

## SHOULD SANCTIONS BE SANCTIONED?

### Hussein solely responsible for Iraq sanctions

### U.S. policy harms innocent Iraqi civilians

It has been nine years since Saddam Hussein's Iraq invaded its neighbor Kuwait. Many of the U.N. sanctions levied against Iraq in the wake of the 1990 invasion are still in effect. Millions of Iraqi men, women and children are now dying of disease and starvation, and some in the United States are now saying these sanctions must be lifted.



MARK PASSWATERS

Somewhere in Baghdad, Hussein must be smiling at the foolishness of the American public. He knows that most of us do not: He alone is to be blamed for the deaths of his people. The man known as "The Butcher of Baghdad" was the business of killing his fellow countrymen long before Operation Desert Storm and its aftermath. Hussein has killed hundreds of thousands of Iraqis in an attempt to cement his hold on power. They die today for the same reasons, only now the Iraqi dictator has a convenient scapegoat.

There is a pervasive belief among those who wish to see sanctions lifted that the money not entering Iraq would be spent for food and medicine for its population. This is an outright lie. Money does indeed enter Iraq; it simply is not distributed among the population. It goes directly into the coffers of Hussein and his Ba'ath Party. In the meantime, Hussein's propaganda wing cries out to the world about how the barbaric United States and United Kingdom are causing Iraqi children to die.

While there is supposed to be a ban on the sale of Iraqi crude oil, the CIA has said more than 100,000 barrels of Iraqi crude is smuggled out daily through Syria, Jordan, and Turkey. The money from this oil, if officially sold, is never seen by the public. Instead, it goes to Hussein.

The proof, as they say, is in the pudding. In this case, the pudding can be found in the more than 70 palaces Hussein has built for himself since the second year of the war. These are not renovations to existing palaces. These are brand-new ones, with deep bunkers designed to prevent American bombs from reaching them.

It also can be seen in the treatment of the elite Republican Guard and members of the Ba'ath Party. These people, whose support Hussein requires to remain in power, actually have increased their standard of living since the end of the war.

The Iraqi government has given seven pay raises to members of the Republican Guard and subsidized housing for them. Ba'ath Party members receive similar treatment, as well as free automobiles. In exchange for their continued support of Saddam, these people live in the lap of luxury. There is no starvation or malnutrition for them.

Members of the Shiite Moslem and Kurdish com-

munities, whose support Hussein does not require, are the ones who have been left to fend for themselves. When the U.N. does authorize the sale of Iraqi oil for food and medicine, little reaches this segment of the population. Since the money is regulated by the Iraqi government, those in power can do as they please. Instead of buying clothing or medicine for the people of Iraq, Saddam has instead spent his money on his weapons of mass destruction program.

When the Russian, French, and Chinese members of the U.N. Security Council condemn the U.S. and U.K. as "barbaric" for continuing sanctions, the world should laugh. Their desire to see sanctions lifted are not humanitarian but self-serving. With the proceeds from their "food-for-oil" program, Iraq has made down payments on weapons systems from all three of these nations, to be delivered as soon as sanctions are lifted.

Why would the U.N. consider lifting sanctions when Iraq is not in compliance with the sanctions? Iraq has yet to account for more than 80,000 Kuwaiti men who have been missing since 1991, nor have they terminated their weapons of mass destruction program. Until these are done, the lifting of sanctions should not be considered.

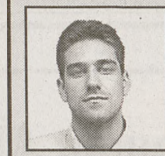
It is a terrible tragedy many Iraqis suffer because of the actions of Hussein, but it is not the fault of the United States. The solution is not the lifting of sanctions, but stronger enforcement of them.

As long as those around Hussein are able to live comfortably, there is no chance he will be removed from power. If they are made to feel the pinch of sanctions the rest of the nation has, then perhaps all of Iraq will be of one mind — that Hussein must go. If sanctions against Iraq were to be lifted, those opposing them would rejoice Iraqis might not die.

