

## No Greeks allowed

Greece should be thrown out of NATO due to recent actions concerning Kosovo conflict

At the outset of NATO's bombing campaign against Yugoslavia, Foreign Minister of Greece came forward to condemn NATO for its actions and demand a peace resolution to the conflict. In every nation's leader entitled to his or her own opinion, this would not be worth mentioning — save for the fact that Greece itself is a part of NATO.



MARK PASSWATERS

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the expansion of NATO into Eastern Europe, some people have suggested that the organization has become too large for a mission that is still relatively undefined. If streamlining is indeed in order, then Greece should be the first to go. Its track record is an indication that it is a part of an alliance in name only.

Under the leadership of Greece's ruling party, the Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), the Greeks have racked up a rather stunning record of meddling in the United States and Great Britain.

It would be a logical assumption that Greece should feel some sort of debt to these two nations for not only freed Greece from Nazi tyranny but prevented it from falling into the Communist clutches of influence in the Greek Civil War. Indeed, the late Prime Minister of Greece Andreas Papandreu, told "60 Minutes" "I'm grateful to you for anything."

Under Panapandreu, Greece showed that to be true. After PASOK signed a "bond of brotherhood" with Syria's Baath Party (run by Hafez Assad, no humanitarian himself), Greece allied itself with Muammar Khaddafi's Libya. While permitting American F-16 fighter aircraft, the Greeks permitted terrorists from Libya and Abu al-Balagh's group to work from inside its territory without any interference.

When the Reagan administration warned American citizens not to travel to Greece after hijackings of several aircraft and the murders of several American citizens, the Greek government accused the United States of conducting terrorist operations against it by creating the impression that Greece was unsafe.

Why would anyone consider a nation that calls itself a Christian nation that blows up buses and



ROBERT HYNCEK/THE BATTALION

bomb synagogues unsafe?

While the Palestinians, who are fighting for a land that they consider to be theirs, are called "freedom fighters," the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) are called terrorists by the Greek government.

Greece hates the KLA because they are of Albanian descent and they consider Albanians to be "Turks."

In Robert Kaplan's splendid book *Balkan Ghosts* a Greek politician tells him that "you must never con-

fuse an open heart with an open mind."

Greece's hatred for Turkey, a supposed ally and fellow member of NATO, goes back nearly a thousand years.

It can be described in one word: Constantinople. Since the Islamic Turks took the city — the cradle of the Eastern Orthodox Church — and renamed it Istanbul, the Greeks have felt that part of their national character has been stolen from them. The hatred of the Turks and those like them has become all-consuming for the Greeks. The Serbs are Eastern Orthodox just as the Greeks are.

As a result, Greece supports their oppression of the Kosovar Albanians. The fact that this oppression can also be deemed extermination is not important; the Serbs are like them, and the Kosovars are like the Turks. This is justification to the Greeks and to many other people of the Eastern Orthodox faith for whatever the Serbs do.

Kaplan writes that "the Greeks cannot bring themselves to utter the word, Istanbul." However, as the song goes, "Istanbul is Constantinople" — and it is nobody's business but the Turks. The Greeks have decided that they cannot let past history be just that — in the past.

They have decided that their religious bonds and long standing hatreds are more important than being a part of a new, multicultural alliance. NATO has existed for 50 years; it does not have the staying power of a grudge 800 years old.

Greece's support for Yugoslavia, no matter how tacit, cannot be permitted by NATO. In order to stop the extermination of the Kosovar Albanians, NATO must put forth a strong, totally united front in order to face down Slobodan Milosevic.

Greece's decision to not be in lock step with NATO has given the Serbs hope that the alliance will crack if they hold out long enough. If Greece wishes to put old hatreds ahead of new bonds, then it should be free to do so — after the other members of NATO eject it from their ranks.

Mark Passwaters is a graduate electrical engineering student.

