

# OPINION

THE BATTALION

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## Next stop, Tehran

### U.S. must take definitive steps to eliminate Iran's nuclear weapons programs

Halloween could be a lot scarier this year, thanks to the Axis of Evil's latest antics. North Korea is playing "trick-or-treat" with the rest of the world, declaring it will continue to pursue a possible operational nuclear weapons program unless the United States agrees to give it economic aid and diplomatic ties. But while dictator Kim Jong-Il has been keeping the world on its toes in Asia, terror-sponsor Iran's interest in spilling blood through the splitting of the atom may be the bigger threat at the moment.

Earlier this year, U.N. inspectors discovered weapons-grade uranium particles at an Iranian power plant supposedly producing only low-grade uranium. Last week, the International Atomic Energy Agency found small quantities of weapons-grade uranium during one of its own inspections. Accordingly, the IAEA has given Iran an Oct. 31 deadline to account for its atomic program and to cease uranium enrichment immediately.

Iran's stance on the matter is anything but friendly. Iranian foreign ministry representative Hamid Reza Asef told the world last week "renouncing nuclear technology or enrichment is not something that Iran will accept a compromise on." One of its top military officials, Gen. Mohammad Ali Jafari, warned that any attack by the United States and Israel against its nuclear installations would be considered a declaration of war and merit an appropriate response.

One wonders what such a response would entail, and why Iran would be so hostile if its nuclear intentions are truly good. Iran's record includes its former leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, calling the

United States "the great Satan," detaining American hostages for 444 days in 1979. In 2000 it still offered no defense when the hostage survivors sued the Iranian government.

Iran's defense on recent nuclear allegations has proven to be just as impotent. Iran officials claim the uranium discovered last September isn't theirs: it was imported along with some equipment they purchased from another country, which they refused to name. Thomas Cochran, a member of the

Institute for Science and International Security, said it is unlikely that Iran would not have checked any used equipment for contamination, especially considering the nature of the contamination. Iran's "explanation" carries the weight of

a 5-year-old's denial of wrongdoing with his hand still in the cookie jar.

The existence of an Iranian atomic program is ridiculous to begin with. The country claims to be interested in nuclear power to ease supposed worries about its oil-dependent power stations, despite the fact that OPEC reports put Iran as the country with the third largest oil reserves in the world.

Iran's excuses — and the entire situation — is ridiculous. Iran's pro-terrorism and anti-American stance is clearer than ever. On Sept. 22, Iranians paraded ballistic missiles through their streets painted with slogans such as "We will crush America under our feet."

reason to believe it wouldn't use them against the United States given the chance. To promote the safety of America, the government must recognize and eliminate the threat Iran poses before the situation gets worse. Hossein Khomeini, great-grandson of the Ayatollah, has recently spoken out against the Iranian government, calling upon the United States to establish a democracy in his country.

The Iranian government, with its intolerance of student-led freedom movements, has answered such uprisings with slaughter and imprisonment. By ruling according to the inhumane Sharia law, Iran is slated to execute an Iranian woman for murdering her attempted rapist. "Even if the situation necessitates for the United States to take military action in Iran," Khomeini said, "they should not hesitate."

An invasion of Iran would solve the problem of the country's nuclear ambitions, eliminate another member of the Axis of Evil and give Iraqi guerrillas one less sponsor in their daily attacks against U.S. troops.

