

OPINION

THE BATTALION

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Where did the jobs go?

Americans cannot accept the outsourcing of domestic work to foreign countries

In the 1990s Americans saw some of the greatest economic prosperity in U.S. history. The influx of new computer and communications technology, combined with the pro-growth economic policies of former President Clinton, created more than 22 million domestic jobs. The nation experienced record job expansion, stable growth in the stock market and the first budget surplus in decades.



JONATHAN STEED

Unfortunately, those times of prosperity have changed, partly due to the enormous amount of outsourcing of domestic jobs overseas.

Nearly three million jobs have been lost since President George W. Bush took office. Many of the jobs that have disappeared are manufacturing jobs throughout the Midwest and in the heartland, where corporate fat cats seek to increase the size of their wallets by shipping good-paying industrial jobs to nations where they can hire cheap labor and avoid environmental regulations. Many of these corporate executives are some of the largest contributors to both the Republican Party and Bush's re-election campaign. Thus, it is no surprise that N. Gregory Mankiw, chairman of Bush's council of economic advisers, said in a recent economic report that outsourcing was good for the American economy.

Mankiw and Bush are out of touch with American workers, especially those who have lost their jobs due to outsourcing. According to salon.com, many of the jobs being sent overseas aren't just in manufacturing but are white-collar service sector jobs as well. For example, if a person calls a customer-assistance help line for instructions on how to use a new computer, there is a good chance the representative one is talking to is in India or Thailand. Many of the types of jobs economists hoped would replace the disappearing domestic manufacturing jobs are being shipped overseas. This poses a serious threat to long-term economic growth in the United States.

The combination of manufacturing and service-related jobs being outsourced and sent overseas is having a devastating impact on the U.S. economy. For instance, citizens in Ohio have lost 192,000 jobs since Bush took office. Nearly one-fourth of those were due to outsourcing. When a person loses a job, their abil-

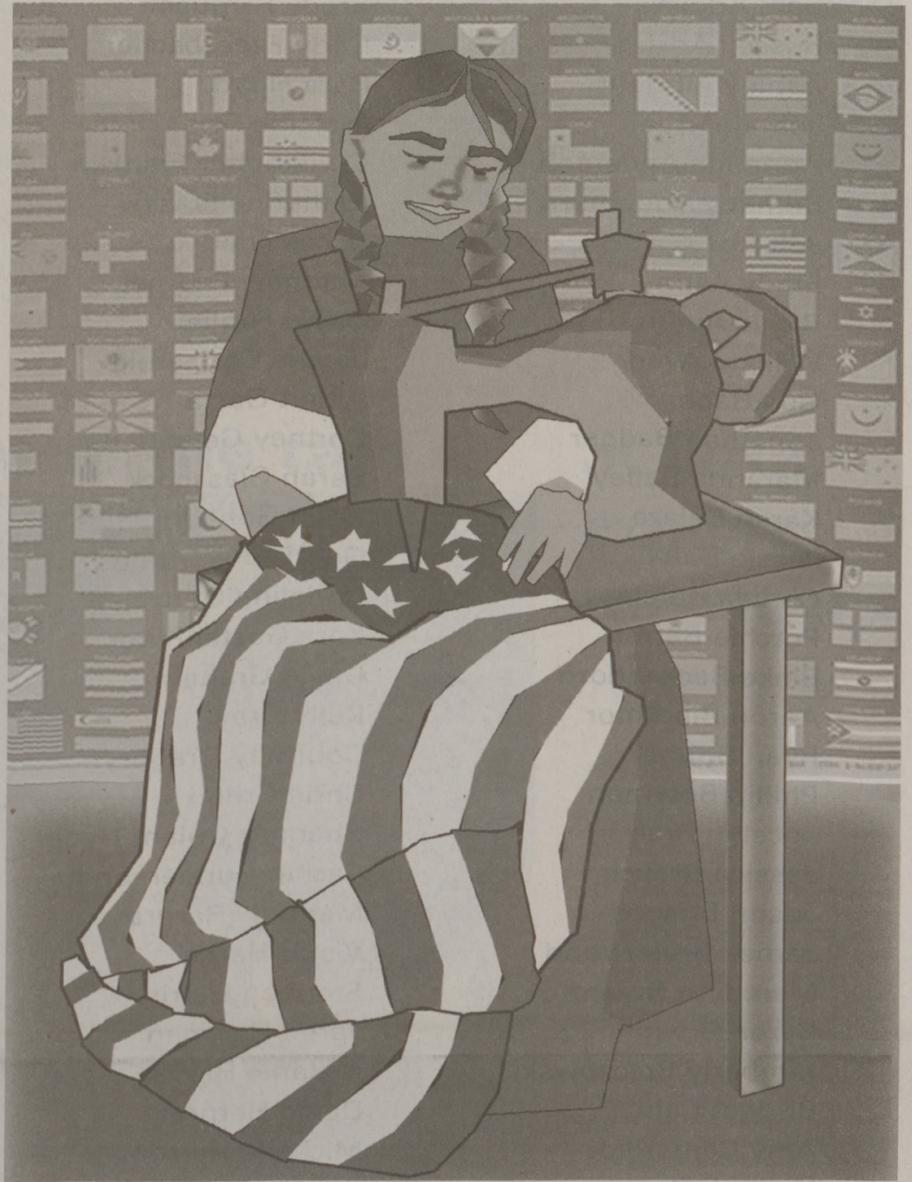
ity to purchase goods and services is diminished substantially, which reduces total demand in the economy. Furthermore, without incomes, citizens pay less taxes, causing a reduction in the tax base needed to fund various government programs and services. The loss of more than three million jobs, combined with Bush's irresponsible tax cuts that disproportionately benefit the wealthy, has created a record budget deficit as well. It is no surprise that the loss of American jobs, many due to outsourcing, is wreaking havoc on our economy and way of life.

