26, 1990.

Hussein is a calculating dictator who built up one of the worst human rights records on earth while the United

Faith Short Reader's Opinion

States supported him. As late as 1989, after the gassing of the Kurds, Congress sought to cut off the sale of military equipment to Iraq, but the Bush Administration resisted.

Many people have been questioning this policy of arming men who are later labeled insane and irrational — and who must be deposed by the loss of American life.

Riley said, "after the annihilation of thousands of people, the protesters would've asked our government, 'Why didn't you take action sooner?'" Thousands were annihilated in the 1980s due to Iraqi aggression.

I am asking right now: Why didn't the government take action sooner to keep us from dying and killing in the Middle East? Why does the United States have a policy of selectively tolerating and supporting such aggression?

Riley also misrepresented the history of World War II when she blamed sustained U.S. neutrality for the Holocaust.

"The United States was neutral until Hitler occupied most of Europe." Before the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the United States was neutral only insofar as we did not send soldiers to fight.

We supplied huge quantities of arms to the allies under the "cash-and-carry" program and the Lend-Lease Act prior to entering the war. These arms sustained Britain and the Soviet Union in their battle against Germany during 1940 and 1941.

Considering this crucial support for the Allies, it hardly seems accurate to say, "Today, the United States is mostly blamed for the Holocaust because we did wait and allow these abominable acts to go on." I blame fascism for the Holocaust.

In regard to the more immediate past, Riley said that Bush, Baker, Gorbachev, Mitterand and Perez de Cuellar "all visited or talked with Hussein to persuade him into a peaceful resolution." I can find nothing

to indicate that any of those named, except Perez de Cuellar, actually visited or talked directly with Hussein.

She also said that "troops gradually were being sent to the gulf to prepare for the Jan. 15 deadline."

Bush's decision to increase the number of deployed troops by 200,000 — for a total of 430,000 troops — came on Nov. 8. This decision was made three weeks before the U.N. resolution of Nov. 29 allowing the use of force after Jan. 15.

Bush made his decision to prepare for an offensive independently of the U.N. resolution allowing such action. Bush stated that the United States would not be bound by the United Nations if the United Nations did not authorize the use of force. His pre-resolution November troop increase backs this statement.

Riley correctly pointed out that "presidents in the past did not look to Congress before acting. Bush did." If Riley was referring to Vietnam, it's important to know that President Johnson had congressional support for escalation — in the Tonkin Gulf Resolution — that dwarfed the near 50-50 split over supporting Bush's military action in the Middle East.

Yes, Bush got congressional approval. However, according to the Washington Post on Jan. 8, "Bush has maintained he has authority to use force without a declaration of war by Congress and without any explicit authorization."

This hardly amounts to an assurance that Bush would have been guided by the decision of our representatives in Congress if they had not supported his policy.

Riley's misrepresentations not only of our history but also of our immediate past is deceptive. Such deception is particularly dangerous when we are engaged in war.

Every individual cannot gather all the facts, but we each have a responsibility to present whatever information we do have accurately. It undermines our exchange of ideas when "the facts" are incorrect.

Faith Short is a Texas A&M employee.

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.

Are other species less worthy than man?

EDITOR:

Occasionally, an opinion will appear in The Battalion which seems as if it were written by someone from another planet. Normally one would simply disregard such a piece and continue. However, Tim Truesdale's column in the Jan. 31 issue is so ill-considered that it requires a response. His argument against all animal testing by pharmaceutical companies rests on two points. First, that it is immoral to perform these tests on animals because man has no right to subject other beings to his control. Second, that computer modeling of a drug's safety and effectiveness renders animal tests obsolete.

The former point is clearly flawed. The most serious defect is the implication that man is morally no more deserving of life or quality of life than other animals. The animal-rights fanatic would say that to believe otherwise is "speciesism."

Of course it is! Man is fundamentally different than other animals in his ability to display individualism, to be capable of independent thought, to ponder his own existence and in other qualities.