## People of different religions should not push beliefs on others

Religious tolerance in AggieLand? Grant this semester would have been a lot of hectic at the *The Battalion* office if such things did exist. The idealist in anyone would just go to see Baptists, Catholics, Jews, Buddhists, Hindus and in atheists hold hands at Fish Pond tomorrow and sing "We Are the World." However, judging from the heated debate sparked by this topic, it is about time someone addresses why religious intolerance exists at Texas A&M.



DAVID LEE

which seems to be innocent at first, manages to undermine the strong unity and levels of understanding that are the cornerstones of this University.

Without a doubt, self-righteousness and religion are a volatile combination. From the Crusades to the ongoing ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, countless conflicts throughout the course of human history have occurred because of self-righteous people who think of themselves as believers of the "absolute" truth. That belief, in and of itself, is not the problem.

Quite the contrary, it is honorable for people to find their spiritual compasses, whether they believe in Jesus Christ, Allah, or something else. It is only when people are deadset on forcing their beliefs on others who do not welcome it, this becomes a serious problem. If anything, people should have figured out by now that there is no way human beings can agree on one absolute truth when it comes to religion. Why else are there so many dif-

ferent religions in the world? Why else are there so many denominations of Christianity?

In a recent study, *Newsweek* reported that almost one-third of the world's population claims to be Christian. Obviously, Christianity is the dominant ideology here on campus. It is not uncommon to see a student faithfully reading his or her Bible between classes. Every now and then, students are seen passionately debating and discussing religious topics.

Such activities do not necessarily indicate self-righteousness; the majority of these students are admirably displaying the strong faith they have in God. It is only when these students begin to pester other students who do not share their views, when they begin to put down and insult other students for having a view that does not conform exactly to theirs that they become self-righteous. Only then is the line crossed.

Yes, it is the duty of every self-respecting Christian to spread the gospel of Je-

sus Christ; no one denies that. However, there is a fine line between enlightening a lost soul and badgering someone who is already on solid spiritual ground. If a student is a devout Muslim and has been for his entire life, it is ridiculous for a fanatical Christian student to pester him, condemning him for not sharing the same beliefs.

The only thing that is accomplished through that course of action is the Muslim student's growing contempt for the other student's ignorance, furthering the rift from understanding. Furthermore, it is even more ridiculous for a Baptist student to insult and berate a Catholic student for not sharing the same religious doctrines.

Even though the two students may be of differing denominations with differing opinions on Christianity, in the end, it is the same God.

In the end, it is the same Christ who died to wash away the collective sins of mankind. It is a shame that in the midst of all this arguing that this ideal is lost.

This is college right? A place of open discussion and respectful debate? Then why is such an ignorant attitude prevalent? It makes very little sense.

What is the solution to this problem? Well, the sad thing is that there is no permanent solution, nor should there be one. Human nature dictates that this imbalance will continue, that human beings will continue to disagree on religion.

It is all just a matter of individual students deciding on how they will deal with all of these clashing beliefs and ideologies, whether it be through practicing tolerance or ignorance. Hopefully, through understanding, or at the very least tolerating someone else's views on religion, one will be able to gain a better perspective on their own faith. "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:29 - 12:31). Perhaps that is God's greatest test of all.

David Lee is a sophomore economics major.

### MAIL CALL

#### Corps, non-regs need understanding

In response to Doug Keegan's 15 mail call.

I have noticed lately, all of the interesting articles between the Corps and non-regs in *The Battalion* and quite frankly I think it is wrong.

The Corps does not hate non-regs and many of my friends open not to be in the Corps. I think that you would show the Corps more what we are about rather than letting people from outside the Corps place articles in *The Battalion* about how they feel about things.

The Corps of Cadets is an integral aspect of Texas A&M that helps to make place seem so orderly. I will agree that people are different and we may not all agree with each other, but definitely should not go out our way to harm each other or say things to reduce each other.

