

# OPINION

THE BATTALION

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## Saddam has no place to run

### The former Iraqi leader's capture is imminent as he loses places to hide in Iraq

For those who are tired of all the whining surrounding 16 disputed words from President George W. Bush's State of the Union Address regarding uranium purchases, a much larger concern remains: capturing Saddam Hussein.



GEORGE DEUTSCH

Though some may doubt Saddam's intent to buy uranium from Africa or his alleged al-Qaida ties, his cemented place in history as a fallen, evil dictator cannot be denied. But amid post-war fighting and attempts to establish an elected government, will the deposed Saddam ever be captured in Iraq, either alive or dead? Yes, and very soon.

Whether because of his own arrogance or, perhaps more likely, his limited options, Saddam is clearly still inside Iraq, which is where the United States wants him. Various U.S. intelligence sources and numerous audiotapes believed to be from Saddam — the most recent of which hails his two dead sons as martyrs — point to as much. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage said coalition forces have been within hours of capturing Saddam in recent raids and that "most people feel that the noose is tightening pretty regularly around the neck of Saddam Hussein."

After all, every Baath party loyalist, Saddam Fedayeen militia member, criminal and anti-U.S. extremist in Iraq are still not enough to hide Saddam forever. Intelligence officials last week, citing technical and human sources, said Saddam has shaven his trademark mustache and grown a beard. So even simple attempts at disguising himself are in vain, as U.S. intelligence sources know every move Saddam makes almost as soon as he makes it.

The same officials say he is moving around Iraq with automatic weapons, cash and as few as two bodyguards. This doesn't bode well for Saddam's ability to escape coalition forces. Saddam is reportedly sleeping in old bunkers or with friends. With such little outside support and a \$25 million bounty on his head as a part of the State Department's Rewards for Justice program, it's a wonder he hasn't been caught already, although the fact that many Iraqis are still terrified of him may have something to do with it.

Though many Baath party loyalists have been killed or cap-

ured in combat and in raids, it was the \$15 million ransom on Saddam's sons Udai and Qusai's heads that eventually led to their deaths in Mosul on July 22. If the actions of Iraqi businessman Nawaf al-Zeidane — one man acting alone — can result in the fall of two of the regime's biggest pillars of evil, why can't Saddam be captured in the same way? One would assume that even the most ardent anti-American jihadist would have no trouble spending \$25 million in U.S. money, Saddam loyalist or not.

Besides, the old Baath regime is getting lazy, as is evident by its actions. One of Saddam's most trusted bodyguards, Adnan al-Musli, was captured last week in his own home, reportedly drunk. As Maj. Josslyn Aberle of the Army's 4th Infantry Division told USA Today, "When people are on the run, they get tired and start making mistakes."

Clearly, Saddam and the remnants of his Baathist regime are on the run, and continue to make mistakes, each more costly than the last.

The 55 most wanted Iraqis are perhaps not best personified by a deck of playing cards, but instead by a row of dominoes, each one tumbling after the one before.

The Iraqis need more than an elected government and the deaths of Udai and Qusai; they need the capture of Saddam, and that capture is imminent.



George Deutsch is a senior journalism major. Graphic by Seth Freeman

*"The 55 most wanted Iraqis are perhaps not best personified by a deck of playing cards, but instead by a row of dominoes, each one tumbling after the one before."*

## Tobacco lawsuits are a waste of resources

Florida smokers will soon be polluting not only the air around them, but clogging up the legal system that they have been battling since 1996.



SARA FOLEY

The recent incident relates to an April 2000 lawsuit against the nation's five largest tobacco companies that awarded a group of 700,000 smokers \$145 billion in punitive damages. The decision was soon appealed and revoked, according to the Miami Herald. While that decision has been appealed, the likelihood of it being reversed again is highly doubtful.

Now, each of the 700,000 plaintiffs must individually sue the tobacco companies and prove fraud and conspiracy on behalf of the tobacco industry all over again, a process that could stretch out for years, according to the Miami Daily Business Review. What the plaintiffs fail to realize, however, is the legitimacy of the overruling and the difficulties that arise with bringing up so many individual cases.

The years of legal battles have resulted in nothing on either side except a heap of legal bills along with a confused audience. The case was reversed because each smoker's habits, health and medical history were different from the next, and they could not be grouped together and given the same monetary compensation.

