

Protests showcase 'Rebels Without a Clue'

Last week I watched with interest a news report about a protest outside the Texas A&M Military Sciences Building. The protesters were picketing because: "We teach war, but we don't teach peace."

What was interesting about this and most of the other anti-war protests on campus was that the faces were practically interchangeable with every other protest which has occurred on this campus over the last few semesters.

This is not surprising because a certain group of people consistently have established themselves on college campuses as malcontents whose sole purpose in life is to be the "social conscience" of their peers and consistently agitate in opposition to the status quo.

What is surprising is that many of these socially hip protesters who speak so highly of peace and worldwide harmony have aligned themselves in the past with some very questionable

Larry Cox
Columnist

bedfellows.

Take, for example, the student group Earth First!-Out There. I wrote last fall about the terroristic activities which the Earth First! parent organization had been linked to and about their inclusion on the FBI's list of domestic terrorist organizations.

According to Field & Stream and Texas Agriculture, Earth First! Journal, the official publication of the Earth First! organization, has published articles suggesting that anti-hunting/anti-cattle persons could pose as hunters and shoot cattle on public lands with rifles and bows to make it look like the work of hunters. Pretty non-violent, huh? "Hunting

season is a good time to cow hunt because there will be many folks out there with rifles or bows," according to a column called Dear Ned Ludd. Ned suggests buying used rifles, shotguns and bows and dressing in camouflage while driving around public lands and shooting sheep and cattle.

This apparently would accomplish two objectives. First, hunters would be blamed and would thus lose access to public lands, so hunting would be eliminated. Second, sheep and cattle are exotic species which have been introduced onto public lands in the West and are (in the opinions of the anti-cattle activists) responsible for the destruction of these lands. "No moo by '92" is their battle cry.

I really don't think the campus members of this group are committed to using eco-terrorism to accomplish their goals, whatever they may be. Nor do I think that all members of campus protest groups cry out simply to be heard. I do think, however, that a certain group of students on this campus are so intent on establishing

themselves as counter-culture activists that they lose sight of the fact that outlandish groups or causes to which they might be allying themselves only serve to decrease their credibility when an issue which deserves an alternate viewpoint, such as the Iraqi Conflict, arises.

The protesters demand to be taken seriously, but how can I pay any attention to a person talking about peace who I know to be a member of a group which condones ecological terrorism? How can I devote one iota of thought to a speech by a person whose only previous exposure on a campus-wide basis was at a protest proclaiming "Trees Are People Too"? I simply cannot.

The malcontents on campus demand respect and attention, but the loony causes and protests which they incessantly stage identify them for what they are — rebels without a clue.

The rhythmic, jingoistic chants and simplistic signs are not conducive to being taken seriously. The people who

make up this subculture on campus must realize that the price they pay for the media attention surrounding their anti-everything protests in the past isn't monetary — it is their credibility.

Everyone has a right for their opinion to be heard and each and every one of these protesters has a right to have his or her say about tree rights, vegetable rights, Iraq or whatever.

When push comes to shove, however, allegiance with these fringe protest groups establishes these campus protesters as spokespersons only for themselves and their causes — not as the social conscience of a generation.

Until they realize this, we'll continue to have groups like Earth First! and other clueless malcontents as an official part of our campus, and voices of opposition will continue to be ignored or greeted by rampant skepticism.

Larry Cox is a graduate student in range science.

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.

Companies, groups should help families

EDITOR:

Regardless of how anyone feels about the war, I hope that everyone will agree with me in saying it's pretty sickening to see that money is being made by some groups and individuals, right here in our own town, at the expense of the men and women fighting in this conflict.

I would ask oil companies in general, but also the gas stations in College Station and Bryan in particular, why gas prices continue to remain so high. There is no oil shortage, and the price of crude has even dropped slightly. So why are we still paying more for gas than before the war started?

And why is the gas in College Station so much more than the gas in other cities, like Houston for example? The gas prices I saw in Southwest Houston and Clearlake averaged between \$1.09 and \$1.11 for regular unleaded, and \$1.22 and \$1.25 for premium unleaded. So why the big difference? I would love to hear this explanation.

On a lesser scale, but just as bad, is the sale of three or four variations of patriotic T-shirts, on campus and in Post Oak Mall, to students by different organizations. Where is the money from the sale of these shirts going? If it's going to some worthwhile cause, like helping out the financially burdened families of the people fighting this war, then I apologize for doubting your group's sincerity.

If, however, it's going to pay for parties or fund equally dubious functions, as I suspect, then I hope these organizations will quit ripping off a patriotic, though naive, public and use their profits (I know y'all have start-up costs) for the well-being of those who are fighting in this war.

For example, the families of many reservists are not used to being without an income for extended periods and are having a hard time making do. Since the government isn't doing anything to help, it would be nice to see people who say they care about the troops to, quite literally, put their money where their mouths are.

Ron Garza '91

We need free market, even if it's subsidized

EDITOR:

As Americans, we have grown to expect and demand a certain share of the world's oil reserves. We have built our cities and our economy around cheap and plentiful oil.

We have brushed aside the doom sayers and the environmentalists who have been claiming for decades that the world is about to run out of oil, or that our Cadillacs and Lincolns are going to turn the planet into a greenhouse.

As we prepare to kill and die for our present way of life, I would like to reassure any doubters that it is our duty to continue to drive cars, and big cars at that. As Ronald Reagan said, "This is America! We don't have to conserve!"