These same people could then watch as hundreds of thousands of Israelis, Saudis, Kuwaitis, Iranians and probably Americans would suffer under a Hussein freed from the shackles of sanctions. Which is better? The answer is clear. Nobody ever said it would be simple or painless.

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A photo essay by the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* shows the body of the tiny 2-year-old girl in a little red dress, lying in the corner of a cold, lonely hospital room. She is a beautiful child and appears gentle and peaceful. Her cheeks still maintain a rosy hue, although the rest of her body has become tinted cold blue. Sadly, she is dead. And the fact that she was alive only two minutes ago, full of hopes and dreams, is haunting. It is painful to think she could have been anyone's sister, daughter or niece. It is even more painful to realize that for 50 cents, the cost for helpful medication, she could still be living.



CAESAR RICCI

challenge the world's most brutal and elusive dictator. When the sanctions are stopped and Iraqis can return to living normal, productive lives, they will be in a much better position to affect change. If the sanctions are doing anything, they are only giving Hussein what he really wants—a weak and exhausted population that he can easily manipulate.

Critics claim that the Iraqi government is hoarding the U.N. relief in order to create a humanitarian disaster that will get Iraq world sympathy. This is possible, and even probable. But what does it matter? Hussein has been holding his people hostage since he came to power.

He has maintained a "state of fear," where no one can publicly speak out against his tyranny. It is senseless for the United States to further contribute to the Iraqis' woes by adding economic hardships to political restrictions. Hussein will likely manipulate U.N. relief aid as long as sanctions are in place. The only way to stop him from having this monopoly is by terminating the sanctions and allowing Iraqis to control their own livelihoods in free trade. The majority of American people, if properly informed, would never condone the suffering sanctions have caused.

As evinced by a Sept. 6 *Houston Chronicle* special on Iraq, sanctions have devastated the lives of civilians but leave the government elite untouched. They have impoverished formally middle-class and professional Iraqis. Families have had to sell their belongings. Children beg in the streets. Millions have fled to neighboring countries seeking economic refuge.

Of course, the worst are the children who are needlessly dying. UNICEF reports that many die from drinking dirty water. During the war, allied bombing destroyed sewage and water-purification systems. Now with sanctions and the greed of Hussein, there is no money to repair them. A famine is looming, and UNICEF has declared the situation a "humanitarian emergency."

Credible individuals have called for an end to the sanctions. Dennis Halliday, who was the U.N. Relief Coordinator for Iraq and is arguably the world's expert on the subject, resigned in 1998 in protest of the sanctions, calling them simplistic and unsuccessful.

"There can be no justification in my view for the death and malnutrition for which sanctions are responsible," he said, in a 1998 speech at Harvard University. The pope also condemned the sanctions, and according to *The New York Times*, he may even make a visit to Iraq.

When a terrorist hijacks a plane and takes its innocent passengers hostage, the answer is not to shoot down the plane and kill all on board. Yet this is what U.S.-backed sanctions are doing to Iraq. It is time to stop such senselessness and save the Iraqi people.

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But this is Iraq, where after nine years of the most comprehensive, strictly-enforced economic blockade of a country in history, common people are struggling to survive. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 500,000 Iraqi children have died from lack of food, medicine and clean water.

The United States, the sole world power still supporting the devastating sanctions, claims they must stay in place until all of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction have been accounted for and destroyed. The United States also asserts that harsh economic conditions will motivate ordinary Iraqis to overthrow Saddam Hussein.

However, this logic is flawed. The desire to destroy a rogue dictator's arms arsenal cannot possibly justify the impoverishment of a people and the killing of half a million innocent children.

The U.S.-backed economic sanctions on Iraq must come to an end. They are immoral and ineffective. They should be delinked from weapons inspections so that common people do not have to suffer for the actions of an intransigent government.

Since economic sanctions were put in place, all they have done is cause misery and death of helpless people, instilled in them a deep hatred for the United States, further solidified Hussein's grasp of power and alienated America from the Arab and Islamic world.