We are all Aggies here and there is absolutely no reason to viciously bash someone else. It seems more and more that people want to see campus unity,

but instead of working for that they complain about the way things are and make the situation worse. We should be more constructive and less destructive.

Isaac Bartholomew  
Class of '99

If I'm not mistaken, the position of yell leader was invented and performed by the Corps long before there were non-regs on this campus.

Why is there such a need to fill our shoes? If non-regs knew what it is like to be in the Corps then I think they would have more respect for it, and if you want a Corps position you should put on a uniform, stop complaining and live the life that Aggies have lived since 1876.

We are so passionate about the Corps because we give our heart, soul sweat and blood to this school and people have no respect.

Why don't we just give Reveille to a frat, put Ol' Sarge in shorts and a T-shirt and tell the families of deceased Aggies that we cannot do Muster anymore.

The fact remains it takes a lit-

tle more to be in the Corps of Cadets, what we do on a daily basis makes us the better candidate.

Ricky Wood, would you be up to spending a few days as one of the freshman that will be carrying you off of Kyle next year? Let us see how you feel about the Corps then.

Ronnie H. Kirschner  
Class of '00

#### Kosovo-like conflict not unique, rare

In response to Lisa Foox's Apr. 13 opinion column.

The crisis in Kosovo cannot be compared with the Holocaust.

Yes, it is ethnic genocide, however not in large as a scale. You also stated that after the Holocaust thousands cried "never again" but it has occurred again and again, and yes even before this crisis in Kosovo.

Rwanda, Sudan, Sri Lanka, not too mention a few other nations the United States did not try to cure.

Bombing for peace, a very interesting concept. The NATO

bombing has to stop; it is hurting more than it's helping. We have basically severed our ties with Russia and this is very crucial. Yesterday, we bombed a convoy of ethnic Albanians. And I am afraid this "war" is going to turn uglier and uglier before it gets better. You can say now that you support the United States' destruction of others, but are you going to feel the same way once body bags of our soldiers start coming back? Stop NATO now.

Angellique Dorazio-Sanders  
Class of '98

#### Writer should do more topic research

In response to Shea Trantham's Apr. 14 mail call.

And so another person claiming to be "hardline" comes to prove that it really translates as "hardhead."

Your claim that the writer's logic is faulty, uninformed and extremely biased. I have some bad news for you, whereas the writer in *The Battalion* may have been biased yours is even more so in

a worse context. You dispense violence like it were aspirin to a problem in which I see you clearly have no grasp of magnitude for. It is far nobler to err on the side of peace than on that of war.

Kill more, kill more — is that always the solution? This brings me to the point of the problem we are trying to solve. Do you know what it is? Think on this one and do not just regurgitate the propaganda that comes out of the Pentagons press room.

You my friend are the pawn of the American hate machine, to paraphrase your clever bit of non-wisdom in your letter.

Perhaps you can think back to the Iraqi War when reports came out of Kuwait that the invading Iraqis were going into hospitals and ripping babies out of incubators and taking the old of life support machines.

These reports turned out to be generated by the American propaganda machine, as too did many other reports that turned out to be false.

This proof that you claim to support your point of view calling for the killing of thousands of more people is not as reliable as you seem to believe because any

coverage of it was made impossible with the removal of the OSCE from the country because of the bombing (now that is a fact).

Milosevic is a political leader, albeit a nationalist one, he is still a political leader. You have swallowed every piece of sensationalism flown by President Clinton, Murderer Albright, and the Pentagon all the while standing upon the ideas of American Imperialism.

I wish that you were more informed before you criticize someone else for not being so.

Jason R. Sanders  
Class of '00

*The Battalion* encourages letters to the editor. Letters must be 300 words or less and include the author's name, class and phone number.

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013 Reed McDonald  
Texas A&M University  
College Station, TX  
77843-1111

Campus Mail: 1111  
Fax: (409) 845-2647  
E-mail: batt@tamvm1.tamu.edu