

EDITORIALS

Cold War fallout

Nuclear weaponry still a threat

While Americans celebrate the dissolution of the Soviet Union and victory in the Cold War, they must remember that the final nail in the Soviet coffin, namely the dismantling of Russia's intercontinental ballistic missile force (ICBM), has not yet been placed.

As Sen. Al Gore pointed out in the vice presidential debate, President Bush has an "understanding" with Russian President Boris Yeltsin concerning the ICBMs, but no permanent "agreement" has been reached.

Considering that Americans spent trillions of dollars to win the Cold War and spilled blood in Cold War-related conflicts, declaring victory would be premature as our children still live in the shadow of

nuclear holocaust.

This very rational fear is heightened by the fact that the former Soviet Union is a very volatile region where democracy struggles for survival. Ethnic and religious wars rage out of control within the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Americans should realize that such places as New York, Washington D.C., Silicon Valley and the Hoover Dam are still targeted for destruction by Russian nuclear arms.

The next president should make it his highest priority to negotiate a U.S.-Russia ICBM treaty. A treaty would not guarantee that the Russians would honor the agreement, but it would surely be a step in the right direction.

Buttcrack's ultimate dimension

Columnist examines ins and outs of the colon-cam

Friends often tell me that I too readily hide behind the crass, wise-cracking facade of this silly old column — that the reading public does not know the real me, that truth in journalism necessitates that I abandon this monstrous persona and bare my soul to you, the readers.

Well, I was feeling kind of warm and fuzzy when suddenly, "Kumbay-yah" began to trickle over the airwaves, and the fervent desire to share my deepest, darkest feelings, fears and secrets overcame me. At first I was hesitant. I almost felt too close to the subject to disclose it to an anonymous conglomeration of cold-hearted readers, but here goes:

Stacy's colon is now a semi-colon. On Monday, I had a camera in my buttcrack. More than my buttcrack, actually it was in my bowels; it was there having a look around and thus ushering in — or out, as the case may be — the latest edition in my epic probe into the deepest recesses of the American psyche, our bowels.

Call me anal retentive, but when the ... when it hit the fan last Thursday night, concern overtook me. I won't go into the details here because you don't want to hear them. Just know this: it was ugly. It was foul. It was worth a call to my local gastroenterologist.

Not knowing whether or not my affliction required a gastroenterologist, I related my symptoms to the nurse (again, I will not go into the symptoms here), and she explained several facts about gastroenterology.

"Basically Stacy, a gastroenterologist covers everything from your mouth to your rectum. I think we're right up your alley."

She really said that. I kid you not. But if you think about it, her remarks make a lot of sense: any person who aspires to be a gastroenterologist must have a really sick sense of humor. Maybe I should quit journalism and try it...

Nah. And miss all this fun? We haven't even gotten to the good part yet. I really, really enjoyed my first rectal exam with the tag-team of comedy, Dr. Gray and Nurse Selina — gee whiz, that was cold! Unfortunately, they really, really couldn't see anything up there — I don't know why; it felt like they had an electron microscope in my butt! Nevertheless, they decided they needed to go in for a closer look, with film footage and a camera crew!

What I enjoyed even more than the rectal exam, though,



STACY FEDUCIA
Assistant editor

was the gallon of liquid laxative they so benevolently gave me to swallow the night before the big colon carnival. Put it this way: I liked my Colyte-flavored laxative so much that I ran into a shelf and cut open my forehead when bolting to the bathroom. There is no concept of hell greater than chugging some Colyte (which the nurses call "go-lightly"), attempting to digest it, and then hugging the same toilet on which you just recently sat.

And, of course, all of my adoring friends and family members supported me through my time of sorrow. I felt like a little baby with swarms of relatives hovering around, watching Stacy "go make pooh-pooh."

My friend Dave offered some pleasant words of consolation by sending me a get well card, wishing me all the best as I walked down the "yellow-bricked road." But, of course, my father was there to offer this tidbit of fatherly advice: "Just be sure when he puts that camera up your butt, he doesn't have both hands on your shoulders."

