

Bush should take advantage of his popularity

As the dust settles from the Gulf War and Washington returns to business as usual (more or less) it is imperative that President Bush seize the initiative in bringing to fruition his domestic agenda.

It is blindingly clear that his interests lie primarily with foreign affairs, as his domestic critics are quick to point out. Bush's background is, after all, steeped in foreign assignments — the CIA, the United Nations, Chinese ambassador, etc. ...

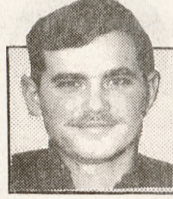
A domestic agenda does exist, though, somewhere deep in the bowels of the governmental workings in D.C. Yes, though the "New World Order" is all the rage in the media and around the country, there actually is a domestic counterpart to this worldwide "vision thing," referred to in inside circles as the New Paradigm.

A paradigm is a \$64 word for a model, and this concept is basically a model for the government-citizen relationship. Its basic premise is that government must assist, not hamper the initiative of private individuals.

The concept hails from a relatively minor administration official, James Pinkerton, a Californian who hails from a libertarian background. The idea has been touted by conservatives within the administration, most notably Jack Kemp, as the possible centerpiece of the Bush administration's refurbished domestic policy.

The core concept is one which conservatives and libertarians have been pushing for years: Empowerment of individuals in their contacts with government.

It suggests offering vouchers for



Larry Cox
Columnist

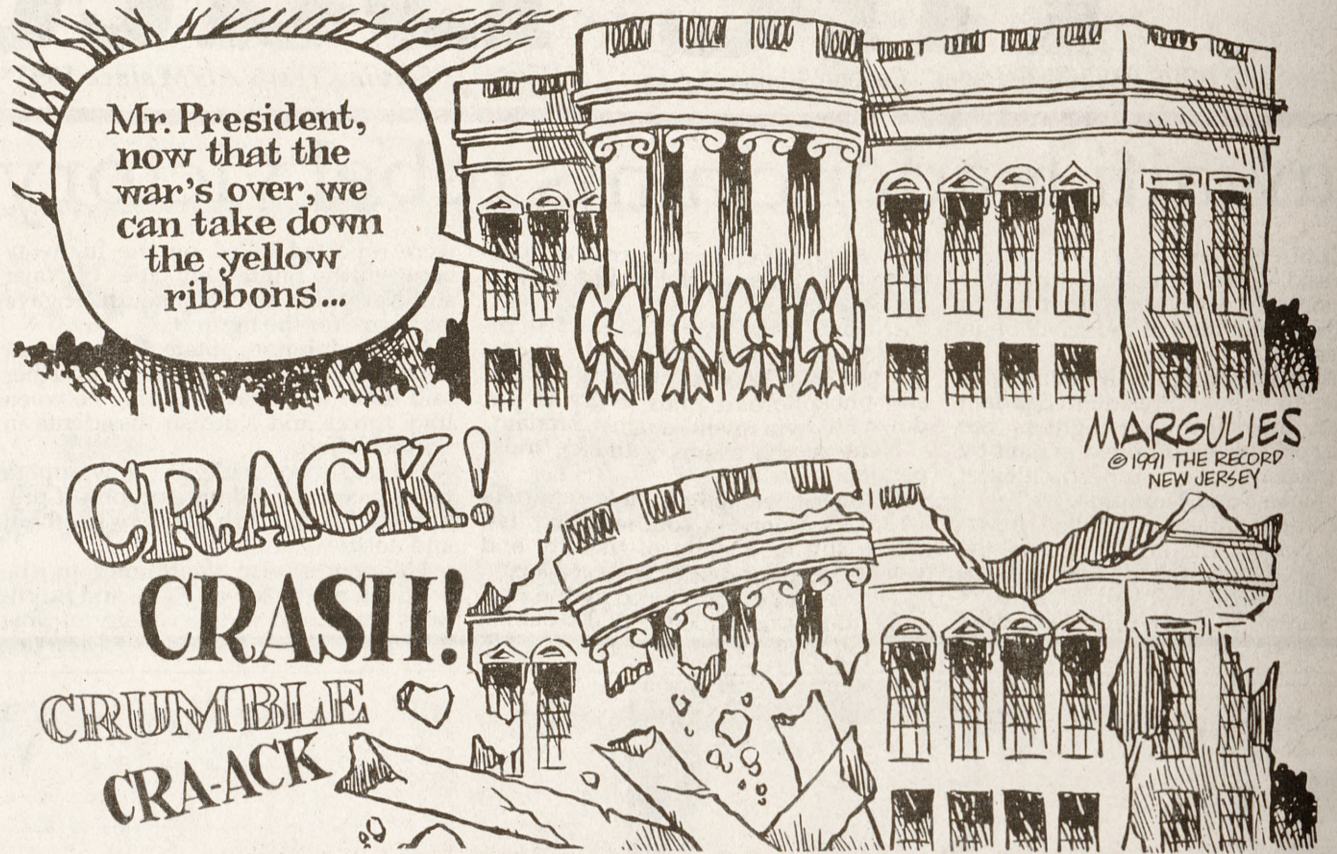
poor citizens to send their children to private schools. It recommends offering incentives rather than tax penalties to cut down on pollution. More important, it recognizes that individual initiative cannot be replaced by bureaucratic intervention.

Kemp said in a speech last year: "America is not divided into two static classes of rich and poor with redistribution and envy the only answer. Our nation is divided into two economies, one democratic capitalist, based on private property; the other (the inner cities) is near socialist, government-directed, based on public ownership of property."

