

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.

If Saddam retreats, stop bombing

As Iraqi troops are being pushed out of Kuwait — by some reports voluntarily — we call for U.S. forces to stop bombing to save the lives that repeated warfare will claim.

While some people say Saddam Hussein will not be punished if allied troops accept his retreat, we think this attitude reflects a call for vindictiveness. They already have been punished with the loss of many lives and their military might. If the Iraqi army has been defeated outright, or even if they are allowed to retreat, they still will be held accountable for Kuwait's destruction.

Continuing this bloodshed will not ensure Saddam's military impotency in the future. It already has been ensured because allied forces have decimated his military power. Claims that he can easily rebuild his forces rely on unfounded fears and assumptions instead of examining the peaceful solution facing us now.

Allowing Saddam to retreat does not mean he is getting out under the Soviet peace proposal, nor does it free him from paying war reparations.

What it does do is achieve what President Bush has repeatedly said is our bottom line: the liberation of Kuwait. The United States went to war with Iraq to stop Saddam. If he is retreating, we should stop the bloodshed and set an example as a world power by looking for peace.

The Battalion Editorial Board

Violent culture
We must realize absurdity of war

Violence is a function of frustration and hate. Collectively, the world today certainly is a very violent place. But do current realities obscure promise of the future? Because something is the case, does that mean it must be the case?

If you listen to middle-America's rationalization of the Oil War, you know we seem to still adamantly clutch this primitive belief. How many times do we find ourselves saying, "Things are just that way, and they always will be that way?"

What an inciteful and helpful response! No, people, we must be willing to meet our humanitarian responsibilities of this new era. We must work with the frustrated, and try to educate the hate away.

And, of course, we must start our campaign at home. Why do we expect other people to be peaceful when we so easily hate, when we give others so many reasons to hate us, when we frustrate others perpetually?

We must no longer blind ourselves to the reality that we have nurtured suspicion, hate, greed and violence in our country as well as others. Ask any anthropologist or sociologist, Americans are extraordinarily violent people. Whether this was ever a useful or necessary trait is not now the question, for certainly such a cultural aspect has been long antiquated in this age of nuclear weaponry.

John F. Kennedy said it best: "The basic problems facing the world today are not susceptible to a military solution."

But no, our society will not end its mad romance with the macho idea of rugged individualism or its violent and costly games of war.

Rambo becomes a folk hero. We buy toy weapons for our children. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles sport an array of weapons.

The Corps of Cadets and the military sciences are oh-so revered, while a department of peace studies and diplomacy is blatantly absent. Our residence halls sponsor games of simulated assassination.

How are these actualities in any way educational, constructive or



Andy Yung
Columnist

entertaining? We ought to be embarrassed.

Why is there not a permanent monument to Martin Luther King Jr. or Gandhi in our MSC — those who really lived peace. Because they are not Aggies?

I have no more honor or respect for any of the good ol' racist Ags among those memorialized than I do for anyone today who is a straight-out racist or a closet bigot.

No, for some reason they are indiscriminately honored for one facet of their lives — they were made to or

"America must realize war is now outdated and senseless. War is systematic violence and only the naive, the sinister or the backward will consider it acceptable today."

willingly participated in war and were killed. There is absolutely nothing objectively noble about that simple fact ... they might have very well been noble men, but it is not because they were Aggies and they died in a war.

It is time to release our death grip on a way of life that is violent. A corollary: We must not let ruthless pursuit of personal or national self-interest (wealth) consume us like some insane cult or fevered religion.

I must believe that we engender this notion, for the alternative is far too horrible to realize — that is, the alternative that we are comfortable with exclaiming: "To hell with the rest of the world, we will not give up our way of life."

Again, I observe, this way of life is Violent, it's Vile, it's Sickening and it

most definitely is Sick.

Greed, despite pop culture, is not "good." This American lust for accumulation is directly proportional to the extent we are willing to exploit the weak.

America must realize war is now outdated and senseless. War is systematic violence and only the naive, the sinister or the backward will consider it acceptable today.

But is not war a necessary evil? Fatalism is not fashionable. Fatalism is not vogue. Fatalism is not enlightened. Fatalism, my friends, is simply a shirking of responsibility — but it is so very obvious that we cannot easily deny our contributing culpability in the dismal conditions and violence of the world.

