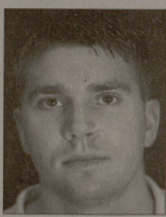


OPINION

OVERCOMING AIDS IN AFRICA

Bush administration's AIDS relief package to Africa is money well spent

President George W. Bush outlined the "Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief" in his State of the Union Address on Jan. 28. The plan was applauded by nearly all, though some argued that it does too little; others, that it is misdirected insofar as the money, some \$15 billion during the next five years, should be used for programs within the United States. While the former argument is best left to international AIDS experts and organizations, the latter argument suggests either ignorance of or disdain for the values, privileges and responsibilities on which America was founded and from which it has matured.



MICHAEL WARD

to mothers with HIV, suffer the most. Not only do they have a 30 percent chance of becoming infected, according to the United Nations, but they will likely be orphaned by their parents' death from the very illness they carry but do not understand.

While many would argue to the contrary, the United States has tried to accept the role of protecting the world. America is peerless with respect to influence, power and prosperity; it is precisely because of this that the country must act now to help the poor and destitute in the world. No crisis poses such a threat to human dignity as the crisis of AIDS in Africa. America cannot turn its head to the silent screams of the dying.

"Our Founders," Bush reminded Americans in his address, "dedicated this country to the cause of human dignity — the rights of every person and the possibilities of every life. This conviction leads us into the world to help the afflicted, and defend the peace, and confound the designs of evil men."

"Mungate is not alone. He is like three million other children under the age of 15, and 30 million Africans total, who writhe and die silently..."

America's richness and prosperity is both a blessing and an imperative. That the United States has both a right and an obligation, for instance, to remove regimes whose continuance of power is a threat to Americans is necessarily coupled with the responsibility and duty to help those who are weak and void of hope.

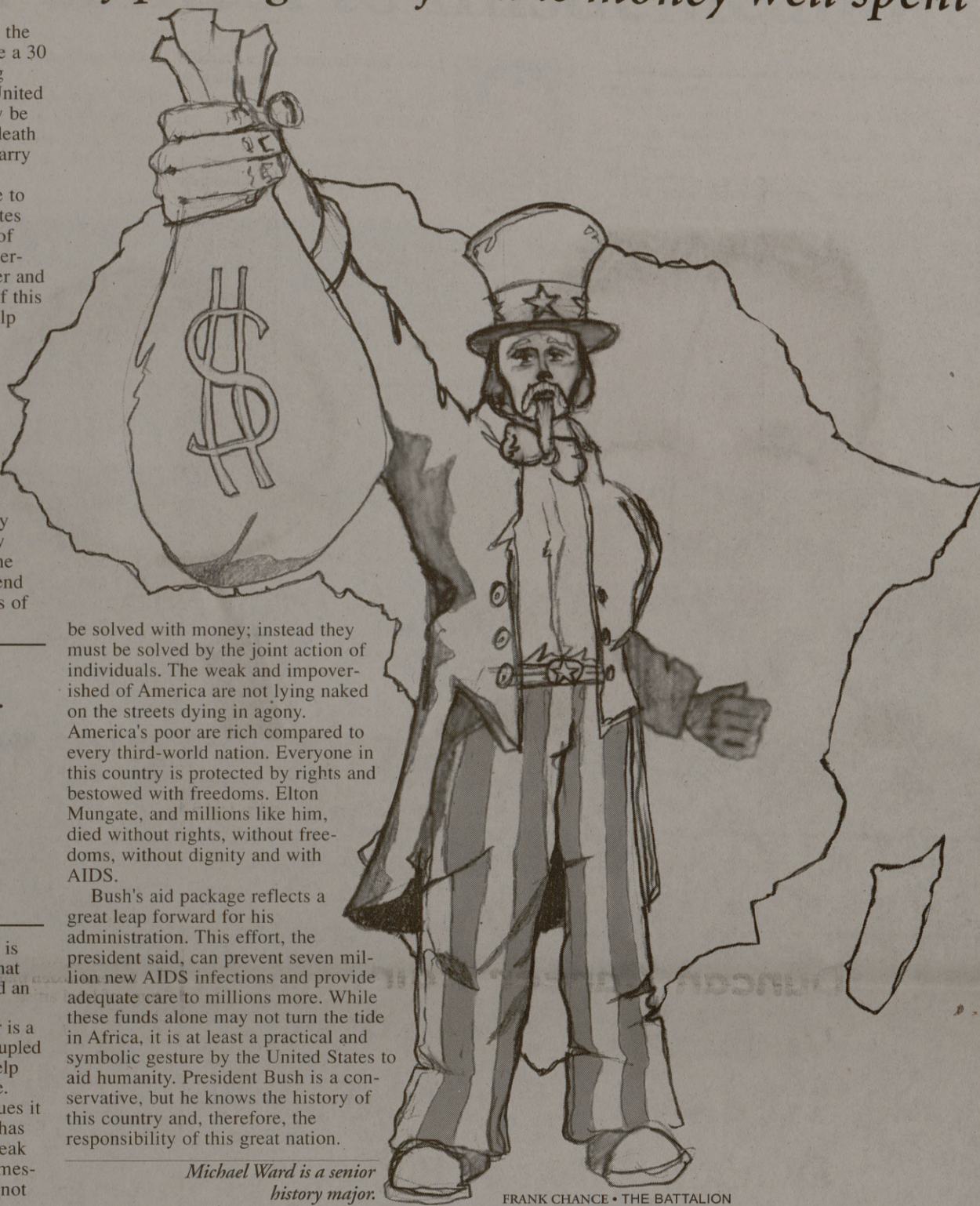
Does America have domestic issues it must deal with? Yes. America, too, has people inside its borders who are weak and impoverished. However, the domestic problems that America faces cannot