Here in Aggieland, we are providing a model for the country. By living in a

suburban sprawl that requires everyone to own a vehicle, we have said "Yes!" to capitalism and industry. By expanding our roads, building more parking places and scrapping our bike lanes and sidewalks we are forcing everyone to drive.

I have to admit that when I first got here, I was tempted to ride a bike myself. Fortunately, the bike lanes here are all so awful that I soon abandoned them. What we have to keep in mind is that in a strong economy everyone must consume. What's good for GM is good for America.

So we need to continue to build more freeways with our taxes. We need to continue to open federal lands for oil exploration. We need to continue tariffs on small, foreign cars. After all, we need the free market, even if we have to subsidize it!

Joseph Kachmar graduate student

Giving credit where credit is due

EDITOR:

I appreciated the coverage (Feb. 13) of my presentations of chemistry demonstrations at Oakwood Middle School students. However, there is one implication in the story I must correct.

My presentation was not exactly the presentation that led to the receipt of the Phoenix Award by the National American Chemical Society. That award was presented to the local American Chemical Society in recognition of the excellence of several efforts made to promote National Chemistry Week.

Although I did play a part in those efforts, the driving force behind the planning and execution of the efforts

was Dr. Larry Peck, associate professor of chemistry and coordinator of the freshman chemistry laboratory program. Many other faculty and students were involved in these presentations, one of which was an excellent "chemistry magic" show presented by Dr. Peck and others.

In fact, without the encouragement of Dr. Peck, who got me started doing these shows, and the technical support of Mr. Ricky Labyer, lecture demonstrator in chemistry, I would not be involved in making presentations of the type you recognized.

Their support is invaluable and I do not want to take credit for a national award which was received as a result of a team effort.

John L. Hogg chemistry professor

God of the universe, please bless the world

EDITOR:

God bless America! That's what I hear constantly since arrived in this wonderful country.

Is this the so called "holy war" the Americans fight against Iraq? I always thought it was vice versa.

You say that God joins you in the fight against "evil." I wonder if anyone really believes God could "join" a nation in a war! I never knew that people could be so simple-minded: A God who tells us we should love one another; a God who tells us we should not kill each other.

There are so many people in the country who supposedly believe in God. Why are they so quiet these days? Is it a crime to demonstrate against war in the land of freedom?

Or is yours a different God the Christians have in the rest of the world? Is it a different God than the one mentioned in the Bible? Is it a God carrying a gun instead of a cross?

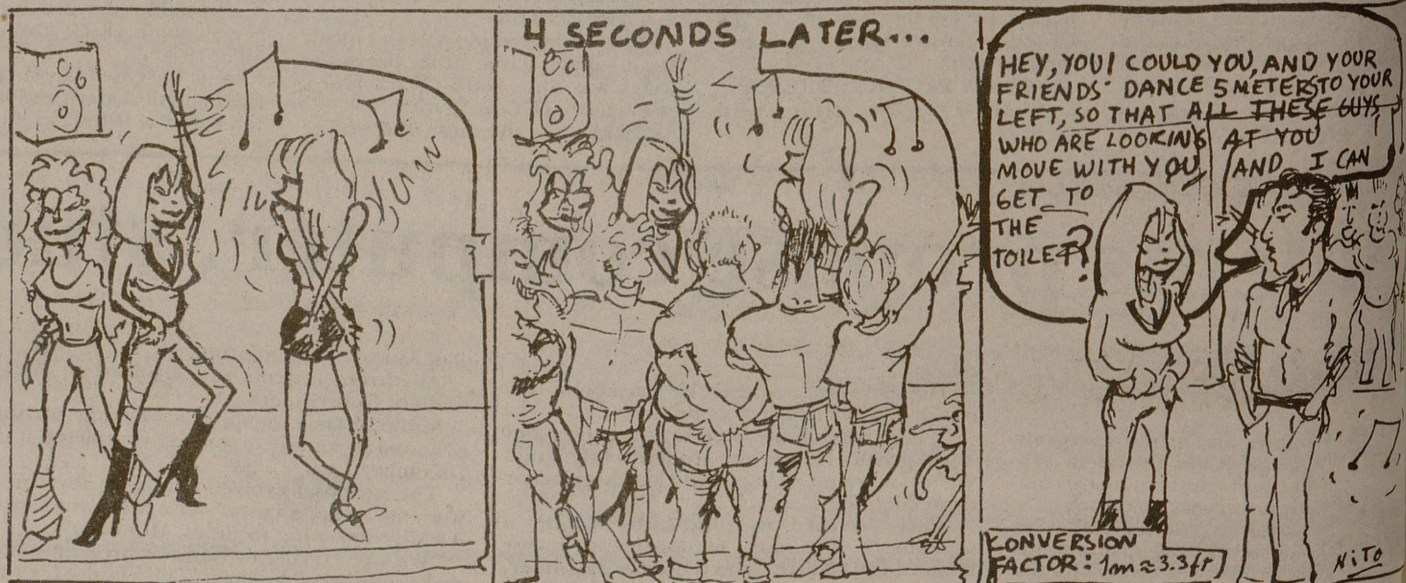
Well, the American God should bless America. But, God of the universe please, bless the world!

Rob Rensenbrink graduate student



"I'm worried... they say the war could be real bad for the economy..."

the itch



by Nito

The Battalion

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