What did they find, you ask? Not that you care, just that I thought I'd go ahead and tell you, now that I have your attention.

Do you ever read those ads in the Batt about the medical studies that offer valuable cash prizes and merchandise for your ailments, aches and pains? Don't you always kind of hope that the researchers are calling for some ooze, goop or mucus that you, yourself produce so you can hang up your half-hearted dreams of finding a real job and spend the rest of your life in the lap of luxury as guinea pig for the masses?

Irritable bowel syndrome ... sucks to be me.

Of course, I would not write anything vacuous so as to string you along through this epic probe into my large intestine without providing a valuable lesson for you, the legions of readers, who have made it this far into this mess — and up into my butt.

Here's the moral to the story, boys and girls: Kids, don't try this at home. Your buttcrack can be your friend if you take good care of it. Get plenty of rest. Drink lots of fluids — especially if they are named "Go-lightly." And work on that high-fiber diet. And buy me in today's date auction for the United Way (MSC Flag room, 1:00 pm). I promise I'll bare my deepest, darkest secrets to you: I'll show you the pictures of my colon — yes, they let me keep them!

And remember, be good to your bowels, because irritated bowel syndrome is a pain in the butt.

You heard it here first.

Feducia is a senior English and history major

The sky isn't falling

Economic 'disaster' overstated

Apocalypse sells. The American public has been sold the idea that America is finished as an economic power.

America is purportedly an international laughingstock and no longer competitive.

In addition, the conventional wisdom that America is in its worst economic downturn since the Great Depression has been bandied about without any supporting evidence.

National income fell by 30 percent in the Depression, and unemployment peaked at 25 percent.

In contrast, between 1990 and 1991, national income fell by 1 percent, and unemployment is currently at 7.5 percent.

Between 1988 and 1992, national income grew by 4 percent. In the

last recession between 1978 and 1982, national income actually fell.

Our current state of affairs hardly compares to the Depression, and it is an egregious exaggeration to call it the worst downturn since then.

America is the most productive nation in the world and has a commanding lead over European and Japanese competitors.

Productivity is the best measure of international competitiveness and also determines a nation's standard of living.

It is a grave distortion to claim that America is anything near a down-turn like the Great Depression, or that America has lost its position as the most competitive nation in the world.

Too bad Aggie friendliness only for those who aren't different

A new tradition has developed on the campus of Texas A&M — the tradition of intolerance. During the last few weeks, the Aggies have made the cover of the Houston Chronicle at least twice.

These Chronicle articles discussed the newfound Aggie fervor for political, social, and racial intolerance. I would like to add a new name to the list of unwanted. Not only are Republican white males the preferred members of this campus; these men must also, of course, be heterosexual.

I do not want to participate in GLSS (Gay and Lesbian Student Service) activities because, as a straight person, I do not think they are for me. However, I support my friends who speak about their gay pride and congratulate them on their Coming-Out Week celebrations. Coming-Out Week was more subdued this semester, perhaps because of the "Kill Fags" response that was scrawled on the walls of Blocker last year.

If I were not more in touch with the gay community, I would not have been aware that Coming-Out Week had taken place. Last week, gays and lesbians celebrated their rights as individuals by "coming out," or celebrating and discussing their lifestyles with friends and family members. However, some Aggie Intolerant must have known that Coming-Out Week was approaching because on Saturday, Oct. 10, a harassing, threatening, anti-gay hate crime was committed.

One of my friends, a gay man, went to the computer room in the Student Services Building on Tuesday to access some official GLSS files that he had saved there. These files concerned the business of GLSS — an organization recognized by the University. When he attempted to retrieve the files, he discovered that they were missing. He searched the computer banks, and though his files were gone, there was a new file called "GLSS." Thinking one of his friends had thoughtfully compacted his files, he accessed "GLSS." "GLSS" did not contain his work. It

was a hateful, anti-gay message which read "All queers should burn in hell. You faggots should be jailed and brainwashed. Watch you(r) back." Needless to say, my friend was dismayed. Not only were his files dumped — he was assaulted and insulted as well.

