THE BATTALION OPINION

Powell knew the game wasn't for him Fear of failure and media hype turned Colin Powell away from presidential quest

would proba-bly lose more support once he committed to running for office and began to spell out his platform. If he had continued to mesmerize the pub-

lic, he soon would have been in over

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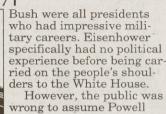
OPINION

LITTLEFIELD

The American public had made the wrong connection, and maybe, just maybe, Colin Powell realized this.

It is human nature to try to make sense of things, to explain things, to find related themes and connect them. It is also human nature to sometimes draw faulty conclusions. That is what the Colin Powell hype was all about.

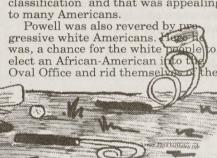
The American public rationalized that since Powell had a successful career in the military, he would have made a successful presider And why not? Andrew Jack Dwight D. Eisenhower and Ge



could become a successful president simply because Eisenhower did. Two different people. Two different eras.

Eisenhower secured the presidency on the wave of nationalism that swept across America during and after World War II. Powell was embraced because many

Americans are tired of partisan politics. Powell seemed to defy political classification and that was appealing to many Americans.



thought they could ever be accused as being racist.

This affirmative action election

is not a reason to elect a president.
A vote should only be cast if the candidate is politically skilled and supports similar ide-

Even those who weren't too keen on the idea of a black president, weren't fazed by Powell's ethnicity. Visually, Powell is not the darkest-skinned person you will see.

If you want to take the iconoclastic method of analyzing this view, it does make sense.

Remember all of those spaghetti westerns — the good guys wore white and the bad guys always wore black. Powell was somewhere in between to

many Americans.
A friend of mine overheard a conversation in which Powell was referred to as being "not like the rest of 'em

The color of one's skin just isn't a good judge of a person's character, much less a judge of a

Powell's official reasons for not entering into the race were the privacy and safety of he and his family. This seems like a shot fired directly at the media. Ask Al Gore's daughter who

was busted for drinking some brew, if the press interferes with

the life of family members of those in office. And her dad isn't even the president.

Powell's wife is rumored to be on medication for her depres sion. She also has said in a television interview that she hoped her husband would not run.

Powell might have thought that he and his family might not survive all of the publicity and mud-slinging a presidential

campaign generates.

The recent assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, prime minister to Israel, might have struck some fear in Powell's heart.

There are many reasons that Powell might have decided not to run. But one of the most compelling reasons is found in the following analogy.
Ask a pro baseball player of su-

perstar status, who has never held a golf club, to hit a tee shot more than 150 yards, and you will prob-ably hear an eager, "Sure!" In reality, he will probably

send a divot flying further than

Powell was smart — he realized this and didn't want to trade in his war hero title for the title of Colin Powell, failed presidential candidate.

Whether or not it was the right choice, we may never know.

> Kyle Littlefield is a senior journalism major



7 ith the 50th anniversary of the United Nations, the sovereignty vote in tion of Yitzhak Rabin and the Bosnics the Bosnian peace talks in Dayton, Ohio, there's been a heightened aware ness on U.S. foreign af-

fairs recently. However, anyone looking for something in common between all of these events will

ASON

COLUMNIST

have to search long and hard. That's the problem with the U.S. foreign policy; it's fragmented, inconsistent and

lacking in leadership.

During the Cold War, foreign policy was easy — capitalism good, communism bad. The world was simpler, partly because

the United States let the world know where it stood. Now, America has been slow to react to the changes the rest of the world is experiencing, and it has lost credibility and au-

thority to bring stability to tense areas of In a 1993 Foreign Affairs article, Harvard political scientist Samuel Huntington warns that future conflicts will not be economic or

ideological, but cultural. According to Huntington, "the fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines

of the future. He offers many reasons why cultural differences will lead to conflict, such as increasing economic regionalism, increasing interactions among groups of people and increas-

ing civilization-consciousness A lot of scholars have disagreed with this article, but a quick look around the globe in the two years since it was published suggests Huntington's ideas have some credence.

Yugoslavia, Chechnya, Quebec, the former Soviet republics and Rwanda have all

experienced increased hostility because of cultural differences.

However, President Bush never did, and President Clinton has yet to devise an overarching strategy to deal with the increased cultural conflicts.

Instead, both presidents have

adopted case-by-case approaches. This confusing method has led to double standards, and rather than easing tensions, it has sometimes exacerbated them be-

tween the United States and other countries. For example, the world, including the United States, cheered when Croatia, Slovenia Macedonia and Bosnia declared their independence from Yugoslavia.

But when Bosnian Serbs wanted independence from Bosnia, the United States frowned and discouraged any further break-up of the Balkans, although it never offered any explanation why certain groups in that area deserved independence while

The same thing happened when the Soviet Union dissolved.

The United States sent a message that it was OK for Soviet republics to declare their independence from the Soviet Union

Now, smaller units are clamoring for their independence, but while Russia was bombing Chechnya, all Secretary of State Warren Christopher did was express concern and say we "respect the territorial integrity of Russia.'

Also, half the former Soviet republics are embroiled in civil wars, and the United States has been mysteriously silent in helping to resolve them.

Of course, Clinton has also done little to justify other double standards.