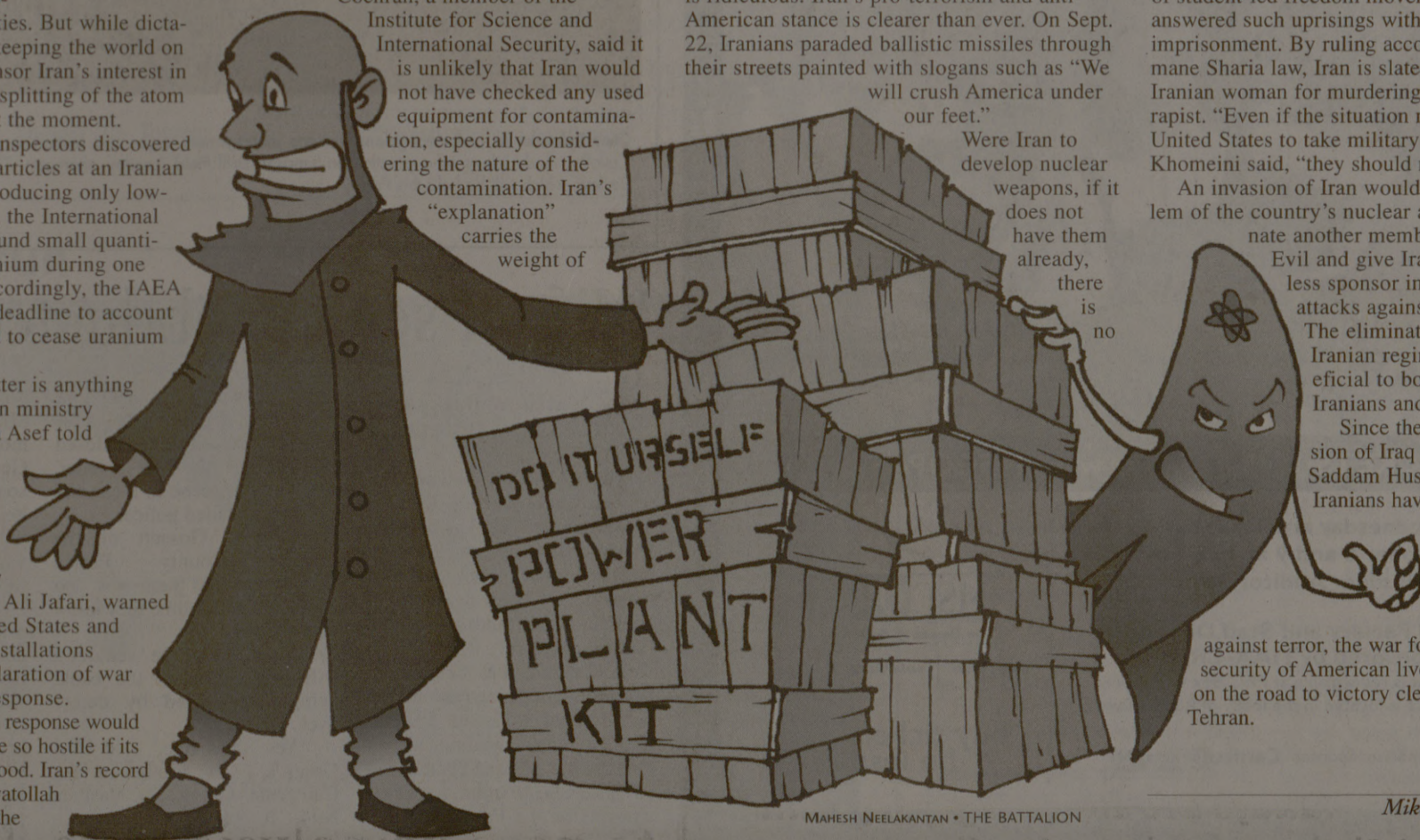
The elimination of the current Iranian regime is clearly beneficial to both oppressed Iranians and Americans.

Since the successful invasion of Iraq that overthrew Saddam Hussein, oppressed Iranians have been calling out for the United States to help them shrug off their own evil.

In America's war against terror, the war for the safety and security of American lives, the next step on the road to victory clearly runs through Tehran.



MIKE WALTERS



MAHESH NEELAKANTAN • THE BATTALION

Mike Walters is a senior psychology major.

## U.N. pullout from Iraq puts region's stability at risk

Postwar Iraq has become a dangerous place, with pro-Saddam forces determined to stop the formation of a new government using violence to achieve their ends. U.S. soldiers are not the only ones in the line of fire. Shiite clerics, members of the U.S.-appointed administration and anyone who might be associated with restoring or preserving order in Iraq are targets.

These targets include U.N. staffers, as shown by the recent bombing of the U.N. Baghdad headquarters. The attack killed 22 international staffers, including Sergio Vieira del Mello, the U.N. high commissioner for human rights. Now, the United Nations has decided that it should pull out its remaining staffers.

The removal of staffers would harm the future stability of Iraq and the possibility of the United States and the United Nations reaching an agreement about increased international involvement in Iraq.

The United Nations seems to be succumbing to pressure from its employees' union and a desire to see the United States fail in this decision. According to the International Herald Tribune, at one time there were roughly 600 U.N. international personnel in Iraq. That number has fallen to 86.

The decision by the United Nations to withdraw its staff to Damascus, Syria, was influenced by the U.N. Staff Union, according to the IHT. The U.N. Staff Union was quoted in a statement asking "How much more can our staff take in Iraq?"

The concern of the union for its constituents is commendable. But it fails to realize that to leave Iraq will only make things worse and harm the United Nations as well.

Removing the staffers will only make the problems faced by the United Nations in Iraq even bigger.

On top of having to venture out in a dangerous environment, the replacement Iraqi staff will lack the experience and skills of the missing international staffers, harming U.N. operations in Iraq. Many Iraqis, according to the BBC, rely heavily upon the services and materials provided by the United Nations.