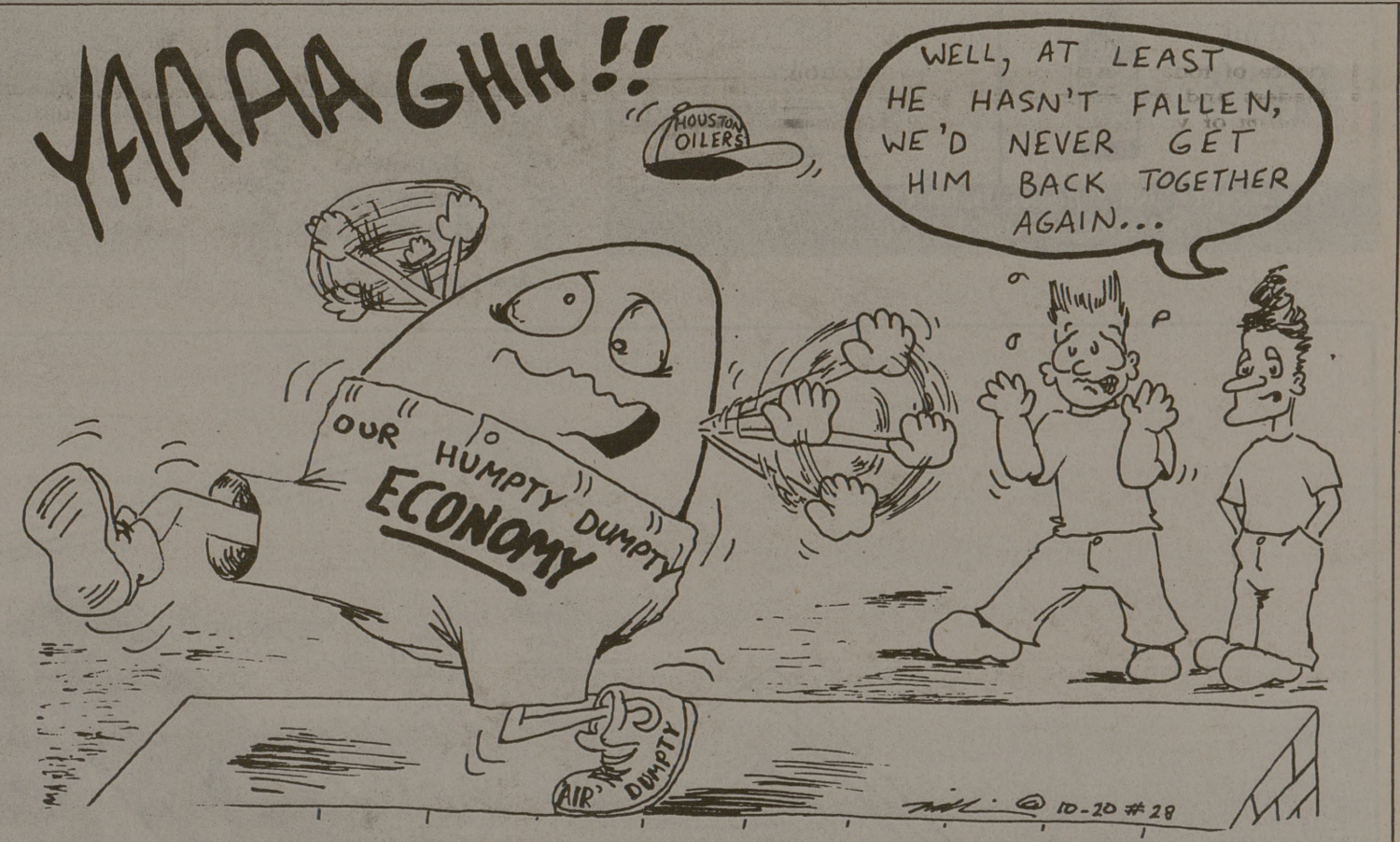
This is a perfect example of the new Aggie Intolerance Tradition. GLSS is one of the many victims of this recent trend. Unfortunately, GLSS is one of the most ignored victims. Outrage and disgust are appropriate responses to discrimination and prejudice. GLSS has been and continues to be a target for harassment. It is time that this is recognized and addressed. A few steps can and must be taken if we want to stop this trend.

