

## War tactics should not be disclosed

With the reality of war getting closer every day, America has a battle to fight other than the one against the terrorists that killed more than 6,000 Americans. America's media has been at the forefront of every battle we have fought since the Persian Gulf War. To protect the safety of our soldiers, this cannot be allowed to happen anymore.

In the Persian Gulf War, CNN crews traveled with many soldiers, broadcasting their battles with the Iraqi soldiers live on television. While informing the American public and gaining its top ratings, CNN also served as Iraq's intelligence system. While Iraq did not seem to gain much of an upper hand by watching CNN, we cannot allow anything to occur which would have the possibility of threatening our soldiers' safety. Reporting troop movements live via satellite could compromise our soldiers' safety as well.

In Kosovo, television crews broadcast our planes leaving bases on live television. This proved to serve as advance warning for Kosovo air defenses. There is no viable reason to do anything that would allow enemies to know the location and movement of our soldiers.

As war looms in the near future, Secretary of State Colin Powell ordered that no civilian reporters or cameras will be allowed to travel with infantry units or travel on our ships. This may save many lives because the Afghanistan soldiers will not be able to know where we are by watching the news.

Our soldiers are heroes on par with the firefighters in New York City. They have given an oath that they will use all means to protect our country from all forces, foreign or domestic. By giving this oath, U.S. soldiers have offered their lives so that all Americans can sleep another night under the blanket of freedom. Americans are all indebted to soldiers, past and present, for the sacrifice they have made so that we can live in freedom. Now is our time to protect our troops by not reporting their locations and movements.

While our technology has improved so much that we can broadcast live anywhere in the world, we must show restraint for the benefit of the country.

Afghanistan held off Russian forces for a year before Russia finally pulled out. They may prove to be a formidable foe. Whether or not Afghanistan has a tough military, the media should not do anything that would help the Afghan army in any way.

Reporters that travel with combat units make for a security risk. All reporters are looking for the best scoop, and in that search, they may compromise the security of orders. Our soldiers should not feel compelled in any way to have to protect civilians, but rather should keep their mind on their orders and their enemy. By having civilians there, our soldiers may be distracted or divert from orders to protect the reporters' lives.

The military also has what is called combat camera. Those soldiers that are in combat camera are field trained and can fight if the situation arises. By utilizing combat camera soldiers, we would be assured that no secure information would be released, and the Afghan army would not be able to get intelligence updates from television news stations.

Our number one priority in this upcoming conflict is to win the war of terrorism, while saving as many American lives as possible. This will only be possible with the full cooperation of all Americans — especially the media.

Thomas Campbell is a senior agricultural journalism major.

## THE MEDIA WAR

## The public must be updated on tactics

Though it may seem ugly, America once again finds itself faced with an impending war. Some, including Secretary of State Colin Powell, would deny the American public any overseas civilian media coverage of this war, claiming that this coverage would only compromise national security. But in reality, a decision to deny civilian reporters the right to deliver the news only compromises the United States' freedom of press, thereby stripping all Americans of their First Amendment right.

Because of the potential loss of American life involved, no one is happy with the possibility of a new war. But as this possibility becomes a reality, the American public is entitled to witness the day-to-day developments of this war from the front lines.

A war waged against the American people requires that the American people themselves know what they are facing, whether at home or abroad. Just as soldiers must man their posts, reporters, too, have obligations to the public during these trying times. Their duty is to relay the news, and this duty becomes increasingly more important in times of war. Every citizen now has a responsibility to his country; reporters must not be stopped from fulfilling theirs.

Critics of civilian war coverage will argue that it can potentially divulge soldier locations and military maneuvers to opposing forces.

But for those who do not remember, the war in the Persian Gulf was a decisive American victory. No amount of media coverage in the world could have saved Iraq; the fact is, news coverage did not play a significant role.

Ultimately, warfare is waged on both physical and mental fronts. If terrorist forces are allowed to dictate U.S. media involvement, the global community will see America as intimidated and the United States will lose much of its psychological edge. No matter the circumstances, outsiders cannot be allowed to control this country's actions in any way, whether they are military or media related.

Admittedly, if the American news were to somehow divulge sensitive military maneuvers or battle strategies to the Afghans, it could present a problem. But civilian reporters should nonetheless be allowed to accompany soldiers with the understanding that they, for the safety of their country, will not report militarily sensitive information of any kind. The government has no legitimate reason to remove the media from the picture entirely.

The potential for overseas news coverage of "Operation Infinite Justice" may already be looking bad. The Taliban, the ruling Afghan government, has told CNN to leave Afghanistan, and it looks as if much of the U.S. reporting there will be done illegally. If civilian news crews are allowed to accompany U.S. soldiers, they have a much more realistic chance of not only reporting the news, but also survival.

The Taliban has also taken steps to ban the Internet in Afghanistan, as they consider it "wrong, obscene, immoral and against Islam," according to Foreign Minister Maulvi Wakil Ahmad Mutawakil. A war-torn nation such as Afghanistan does little to embrace technology. They do not stand to gain any significant wartime advantage from the U.S. media.

Whether the coverage is extensive or limited, the American media has an obligation to history to capture this country's new war. Terrorism has done enough to infringe on the rights of Americans, the government cannot be allowed to do the same.

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THOMAS CAMPBELL



GEORGE DEUTSCH



RUBEN DELUNA • THE BATTALION

### Corps overreacts

In response to the comic strip on Monday Sept. 24th. I seem to have misunderstood the point of a comic strip. For a while I thought it was intended to be taken light-heartedly and with a laugh, yet the Corps has once again taken it to far. I was under the impression that the comic would have only taken a hit at the Trigon and/or the military personnel who called for Bravos to be worn by the

### Cadets on game day

This was not a hit on their patriotism just a joke about how their khaki uniforms looked mixed in with a sea of blue. If the Cadets had an issue with people commenting on how they looked they should not have. Everyone on campus knows that they have to wear their uniforms everyday and that they take pride in that, so why even let some comic strip offend you about not matching the rest of the students at the game. And as for the many

### Americans who have died

for our country and our flag, they did it not only for themselves, but also for those whose opinions differed from their own, so think twice before throwing their legacy into the Battalion's face. Camille Munoz Class of 2003

### dozen other Aggies here

in California and was stricken with goose bumps every time the cameras panned the crowd. The Red White and Blue Out at Kyle Field was truly remarkable. As always, the 12th Man finds a unique way to show its spirit. You reminded me why I'm so proud to be an Aggie, and even prouder to be an American. Kathy Clarke Class of 1995

### MAIL CALL

### Aggie show their true colors

I watched the game with a

### CARTOON OF THE DAY



THE UN-CARTOONIST ©