be solved with money; instead they must be solved by the joint action of individuals. The weak and impoverished of America are not lying naked on the streets dying in agony. America's poor are rich compared to every third-world nation. Everyone in this country is protected by rights and bestowed with freedoms. Elton Mungate, and millions like him, died without rights, without freedoms, without dignity and with AIDS.

Bush's aid package reflects a great leap forward for his administration. This effort, the president said, can prevent seven million new AIDS infections and provide adequate care to millions more. While these funds alone may not turn the tide in Africa, it is at least a practical and symbolic gesture by the United States to aid humanity. President Bush is a conservative, but he knows the history of this country and, therefore, the responsibility of this great nation.

Michael Ward is a senior history major.

FRANK CHANCE • THE BATTALION



CRAIG LITTEK • KRT CAMPUS
ident Kelsey Fowler fills in
that reads "Make Love not
ly in a park on Saturday in

Protesting against
war on Iraq

hundreds of thousands of people
in Saturday in cities around the
world protested against military
action against Iraq.

general crowd estimates
in Saturday

ome	1 million
ondon	750,000
adrid, Spain	660,000
erlin	300,000-500,000
aris	100,000
ublin, Ireland	80,000
msterdam, Netherlands	70,000
lo, Norway	60,000
ville, Spain	60,000
ussels, Belgium	50,000
ern, Switzerland	40,000
ockholm, Sweden	35,000
lasgow, Scotland	30,000
openhagen, Denmark	25,000
ontreal	20,000
ronto	15,000
enna, Austria	15,000
ulouse, France	10,000
apetown, South Africa	5,000
kyo	5,000
hannesburg, South Africa	4,000
ca, Bangladesh	2,000
ev, Ukraine	2,000
Aviv, Israel	2,000

SOURCE: Associated Press

Military academies need affirmative action

History of military discrimination and need to boost morale encourages diversity

In a time when affirmative action programs are under fire from the public and the Bush administration, there is one group of schools that admits to proactive minority recruitment and has not become a target of public scrutiny. The United States Military Academy at West Point Va., the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., and the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo. admit to actively targeting minority students for recruitment into the academies and West Point openly says that it wants black students to make up 10-12 percent of the class, according to The New York Times.



BRIANNE PORTER

While many would see this as a direct contradiction to the Bush administration's stance on affirmative action policies, this is not the case. The military academies need to have affirmative action policies for reasons that differ from other admissions policies.

One of the first reasons the military academies need these programs is the history of discrimination in the military. For most of American military history, there were no minority officers unless they were part of segregated units. Once the military integrated, there were still numerous problems with continued discrimination for the promotion of minority officers. According to an article in The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Secretary of State Colin Powell was overlooked for a promotion to brigadier general. Clifford Alexander, then secretary of the Army, held up the promotions list and ordered the General Officer Board to take a second look for black officers unfairly passed over. The list included Powell's name the second time, as well as other black colonels. Without Alexander's affirmative effort, Powell's career may have stalled.

It is this type of history that the military academies have to actively work to correct. While the military has come a long way in correcting past discrimination, the problem is still visible in the service academies.