How can the Iraqi people overthrow Hussein when they are sick and hungry? A man who can barely get enough to eat and has to work two to three jobs to survive does not have the time nor the energy to chal-

### EDITORIAL ROUNDUP

from U-Wire editorial reports

#### Campaign finance bill should not have failed

from the Michigan Daily at the University of Michigan.

(U-WIRE) ANN ARBOR, Mich. — Last week, in what has become a yearly ritual in Washington, D.C., the U.S. Senate again defeated a bipartisan campaign finance reform bill drafted by Sen. John McCain of Arizona and Sen. Russ Feingold of Wisconsin.

The bill was not defeated by lack of majority support.

This year, as in past years, the McCain-Feingold legislation drew the support of a majority of senators but was again defeated by a filibuster led by Sen. Mitch McConnell of Kentucky. ...

The continued blocking of campaign finance reform by the Senate is an affront to the democratic ideals of this nation and is a clear example of how many lawmakers have become obsessed with raising money. ...

The usual argument used against campaign finance reform is that it restricts freedom of speech.

But it is difficult to see how corporations and special interest groups giving hundreds of thousands of dollars to political parties can be construed as speech. It is a blatant form of bribery.

Companies do not give money to politicians to exercise free speech. They contribute because it buys them influence and access to those who make laws affecting them. ...

Campaign finance reform is not about bridging free speech. It is about allowing the vast majority of Americans who do not make exorbitant campaign donations to have a voice in their government. ...

Our legislators today are spending more and more time raising money and less and less time legislating. Their primary concerns are no longer with their constituents, but their contributors. ...

While large amounts of polling data show that a clear majority of Americans favor campaign finance reform, few hold it as a top priority.

To end the giving of these vast sums of money, and thus special interest control of our government, people need to contact lawmakers.

#### Donald Trump may be best hope for Reform

From The Daily Athenaeum at West Virginia University.

(U-WIRE) MORGANTOWN, W.V. — Forget Gore vs. Bradley. Bush vs. McCain? No way. The real fun begins and ends in the Reform Party, where former Republican Donald Trump declared his intention to file papers on Monday that would make him an official member of the Reform Party.

Ah, the first signs of another interesting race. Trump vs. Buchanan. The prominent businessman vs. the career political figure. The public debates will be interesting, to say the least. These two running for the same nomination would be bigger news if they weren't running for the Reform Party nomination.

Unfortunately, this race, if and when Trump does decide to run, will be missed by many Americans who just don't care enough about a rogue third party to pay attention. ...

Buchanan has yet to respond to Trump's moves, but you can bet that Pat isn't going to sit idly by and allow the Donald to sit around and talk smack about him on national television.

Buchanan might not have to, though. A recent poll done by CNN showed that among the number of Americans most likely to vote in the Reform Party primary, Buchanan would win, 52 percent to 33 percent sampling errors notwithstanding.

That's not a good sign for Trump, who, with a loss in this election, would go down as the only candidate to lose an election to a guy who would prefer that all his followers carry pitchforks. However, Trump has a good shot of winning over those voters if he does decide to run. He's running as an ultra-moderate, a true centrist.

He speaks as a moderate politician who would offer tax cuts to the middle class, ban "soft money" from campaigns and negotiate tougher trade deals. ...

Strangely enough, if Trump wins, he will give the Reform Party a lot more credibility than Buchanan ever would, considering his track record for success and the fact that he makes no effort to court the so-called "lunatic fringe" that Buchanan does. If Reform Party voters want a chance to advance their reputation, they'd do well to vote for Trump.

## Meningitis prevention imperative

A deadly disease is on the rise in the United States, but little is being done to stop it. Unfortunately, when people are infected, the disease is extremely hard to stop. Once symptoms appear, death can sometimes come in as few as 24 hours or leave survivors with brain damage and multiple amputations. These grisly possibilities should be all the more frightening to college students since this virulent killer has universities in its cross-hairs.