Not many realize the world disposes well over \$800 billion a year on military expenditures. Now if we could redirect some of these monies what could be done?

* The price of one Trident submarine (\$1.4 billion) would fund a five-year program that will immunize every child on the globe against six deadly diseases which would prevent more than a million deaths a year.

* The cost of one nuclear weapon test (\$12 million) would fund installation of 80,000 hand pumps allowing Third World villages access to safe water.

* The expense of operating a B-1 bomber for one hour (\$21,000) would be enough to implement community-based maternal health care in 10 African villages to reduce maternal deaths by half in one decade.

There is ample wealth in the world to allow every human to meet her basic needs — housing, food, medicine and education.

As long as we can stomach the tragedies of extreme disparity, however, we also will advocate and promote violence and hate.

We must no longer frustrate people's realization of human dignity, and similarly we must no longer harbor this subtle but pure form of hate (i.e., indifference) which justifies exploitation.

Andy Yung is a junior political science 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.

Student regent issue

EDITOR: On Friday, Feb. 22, The Battalion's lead story stated that "bickering" among students was threatening the student regent legislation in Austin.

The truth of the matter is that students of 12 state institutions are and have been working since January in support of the same legislative proposal.

A problem did arise several weeks ago because my colleague at the University of Texas at Austin refused to meet with any of us to coordinate efforts in the Legislature and would not even inform her student lobby members of what other schools were doing.

As a result, the student lobby members went out on their own seeking a different version of legislation (for a voting member) not knowing what the other schools were doing.

However, I circumvented their student body president several weeks ago, contacted the student lobby directly and worked out an agreement.

A state senator has agreed to introduce the original, agreed upon version of the non-voting student regent bill as well as a separate bill providing for a voting student regent.

This was done at my request because we simply do not have the votes to pass a bill providing for a voting student regent and I did not want this impeding the non-voting version. All sides thus far involved in the issue are thereby in agreement.

The presence of several bills on the same issue does create the appearance of a divided effort. I do not doubt that this may be a tactic of some trying to undermine the legislation.

More accurately though, I believe it represents the sudden surge in political popularity of the student regent issue, particularly among those legislators who represent college campuses. Each understandably wants to tell his or her constituents that he or she introduced a student regent bill.

All of these bills will most likely come up before the same committee at the same time, but more than one will be sent to either chamber. The legislation is in good shape, and we are not "bickering."

Ty Clevenger '91
student body president

A&M is not 'world class'

EDITOR: Joseph Kachmar gets an A in my gradebook. When I read the advertisements Texas A&M puts together proclaiming the University to be "world class," I can only either shake my head sadly or laugh at the joke.

Texas A&M has a long way to go: The racial tensions alone on this campus discount the term "world class." The imposed conformity and intolerance on this campus is unbelievable — my friends at other universities think I am joking when I tell them about some of the common attitudes here. The words "backwards" and "hick" usually appear somewhere in their reply.

In America, everyone has a right to an opinion; it is truly sad that the same cannot be said of the A&M campus.

L. Eagleson
graduate student

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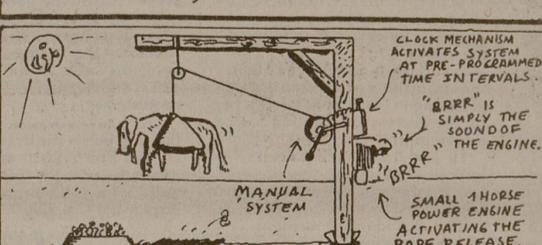
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AS A STRONG BELIEVER IN THE OBVIOUSLY SCIENTIFICALLY BASED "THEORY OF REINCARNATION," PROFESSOR HANS SCHUMVAULERCHAIN (ALSO KNOWN AS "MI") HAS YET AGAIN BEWILDERED HUMANITY WITH AN INVENTION THAT REFLECTS HIS HONEST PREOCCUPATION FOR THAT MATTER; THE AUTOFEED



OF COURSE I WANT TO GO WITH YOU TO BRAZIL FOR TEN DAYS!! BUT WHAT ABOUT THIS STUPID DOG? GNEEK GNEEK



AUTOFEED IN ACTION... OBSERVE HOW THE DOG EATS COMFORTABLY FROM THE ASTONISHING INVENTION. GRRR

by Nite