Another goal of the service academies is to create an integrated officers corps. According to a New York Times article, the military argument is that with racial minorities making up from 28 percent of the enlisted personnel in the Air Force to 44 percent in the Army, mostly all-white ranks of officers would hurt morale. The difference between universities and colleges having affirmative action programs and the service academies having the programs is a matter of national security. Morale and strong leadership are important in the military, especially as we edge closer to war with Iraq. A disgruntled military personnel member is a dangerous proposition when it comes to the safety of the nation. These men and women are putting their lives on the line to protect the nation and if there is antagonism between them and the officer corps because of racial differences, it could be disastrous. According to The Boston Globe, military leaders have long stressed the importance of having the armed services reflect the diversity of the country they protect.

Service academies don't accept anyone who does not meet strenuous physical and academic standards. If an applicant doesn't meet the standards, the academy has the option to send them to a one-year prep school to give the student an opportunity to meet the requirements. Naval Academy Dean of Admissions Dave Vetter told The New York Times, "everybody that receives an offer to the

academy has to be fully qualified, but beyond that, we want a brigade that reflects our country, geographically diverse, we want it to be diverse in other regards, too." The academies do not lessen their standards for minority students. Instead, the academies actively recruit minorities to get them to come.

According to The Boston Globe, director of admissions at West Point Col. Michael L. Jones said, "admissions officials rely on aggressive, targeted recruiting that would increase the number of minority applicants who meet the school's rigorous academic and physical standards." It is not a matter of setting aside a certain number of spots for minority students, but instead it is a goal of increasing the total amount of minority applicants in the admission pool. The academies acknowledge that most of the minority students they seek could usually win full scholarships at private institutions that did not wake them up before dawn or expect them to serve five years of active duty after graduation, according to The New York Times.

While many people are against affirmative action policies for colleges and universities, they need to support the programs at the military service academies. The military's programs are not ones of lower standards, but instead are ones of active and specifically-targeted recruitment to encourage minority students to apply to the academies. It is in the best interest of the military and the nation that the officer corps reflect the diversity of the nation.

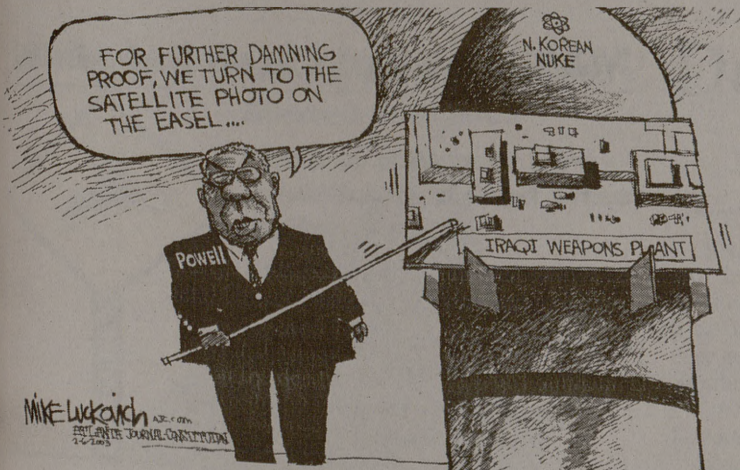
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MAIL CALL

War on drugs claims the lives of innocent

The recent death of 14-year-old Ashley Villareal in San Antonio at the hands of the DEA is indeed a tragedy. It marks a disturbing trend that is but one of the many unfortunate side effects of our government's failed War on Drugs.

Too often, overzealous state and federal agents sidestep the Fourth Amendment and conduct drug raids based on second-hand, unsubstantiated information and without a proper search warrant. Many times these raids end not only with a failure to find any drugs, but also with the commission of gross Constitutional viola-

tions and, worst of all, the injury or death of innocent civilians.

Tony Martinez, 19 and unarmed, was killed by drug taskforce officers during a raid on a mobile home in Del Valle, Texas, in December of 2001. He was sleeping on the couch and wasn't even the target of the raid. In Milwaukee, based on an anonymous tip about "possible drug activity" in a house on her block, police officers burst into the home of Jacqueline Paasch and shot her, causing permanent debilitating injuries. Again, no drugs were found. And Clayton Helriggle, 23, was shot dead as he came down his stairs after police in riot gear raided his Ohio home. They

recovered less than an ounce of marijuana — hardly a reason to shoot and kill an American citizen in his own home.

Our government tells us that buying drugs causes the death of innocent men, women, and children at the hands of terrorists and drug dealers. Lately, however, DEA agents and narcotics officers seem to be the ones doing all the killing. So while the government claims that buying drugs funds terrorism, I guess I can claim that paying federal income taxes funds Constitutional violations and senseless killing by the DEA.

Jon Appgar Class of 1999