First of all, we must find out who is committing these actions and we must make sure that they do not recur. According to the log-on, the GLSS file dumping occurred at 4 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 10. There is no supervision over Student Services computers — the system is arranged with the Aggie Code of Honor in mind. Apparently this arrangement needs to be revised. An attempt should be made to find and punish the perpetrator of this hate crime, and the Student Services computer system needs to be rearranged so that something like this will never happen again. It is just too bad that we cannot trust our fellow Ags.

Secondly, it would be ideal if every Aggie would try to display thoughtful, tolerant behavior. Is it really so hard to live and let live? Targeting another group simply because you do not agree with their political, religious, personal, or cultural beliefs is immature and selfish. It would be nice if A&M could end its reputation as an intolerant institution.

Next time you walk across campus, take a look around. Notice the people with whom you attend school. Pick a person that seems most unlike yourself, and strike up a conversation. Meet someone who exists outside of your safe circle of similarity. If you are an atheist, choose someone who is wearing a religious symbol. If you are pro-life, talk to someone wearing a pro-choice T-shirt. Talk, discuss, communicate, and think. You might make a friend after all.

Holden is a graduate student in English



MAIL CALL

Student puzzled about life's oddities

I have a few questions to put to you. Question one: What's the deal with the shirts I have seen around campus toting the slogan "Aggies against Aggies against Bonfire?" I mean, I can understand "Aggies for Bonfire" and even "Earn a friend — build a bonfire," but Aggies against Aggies? I was told that Ags helped Ags. Hmph.

Question two: Why is there a picture of a frog being melted in acid on the cover of the Chemistry 111 lab book? I mean, I can understand a picture of a chemical reaction, and even a picture of a frog being turned into a prince by the kiss of a princess, but a frog in acid? I was told chemistry was more constructive than that. Hmph.

Question three: What is this world coming to? Not only are Aggies against

Aggies, but frogs are being dropped in acid in the name of science. Unbelievable.

Stephen Newman
Class of '96

That's the pot calling the kettle black

While I don't endorse any candidate for the Texas Railroad Commission (wish there was a third to vote for!), Lena Guerrero's quote in Todd Stone's article (Oct. 19) has moved me to comment. Guerrero, in referring to her opponent's candidacy, said, "If it is not illegal, it is totally unethical."

Excuse me, Guerrero, but what you did was illegal and unethical (not to mention immoral). I don't like (opposing candidate) Williamson's connections either, but what ever happened to "innocent until proven guilty?" As for her comment that she respects the Texas A&M University System and the spirit of Aggieland, might I suggest she investigate our University further before she endorses it? (See "...do not lie, cheat, etc..." under Aggie Code of Honor).

Grady S. McClung
Class of '93

Baptist students showed hospitality

On Thursday, Oct. 15, I attended a free Christian concert put on by the Baptist Student Union in Rudder Theater. I went to the concert alone, but a group of students saw me sitting alone and invited me to join them. The students were very polite and treated me like a good friend they had known for years instead of a few minutes. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their kindness, because what could have been an uncomfortable experience was actually a very pleasant one.

Pennette Green
Student Activities Staff

Editorials appearing in The Battalion reflect the views of the opinion page staff and editor in chief only. They do not represent, in any way, the opinions of reporters, staff, or editors of other sections of the newspaper. Columns, guest columns, and Mail Call items express the opinions of the authors only. The Battalion encourages letters to the editor and will print as many as space allows in the Mail Call section. Letters must be 300 words or less and include author's name, Social Security number, class, and phone number. We reserve the right to edit letters for length, style, and accuracy. Letters should be addressed to: The Battalion - Mail Call 013 Reed McDonald / Mail stop 1111 Texas A&M University College Station, TX 77843