In one, markets are "rewarding work, investment, savings and human output" while the other is "predicated on rules, regulations and disincentives almost totally opposite to the way people are treated in our mainstream economy."

The New Paradigm concept addresses these problems with old ideas which may turn out to be new solutions. It includes plans for tenant ownership of public housing projects and other welfare-state infrastructure.

The message of hope and rejuvenation through extending venture capital and home ownership to low income people should receive the support and encouragement of Democrats who represent districts where decades of government programs have brought about only a greater degree of dependence on the



bureaucratic infrastructure.

Signing a housing bill recently, Bush said: "The idea of empowering people, not bureaucracies is a cornerstone in our effort to reduce the heavy hand of government."

If he truly believes this, he should seize the opportunity afforded him by his phenomenal popularity following Desert Storm and push this domestic agenda through Congress before the

public's euphoria fades and Bush doesn't have this tremendous position of power from which to operate.

The Democratic welfare-state proponents who are so symbolic of the "heavy hand of government" are in no position to win a confrontation against a president with such phenomenal popularity, pushing an idea which appeals so strongly to the visceral feelings of Americans that the

individual is the backbone of the nation.

This idea, one of the oldest in our society, could be the beginning of a turnaround in our socialist domestic policy. If only Bush will attack this problem with the same vigor he attacked Saddam What's-his-name.

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.

Isn't America great?

EDITOR:

This letter is in regard to Richard Brown's Reader's Opinion in the March 4 issue of The Battalion concerning Business Services overcharging students. Let's take a closer, more intellectual look at your (and our) situation.

One of quite a few misobservations Brown has made is: "You see ... I have to eat breakfast and lunch on campus. If I have a snack, I have to buy it on campus."

You're a big boy now that you've been away from home for at least two years. I should hope you are able to pour a bowl of cereal or slap a sandwich together! These are just a couple of skills many of us grown-ups practice everyday.

Brown was right about one thing. "(A&M Business Services) ... prices items they sell in order to make their financial statements look good." That's quite informative Ags! I thought all businesses did that.

Brown, A&M services are not gouging you. They may and probably do have their hand in your wallet, but that is because you, unlike me, CHOOSE to buy their SERVICE. Isn't America great!

Adrian Binnion '94

Dixon sees fire where no fuel exists

EDITOR:

Thanks to Dixon for adding to the fire over this issue of A&M's world class status. However, he seems to have read an awful lot into my letter. I only meant to express my support to J. Kachmar.

I did not give a definition, or even a pseudo-definition, of "world class." I find his interpretation of my small letter intriguing.

I have received more flak for those six sentences than I

ever expected — and also more support. The foreign-born and non-Anglo students expressed agreement on some points, and educated me on others. From the Texas-born, I have been called a Communist, reminded that Texas six runs both ways and have been labeled a "liberal." I have had obscenities aimed in my direction by Ags who say they uphold A&M traditions of honor and integrity.

I do not know what the politically correct are preaching — I have to make time to read The Battalion and only rarely see television.

Dixon hits home when he says that universities are institutions to "train minds, not convert" them. Absolutely. I agree that eagles soar and turkeys flock. Being open-minded means accepting the high-soaring uniqueness of A&M's Ags rather than trying to force conformity.

A&M is a fine institution — it offers much to the student who is willing to work to be trained. I would not wish A&M to be a utopia, as Dixon seems to imply, nor any university. Ags would rather live in the real world, I think. I simply agreed with Kachmar that tolerance through knowledge was something important to be learned.

I am from a small town. I have been called a "hick," though not always as an insult. My friends poke gentle fun at my country accent, which can be strong. I do not mind, as I know they accept me. They are the Ags who will see to it that one day "personal acceptance" is added to the list permanently of Texas A&M's many strong points.

By the way, I do not read Playboy, as I am a female engineering graduate student, not male. (I also do not read Playgirl, in case you'd like to reply again.) I do not always understand "the itch" either. Finally, I have also been called a "conservative" as well as a "liberal."

L. Eagleson
graduate student

Ask yourself: Does death stop death?

Michael Worsham

Reader's Opinion

I strongly agree with Andy Yung that the death penalty should be abolished. It now appears that maybe President Bush also is thinking along these lines.

In a letter preparing college students for the Gulf War, Bush cited Amnesty International's report on the human rights abuses committed by Iraq against Kuwait, including the imposition of the death penalty.

Does this mean that the human rights abuses committed by Iraq against Kuwait were able to touch Bush in some way which the previous decade of Iraqi human rights abuses (also well-documented by Amnesty International and the United Nations but ignored by Bush) were not, so that Bush is now taking a stand against the death penalty?

This would be an overdue and welcome change. As Yung pointed out, the death penalty in the United States is extremely expensive to fully prosecute and discriminates against non-whites, the poor and even mentally handicapped people.

Worst of all, innocent people like James Bethard, who currently sits on death row in Texas, have been and could continue to be executed.

If Bush is serious about abolishing capital punishment, maybe a small bit

of good will have come out of his Gulf War.

The war raised again the reasonable question: "Why do people kill people to show that killing people is wrong?" The United States' use of the death penalty will continue to focus attention on this faulty logic.

Two important facts not mentioned in Yung's column is that Texas has executed 38 people since 1977, more than any other state since the death penalty was resumed in 1976.

Texas also has about 350 people on death row, including four women, more than any other state.

To combat this outdated form of punishment, Texans Against State Killing is holding a March for Abolition from Huntsville to Austin in early April.

The march will come through College Station and will include a rally on the Texas A&M campus.

For more information or to get involved with the march, please contact me at 846-8748.

Michael C. Worsham is a graduate student in environmental engineering.

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(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.

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, 216 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.