

Opinion

The Battalion

Thursday, April 25, 1991

End world hunger American citizens need to consume less meat

"There are people into whose heads it never enters to conceive of any better state of society than that which now exists."

— Henry George
The Reality ...

Being a citizen of the United States, which of all the nations I believe singly emanates the most ubiquitous influence, makes me realize the above quote ought to be reworded to include the fortune of the entire world instead of simply just our society.

There is no argument that our own country has many internal crises to tackle. What is oftentimes overlooked, however, is that the solutions to our own polity's fundamental problems are very much the solutions that the rest of the world is crying for.

The Global Village (a term which is almost as trite but not as objectionable as our lovely "New World Order") has been a reality for quite some time. Though it has gained recent popularity in the vocabulary of our leaders (Dr. Mobley not excepted), one must believe that the conscious notion of all people's interconnectedness has existed for decades.

The Problem ...

What, then, are reasonable and caring humans to make of this reality? Clearly, we feel a certain degree of frustration (an impotence of distance) when foreign countries are engaged in

How many people could adequately be fed by the grain saved if Americans reduced their intake of meat by merely 10 percent? The answer: 60 million — hence, the end of starvation. ■

practices which have negative global implications.

Does anyone benefit from the destruction of gene pools which later might be the key to human survival? In the long run, do any truly relish the idea that our brothers and sisters in the Third World can be bribed out of their country's future by false promises and a few more dollars today?

And now, perhaps the most soul-wrenching and fundamental question of all: Can any of us feel really content in a world where hundreds of millions go hungry each night and 40,000 children die of starvation each day?

The Importance ...

There is hope. Much of our frustrations can be quickly ameliorated when we recognize our position, as Americans, affords us tremendous opportunities to solve worldwide problems.

The moral leadership of our country might very well be a fantastically noble force that will someday emerge, but today it seems clear that our nation is called to set aside our contemplation of glory and employ its resources immediately to effect a basic change in the condition of our human race.

Whether there is substance enough on this planet to allow all humans to be happy is an empirical question (and one I dare not leave up to the economists); what need not be disputed by any thinking observer is that there is food enough to ensure the world's population is fed.

Starvation goes well beyond undue suffering and oppression. Starvation is



Andy Yung
Columnist

an immediate evil which horrifies our sensibilities as charitable humans. We are not talking of the ozone layer's depletion whose devastating effects are years off; rather, when we speak of starvation, we know that action tomorrow is too late ... Now is the only acceptable time.

The most blatant manifestations of greed, convenience and exploitation our world has to offer is the 60 million famished corpses sacrificed to the god of apathy each year.

Can we make a difference? To this there is no doubt.

The Solution ...

By and large, our saints and heroes of the day are people who know and practice moderation. An important and worthwhile existence seems to presuppose a degree of self-control. Why do a disproportionate number of these moral exemplars choose to be vegetarians? Probably, because they are committed to advancing humanity. We, in the United States, are able to participate in this campaign with just the slightest of sacrifice.

The percentage of protein wasted by cycling grain through livestock is 90 percent, lost carbohydrates number 99 percent. The number of pounds of beef that can be raised on one acre of land is 165; the pounds of potatoes which can be grown on one acre of land ... 20,000.

In fact, 56 percent of all U.S. agricultural land is used to produce beef. To allow our resources to be monopolized by such a wasteful endeavour, while literally millions are starving to death each year, plainly is unacceptable.

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In Other Words ...

No one denies that we are the most wasteful nation on Earth. What can we do? Well, we are currently working to improve our habits and tendencies. Meanwhile, it doesn't seem to me that we can truly reconcile our sense of compassion and human love with the unfathomable degree of suffering, pain and death associated with starvation.

We need to do more than just take note of this interesting hypothetical model of cause and effect. We need to personally make a commitment to eating less meat. It will undoubtedly make a difference ... both to the world and to our character.

If we choose not to consume meat just one day a week when we otherwise would have, we will be making incredibly positive strides toward ending this catastrophic inhumanity. It doesn't seem all that much to ask. To make such a commitment truly would be enabling.

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The Battalion

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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.

PTTS frustrates student

EDITOR:

Got a little story for you Ags. It seems the weekend before Parents' Weekend I went home. My car, being the trustworthy '77 Buick Le Sabre that it is, had to stay home and get repaired. I took my father's truck and used it for a week until my parents brought me my car on Parents' Weekend.

Since I'm not perfect, I managed to leave my parking tag in my Dad's truck. Realizing the seriousness of the situation, I called my folks Monday and asked them to mail me my tag. My parents, not being perfect either, forgot to mail it right away. After a few more phone calls and two tickets later, I finally received my tag in the mail.

No, there's no punchline to this story, but what happened to me next is one of the biggest jokes about A&M. I took my two tickets over to the Parking, Transit and Traffic office, hoping they would understand my situation and dismiss my tickets.