Although the U.N. Staff Union must protect its workers, its constituents do assume some risk in choosing their profession. Agreeing to go into the field or the United Nations in a possible war zone includes the risk of being killed or wounded in their line of work.

Although U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan is upset with the United States for going at it alone in Iraq, this is not the way to show his displeasure.

However, this is exactly what he seems to be doing. As far as he is concerned, the U.S. invasion lacked legitimacy because it was not sanctioned by the United Nations. In a news story from the BBC, Annan said, "in the international arena there is no substitute for such legitimacy" with regards to international law, as interpreted by the United Nations.

Annan has a right to disagree with the United States, but if he

values the fair and positive light in which the United Nations is seen in many countries, he may wish to rethink the staff pullout.

According to the BBC, Hoshyar Zebari, the minister of foreign affairs for the provisional government, said the U.N.'s move was "playing into the hands of terrorists." By driving out one of the primary stabilizing forces in Iraq, the anti-American forces hope to drive the country further into chaos and eventually mobilize the average Iraqi against the United States in particular, and the West in general.

By leaving Iraq, the United Nations is abandoning the civilians who depend upon it, and making the United States' job there more difficult. This might satisfy Annan's desire to spite the United States but will likely make an already intransigent Bush administration less likely to deal with the United Nations or other countries in giving them expanded roles in Iraq.

Annan and the United Nations should rethink their decision. Although the safety of their staff is an important consideration, the legitimacy of the United Nations as a reliable neutral looking out for the interests of people like those in Iraq must be preserved as well.

David Shoemaker is a junior management major.



DAVID SHOEMAKER

### MAIL CALL

#### Classless behavior at Midnight Yell

I'm currently a freshman at Texas Tech. Friday night I went over to the Buddy Holly statue to experience Midnight Yell with the Aggies. I noticed two things during my visit: an enormous amount of pride that the Aggies display for their school and classless behavior portrayed by my fellow Red Raiders.

A large group of Red Raiders came to "crash" the Midnight Yell for the Aggies. Not only did they disgrace our school, they disgraced our athletic program and most importantly their parents. If that couldn't be enough, the cops had to make an arrest. Rude hand gestures and crude behavior made me ashamed to associate myself with the school I'm currently attending. What happened to

being "good sports?" After the display that I witnessed by my fellow classmates on Friday night, it makes me even more thankful that my time at Tech will be short before I go on to join a school full of class.

To the Aggies I say, not only did you bring your pride for your school with you, you also brought good sportsmanship and Texas hospitality as well. I look forward to being part of your family soon.

Justin Garrison  
Texas Tech student

#### Companies need to make profits

In response to Jonathan Steed's Oct. 3 column:

I find it amazing that you would think that successful

companies that invest money in countries do so out of altruistic reasons. To be successful, meaning profitable, for the company and thereby its stockholders, they make decisions to produce their product as efficiently as possible. This does not include charitable ideas of helping the poor in socialist countries.

But a corollary of these businesses investing in these countries is the fact that the country is no longer as poor as it was. The people now have a choice to work for a living or die a slow starving death in whatever fields they plow. I suggest you consider how much damage your ideas have brought to those poor countries.

Mr. Steed's kind of altruism ruined many businesses in the 1980s and has taken many lives in the countries their lower wages were supporting. Same applies here: they raise

wages and they lose a reason to invest there. Their poor country stays poor, and good ol' socialism can tramp on them a little more.

Keenan Nichols  
Class of 2004

#### Reporting too late

In response to Lauren Smith's Oct. 3 article:

I was disappointed to see The Battalion print the story about the passing of Virgil Dabney last Friday. I am disappointed because The Associated Press filed that story on Tuesday and The Battalion failed to print it until three days later, after his funeral services had taken place. What about those who would have wanted to attend his services?

I have found this very type of

Noel Freeman  
Class of 2003

#### Sportswriter owes A&M an apology

In response to Dallas Shipp's Oct. 6 column:

We feel that Dallas Shipp was out of line in his reference that compared the Texas A&M defense to the heroic USS Arizona at Pearl Harbor. This article is an unjustified, as well as unnecessary slandering of Texas

A&M and its traditions. We feel an apology is due to both the heroic soldiers of the USS Arizona and the students of this fine University who faithfully believe in and will follow its traditions without question.

Brian Reeves  
Class of 2007  
Travis Book  
Class of 2007

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor. Letters must be 200 words or less and include the author's name, class and phone number. The opinion editor reserves the right to edit letters for length, style and accuracy. Letters may be submitted in person at 014 Reed McDonald with a valid student ID. Letters also may be mailed to: 014 Reed McDonald, MS 1111, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843-1111. Fax: (979) 845-2647 Email: mailcall@thebattalion.net