If it is morally wrong to consider other species of animals as less worthy than your own, then why isn't it just as wrong to consider other genera, other phylums, the plant kingdom, even viruses and bacteria as inferior? Who is to say that neither plants nor bacteria aren't sentient beings? We're just being "kingdom-centric" by not admitting so.

The second point is also faulty. While there have been and continue to be great advances in computer modeling, the truth is that even the best systems can't reliably predict all of the important biological effects of a chemical. A good case in point is the potential anti-cancer agent CC-1065. During the initial clinical trials on mice, a totally unexpected delayed toxicity response resulting in the deaths of all of the animals appeared.

If the testing had been limited to computer modeling, imagine how many people might have been injured or killed by this unforeseen complication.

As the saying goes, "Better to be silent and be thought a fool than to open one's mouth and remove all doubt." We can only hope Truesdale considers such advice in the future before deciding to subject us to his philosophy.

Peter Klimko
graduate student

Power means responsibility

EDITOR:

This is in response to responses to B. Jon Traylor's letter in the Feb. 4 issue of The Battalion. The hypocrisy I see in some of these letters is nothing short of amazing. Of the three responses I've seen, one goes as far as to say that our forefathers "would roll in their graves over the narrow-mindedness" of Traylor's letter. Webster's New World Dictionary defines narrow-minded as "limited in outlook or lacking in tolerance." Well, these three letters are, by definition, guilty of the same thing.

One letter asks "who are you to put (protesters) down" if they believe protests will work? But who is the letter writer to put down someone with a view different than his own? Another letter implies (or appears to imply) that intolerance will destroy this country. Does intolerance in one person justify it in yourself?

The self-contradiction in these letters is disturbing, to say the least. Dwight Barry made some good points about disagreeing with the government. However, I cannot blame the government in their handling of this situation.

A dictator forcefully takes a smaller country, claiming it as his by right. The rightful rulers of the country make an appeal for help. This situation has occurred once before, about 50 years ago. Rather than tackle the aggressor early when he was vulnerable, the world powers gave him all he demanded. "Peace in our time" British Prime Minister Chamberlain called it. Failure to act led to one of the most devastating wars in world history.

We must learn from our past mistakes. There are some who believe that we have no business interfering, as we should have done then. I believe differently. Ours is one of the most powerful countries in the world. With this power, there is also a responsibility. We cannot sit idly by and let Hussein take any country he feels like.

Peace in our time will not occur if we allow Hussein freedom to conquer his neighbors and justify it with "he's so far away ... he can't affect us." David Hill '93

Bring back 'FAX'

EDITOR:

I have been disappointed in your choices of Editorial Page comic strips. "FAX," the summer strip, was a good one. But in the fall, you replaced it with Don Atkinson Jr.'s strip, which had its funny moments and was most often tasteful.

Now to my horror, I realize that the comic strip you've chosen for the spring is this tacky one by Nito. Its first problem is that it is not even humorous. Its second problem is that it is utterly tasteless, and often offensive.

My plea is that you give us a tasteful comic strip, and even preferably one that will make us laugh. My first choice is "FAX," but if you can't get "FAX" back, please get rid of Nito and bring in someone else.

In response to the letter from Paul Fierro (Jan. 28) where he made the statement "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.'" However, it takes a truly mature mind to realize the "gravity of such 'real problems'" is no laughing matter. How far can you open your mind before your brain falls out?

Adrienne Elliott '91

the itch

SOMETIMES I WONDER IF A MAN CAN REACH ENLIGHTENMENT BY CORNERING ALL FEARS AND PERTURBING THOUGHTS, AND WASHING THEM AWAY WITH THE HEDONISTIC PLEASURES FOUND IN NATURAL HARMONY AND SPIRITUAL EQUILIBRIUM... MAYBE I'M BECOMING A BIT TOO STOIC. WHO KNOWS...



by Nito

The Battalion

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