CALEB MCDANIEL

The disease is meningococcal meningitis, and Texas A&M must join with other colleges throughout the country to prevent its outbreaks by raising awareness of the infection and available vaccinations.

Meningitis leads to swelling around the brain and spinal cord that can cause permanent disabilities, invading the central nervous system and crippling the brain's immunological defenses. Sometimes, early signs of infection — including headache, fever and nausea — are not much different from flu symptoms, and bacterial meningitis is occasionally diagnosed incorrectly as a common virus.

Unfortunately, it does not take long for doctors to realize they have made a mistake. As bacterial meningitis begins to spread purplish-black rashes caused by nerve death and blood poisoning often appear at the victim's extremities. To prevent the spread of the ensuing gangrene, patients are often forced to endure several amputations.

Within 48 hours an infected person may be dead, missing several limbs or be severely brain damaged. Unless the infection is fought early with intensive antibiotics, few victims survive unscathed by the disease.

Meningitis is extremely contagious. The infection spreads easily through kissing, sneezing and coughing or the sharing of eating utensils.

Once a person has contracted the illness, antibiotics should be administered to everyone the patient had been in contact with in the previous 72 hours. Consequently, it quickly be-

comes logistically difficult to stop the bacteria from spreading.

Bacterial strains of meningitis are still rare, but there has been a moderate increase in outbreaks since the early 1990s. Studies are also beginning to show that this general rise is inordinately affecting college-age students. Researchers have suggested that college students' statistical susceptibility to infection is caused in part by on-campus living.

It is not hard to see how residence halls — where large numbers of people live in close proximity to one another — can be breeding grounds for bacterial disease.

### Steps must be taken to stop a growing killer among college students.

According to *The New York Times*, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) released a report in May that college freshmen living in residence halls were six times more likely to be infected by bacterial meningitis than off-campus students. Living patterns also make college students more vulnerable to the disease. Heavy smoking, drinking and sleep deprivation — chronic problems for many college students — all lower the immune system's ability to stop bacterial infections.

Fortunately, although meningitis bacteria are dangerous, they are not invincible. If meningitis patients are diagnosed quickly enough, they can usually be cured with large doses of antibiotics, and a preventive vaccination has been developed for the disease.

Because horrible outbreaks can be prevented and controlled, A&M must focus on two pre-emptive policies to lessen the likelihood of a meningitis problem in College Station.

First, awareness is the key to stopping meningitis cases from becoming fatal. The University must make concerted efforts to educate students about the importance of healthy lifestyles and

adequate amounts of sleep — especially in the context of meningitis risks. Students should also be instructed on how to identify dangerous symptoms.

The A.P. Beutel Student Health Center at A&M provides information about meningitis in the form of printed material and the general information phone line. But these educational resources require students — many of whom have likely never heard of the disease — to be inquisitive enough to seek information out. Initiatives should begin now to make meningitis awareness more proactive, involving residence hall councils and student leaders to educate students about risks and preventive advice.

Secondly, the University should start a campaign to inform parents about the benefits of receiving meningitis immunization. Menomune, a vaccine which is effective against four known strains of bacterial meningitis, is recommended to incoming freshmen, but not required for admission. A&M should at least make an organized inquiry about the possible benefit of requiring the meningitis vaccination.

And in the meantime, University health officials should more strongly recommend the drug. Right now, menomune appears inconspicuously on a letter to parents.

More must be done. Along with recommending the drug, the University should give parents sufficient information about the disease and strive to make the drug even more affordable than it already is. The immunization currently costs \$57 at Beutel, but it should be made as inexpensive as those on the required list, which range in price from \$7 to \$40. Some universities have even had the foresight to make menomune available for free.

Students should not be unnecessarily frightened by meningitis; it is preventable. But University officials should not be lulled into complacency. Prevention requires action, and if A&M waits until after an outbreak to emphasize the dangers of meningitis, it will be too late. The time to strike a blow against meningococcal infections is now — before they have a chance to strike first.

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ROBERT HYNCEK/THE BATTALION