Furthermore, the smokers in the suit were not all originally from Florida, making it unfitting for a class action suit, according to the Miami Daily Business Review.

With time and energy already wasted without any financial gain or justice, doubts have risen about when the smokers will going to give up. Understandably, they want the companies to pay for their monetary losses and what the class action lawsuit termed as "deceiving."

Understandable also is the pain that family members may feel with the loss of a loved one to lung cancer or one of the many diseases related to cigarette smoking. However, the

blame shouldn't be placed on the manufactures of the product, or even the advertisers. If that were the case, any alcoholic could claim beer advertisements led him to drinking. The blame should be placed on the 700,000 smokers who

*"The blame should be placed on the 700,000 smokers who became aware of the dangers of smoking in the 1960s and still continued to smoke."*

became aware of the dangers of smoking in the 1960s and still continued to smoke. While it was clearly proven in court cases

around the country that cigarette smoking is addictive and tobacco companies knew, that doesn't excuse the various individuals who knew of the dangers and didn't have the discipline to quit.

While the families may want to blame Big Tobacco for the loss of health or lives, they should blame themselves for not persistently urging their family member to quit smoking. Monetary compensation will not undo their mistakes.

If the plaintiffs are truly concerned about the smokers of tomorrow, they should seek to end smoking or petition to change the method of advertising. Gaining money for their own mistakes doesn't serve any purpose aside from their own greed.

Sara Foley is a junior journalism major.

### MAIL CALL

#### Cutting Dairy Center and journalism good decisions for the University

In response to Matt Maddox's July 30 column:

Although I normally share some of the opinions expressed by Mr. Maddox, I am saddened by his attack on the way money is spent on this campus. First, as sad as the spending may be, this campus does have the right to spend the money where it chooses to. We may not like it but that's the way it goes. As far as what the money is spent on, that's where the debate begins.

Take the Dairy Center, first. I would like to point out to Mr. Maddox that the two top dairy production counties in the state are at least three hours away from TAMU. Why would I, if I was a dairy science major, go to a school that is not where most of the dairy business is located? And even with current trends, the dairy industry is moving farther west into the Panhandle and Eastern New Mexico, placing TAMU farther away. Why waste money on a system that is not located anywhere near the center of business in this state?

Now take the journalism department. First, I am saddened at the many and countless mistakes made by this newspaper. I don't know how many times I see a retraction or a correction or a mistake in here. Second, as with the Dairy Center, why put more money into a program that is light years behind that of University of North Texas or University of Texas-Austin? They are much closer to major newspapers and television outlets. We are not. We are some distance away from Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, Austin or San Antonio.

Mr. Maddox, no one school can be good at producing everything. One, at any school, especially this one, must learn that

TAMU can not have everything its way. Maybe take off the pride and look at this from an outsider's view. TAMU doesn't have to be the best at everything it does. Others have realized it, why don't you? Then you wouldn't have to make this place a Mayberry all by yourself.

Randy Jackson  
Senior

#### Alcohol practices protect store employees

In response to Mike Walters' July 31 column:

While the points made in the July 31 opinion about alcohol discrimination do offer validity to his point of "inconvenience", I would like to encourage Mr. Walters to look at the vendors' side of the argument. According to Texas law, establishments are not required to accept out-of-state identification for alcohol sales; the sale to an out-of-state ID is at the discretion of not only the establishment, but also the employee. This is simply because any out-of-state student can go to the local Department of Motor Vehicles, spend \$10, and obtain a Texas identification card while retaining his native driver's license.

Secondly, there is no "common sense" to the idea that Kroger needs fewer restrictions on alcohol sales than may the Dixie Chicken. The penalties for the employee are very much the same. Whereas the fine for a first MIP is no more than \$500, the sale of alcohol to a minor is a Class A misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of up to \$4,000, jail time and the loss of the employee's job. There is quite a large discrepancy in these penalties.

The responsibility of curbing underage alcohol consumption does not lie solely with the minor; a significant amount has to do with the

establishments that sell them as well. For as much "inconvenience" this causes you to go to another store or bar, I think that any grocery store will tell you that they would rather have you buy your case of beer at another store than risk their employees being carted off to jail.

Allison Lothman  
Senior



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