Instead, I was informed that I could pay the \$50 to cover the tickets and then appeal for either a full or partial refund. They were also nice enough to say that they could reduce my tickets to \$10 a piece for failing to display a permit, but there would be no possibility for an appeal.

From experience, I know that the appeals board dismisses tickets about as frequently as Texas gets swept in baseball.

One time I parked in an "illegal" parking zone for five minutes to carry my luggage and food supplies into my dorm room late one Sunday night. It was that or take four trips between my dorm and George Bush.

Needless to say, I got a ticket, and the PT&T people couldn't have cared less about my circumstance.

So, now I'm in a dilemma.

I can either pay \$50, which I don't have and pray I get it back in four to six weeks (maybe my check still won't have cleared by then), or I can pay \$20, which I can't afford, nor can I justify paying.

Then again, I could just blow it all off and just not graduate in May. I'm sure my family wouldn't mind.

My question is, who is in charge of this money-making scheme? They obviously are blind to the fact that parking here sucks and are unwilling to bend a little to help out students.

How much money are they going to rake in this year? Two million? I guess they can't afford to hire someone to listen to and approve appeals on the campus 24 hours a day. They probably get paid on commission.

I guess I just had to get my frustration out somehow, but I highly suggest everyone else out there who is bothered by this situation write in and express their opinion too.

Oh, I forgot to mention this. The sweet folks over at the PT&T office would have given me a temporary permit if I had only asked ... for \$1 a day.

Mark W. Davidson '91

Don't get caught

EDITOR:

Tuesday's feature article, "Hell on wheels" by Julie Hedderman, was, on the whole, very informative, although it lacked what I think is a crucial point in this debate.

The missing point concerns what they do to you when you are caught running a stop sign or committing some other dangerous crime against humanity.

Hedderman forgot to mention that if you are given a ticket by the police for running a stop sign (for instance), the citation will make it to your driving record and will screw up your car insurance premiums.

Yes, that's right, in addition to having to pay the fine for "the crime," you will be dogged by the memory of your "reckless disregard" every time you pay your auto-insurance premiums or apply for new insurance.

This issue is a particularly timely one, seeing as last week saw the three-year mark for a ticket I received from

CSPD for running a stop sign on my bike in a remote, sleepy, little residential neighborhood in Southwood Valley.

So Aggies, please, take some advice from one who learned the hard way.

□ If the police desire your company to discuss your stop sign policy, FLEE! Go up onto a curb or into the woods — any place where they cannot drive a car after you.

□ If you are caught, do not hand over your license, it will make your life difficult for three years. Tell them "I don't have one."

So ride safely, but remember, if you get caught, it was because you let it happen. Fight the power!

Craig Coates '91

Silent majority speaks out

DEAR DR. MOBLEY:

This is a letter from the silent majority.

I realize that the very small, very loud minority of students and faculty at Texas A&M who support homosexuals have tried to force their beliefs on others. They want to make homosexuality perfectly acceptable in our society. Their ultimate goal is to get homosexuality taught in the public school system as a perfectly natural "alternative" lifestyle.

The majority of students at Texas A&M is opposed to homosexuality. As a matter of fact, we are sick of hearing about the plight of homosexuals. Unfortunately, 2 percent of the loud students (800 at most) and The Battalion "journalists" support homosexuals.

It is legal to discriminate against someone in hiring because of his or her sexual preference. Dr. Mobley, would you hire someone if their sexual preference was farm animals?

Or would you hire pedophiles or necrophiles? I hope you would not hire them. Homosexuality, necrophilia, pedophilia and bestiality are all unnatural and an abomination to God.

Please, Dr. Mobley, listen to the silent majority and preserve your right to discriminate the hiring of faculty based on sexual preference. Please, don't let homosexuality be forced upon the silent majority.

Now, I know this letter will anger homosexuals; I am not judging them. I just don't want their lifestyle thrust on me.

Homosexuals know what they do is wrong, and they will never find peace and happiness until they turn from their sin, repent and accept Jesus Christ for redemption of their sins.

J. Arthur '90

Nito offends Christians

EDITOR:

I have read "the itch" on and off all year and have noticed the controversy it stirs up. The cartoon from the April 16 and April 19 editions of The Battalion caught my eye.

I am grossly insulted by your use of Jesus as the butt of your jokes.

I am sure that many other Christians were insulted also. I must admit, you have a lot of guts poking fun at the Almighty God.

Jesus gave His life for you, indeed, for all people. The very least He deserves is a little respect. Even if someone does not believe in Jesus, it is irresponsible to insult the most sacred part of thousands of peoples' lives.

I am not writing this to defend Jesus because He does not need me to defend Him. I just hope that you think twice before you draw a cartoon.

Maybe when you are thinking, you can take a closer look at Jesus, and you will find He is a loving, just, forgiving and awesome God.

Todd Primm '91
accompanied by four signatures

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