Why does he think freer trade and a more open relationship with the oppressive, totalitarian government of China will push communism out of that country, while a stiffer

embargo and isolation from the oppressive, totalitarian government of Cuba will push

communism out of that country? To make matters worse, the United States owes the United Nations a whopping

The 50th anniversary became a bashing ceremony of the United States, as heads of state denounced America's debt:

The low point of the ceremony was when British Prime Minister John Major declared no member state should enjoy "representation without taxation" — a blatant jab at the United States.

That's the problem with U.S. foreign policy; it's fragmented, inconsistent and totally lacking in leadership.

The loss of American prestige around the world parallels the loss of American control over the United Nations, which has served as the United States' puppet since its creation in 1945.

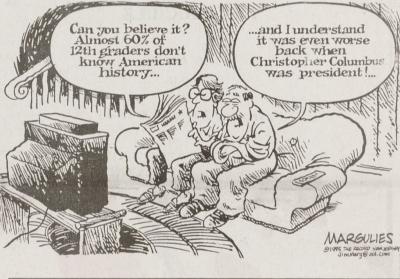
Perhaps the most obvious sign of America's reputation decline in the United Nations was Fidel Castro's speech, which garnered more praise and applause than Bill Clinton's at the anniversary ceremony.

If the White House wants to regain credibility and influence in world affairs, it must first get its own house in order.

The Clinton administration should decide what it wants to accomplish in foreign policy, let everyone know and then handle situations that arise accordingly, and most importantly do it consistently.

If the United States wants to be the leader of the world, it should start acting

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THE BATTALION

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EDITORIAL POWELL OUTAGE

Colin Powell's decision not to run will make things less interesting.

While pundits may argue about which presidential candidates benefit or are hurt by Colin Powell's decision not to run for president, one thing is for sure — the presidential race will be less interesting.

Because of Powell's decision, Americans have lost a historic opportunity to witness and experience a viable challenge to traditional American politics.

A self-proclaimed moderate Republican, Powell had already prompted an intense debate among conservatives and minorities

Many Republicans were hoping to win back the White House at any cost.

Others did not want to see a candidate openly hostile to many elements of the conservative agenda enter the Republican primary.

Given his popularity, Powell's stance on affirmative action, abortion and gun control would have forced the Republican Party to re-evaluate its platform.

On the other hand, African-Americans, the majority of whom vote Democratic, would have had to choose between their traditional party and the chance to contribute to a symbolic victory on the road to racial equality. Furthermore, the entire

American public would have

had to do some soul searching if Powell had run. Some people believe that the United States has nearly achieved racial equality, but

Powell would have put this belief to the test. His candidacy would have made this country ask if it was ready for an African-

American president. Just as interesting would have been people's reactions to the first minority presi-

dent, if he had been elected president in 1996.

However, these questions are only hypothetical.

For now, it looks like Americans will not have their beliefs challenged the way a Powell presidential candidacy would have.

Instead, the choice for president will more than likely come down to a race between two white, male, professional politicians.

With that in mind, Powell's non-candidacy leaves many questions unanswered.



12th Man quiet at recent A&M game

I would like to commend the yell leaders for taking their criticism graciously and for correcting the silence on Kyle Field.

I thought the Houston game was great as far as yells go, but it was still incredibly quiet and that was disheartening. This time, it was the 12th Man's fault.

I agreed with the criticism of the yell leaders, but they handled

the situation well. Now the 12th Man should straighten up its act. I hope that we can put some pride, spirit and noise back into Kyle Field.

We have much to be proud of. We should remember all of the games we've won.

We should be glad we don't have to take the 12th Man literally and go on the field and do the tough job those players do.

We should keep our promise of supporting the Ags — win or lose.

It seems silly to give up when they have done such an incredible job in the past and when we know they will do an incredible job in the future. Let's demonstrate that spirit and pride we all talk about.

> Catherine Palmore Class of '98

fit in hard at A&M

Recently I have noticed a number of students wearing T-shirts bearing the message "I found my

place at Texas A&M." I wonder if this applies to everyone. Having been an Aggie for two

months, I don't consider myself an expert on this school, but I do know that I personally have yet to "find my place." After all, it can sometimes be

difficult to fit in when:

· There are ridiculous arguments dealing with a multiculturalism requirement that would only affect six hours. This amounts to less than 5

percent of the classes students will take to get a degree. Can people be so closed-minded as to reject even the thought of

learning about people with backgrounds other than their own for · It seems impossible to be a heterosexual Ag and support people of other sexual orientations

damning those who don't agree. · People who think for themselves and keep an open mind are told that they can transfer to t.u.

instead of being disgusted and

The school yearbook angers students if it prints what happened instead of what students would like to have happened.

I came to A&M from out of state because of its traditions and scholastics. I've been to cut, worn grodes and a pot. I make an effort to tell people "Howdy" and I proudly stand with the 12th Man. I didn't realize that traditions

included being closed-minded to anyone who doesn't go with the flow and fit in with the majority. It's funny how that's never mentioned in the brochures. I do hope there is a silent minority out there that isn't afraid

to speak up for what is right, even if it isn't the opinion of the majori-Maybe someday differences will be respected, and everyone will be able to find their place.

And maybe I'll even buy one of Gregory C. Fahrenholt

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phone number. We reserve the right to edit letters for length, style and accuracy. Letters may be submitted in person at 013 Reed McDonald. A valid student ID is required. Letters may also be mailed to The Battalion - Mail Call

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