The United States is no longer the only nation in the world that has a substantially educated workforce. Countries such as China and India now have substantial amounts of educated citizens eager to find work. They are willing and able to work for a fraction of the wages U.S. citizens do. Without any real protections and laws preventing jobs from being outsourced overseas, corporate executives have no reason to keep jobs here in America. If they can make huge profits at the expense of dedicated employees and workers, they will more than likely take advantage of the cheap labor and educated workforces abroad.

The American worker can take steps necessary to preventing the rise of outsourcing. For starters, workers must not shy away from organizing unions to create substantial collective bargaining powers that will give them a voice with their employers. As the nation recently saw with supermarket workers on strike and a lockout in southern California, organized labor still has great power and influence in protecting American jobs.

Additionally, workers must vote for officials who will look out for them and their jobs and not protect the corporate executives who dig deep into their pockets to fund the campaigns of Bush and his friends. Having elected officials on the side of ordinary Americans who work hard and play by the rules is perhaps one of the best assets a factory worker or engineer can have in preventing his job from going overseas. Until Americans wake up and understand the threat that outsourcing has on their livelihood, and until they take action to prevent the hemorrhaging of domestic jobs overseas, this unfortunate trend will continue.

Jonathan Steed is a senior political science major. Graphic by Gracie Arenas



Church must re-evaluate zero tolerance policy

Since January 2002, nearly 700 Catholic priests accused of sexually assaulting children have been removed from churches in accordance with U.S. bishops' zero-tolerance policy. However, a recent report issued by the Vatican makes the dangerous contention that this policy is more conducive to furthering abuse by distancing sex offenders from the church and releasing them unsupervised into society.

The report insists that a policy of zero tolerance is an overreaction, when evidence shows that, if anything, zero tolerance "has barely been enacted, and it has been very sporadically enforced," David Clohessy, a leading advocate for abuse victims, told The New York Times. To relax the policy further would sanction keeping pedophile priests in positions of moral authority, a situation inexcusably dangerous for potential victims.

The Vatican report, "Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church: Scientific and Legal Perspectives," condemns zero tolerance as an "abdication of responsibility" by the church, according to The Los Angeles Times. However, the church's role is to provide religious teaching, not criminal punishment or rehabilitation.

Employing sex offenders as moral leaders is contrary to the purpose of the church; the responsibility of disciplining these monsters rightly belongs to law enforcement and criminal justice officers. Keeping child molesters closer to God by keeping them in the parishes puts the people to whom the church ministers at risk. Rather than endangering congregations, bishops should relinquish disciplinary and rehabilitation therapy to the courts.



LINDSAY ORMAN

This is an appropriate transference of responsibility, not an abdication.

The real "abdication of responsibility" being committed by the church is in allowing bishops to turn a blind eye to offenses.

While defending the zero-tolerance policy of the American Catholic Church, Bishop Wilton D. Gregory, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, assured the public that "known offenders are not in ministry. The terrible history recorded here today is history." However, the network of abuse victims was quick to point out that nine bishops who were reported abusers were allowed to continue actively in ministry, and some were even permitted to stay in the parishes, according to The New York Times.

Bishops have also shirked the responsibility of publicly releasing removed priests' names as a preventative measure and warning for future neighbors. There is no need for these criminals to be released anonymously into society, which is one of the main complaints against zero tolerance. Proper public notification of criminal history provides a more suitable remedy for promoting a safe society than allowing sex offenders to remain in the society of the church does.

The statistics supply staggering evidence for this claim. In a study released by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, the dioceses and religious orders surveyed confessed that 10,667 children had been molested by 4,392 priests between 1950 and 2002. Twenty-seven percent of these crimes included oral sex and 25 percent involved a priest penetrating the child.

Repeat offenders constitute the majority of these crimes, a compelling reason to enforce a policy of zero tolerance if children are to be protected. Twenty-seven percent of all accusations were against a group of only 149 priests, each of whom had at least 10

instances of abuse.

One has trouble understanding how keeping these priests in the ministry curtailed abuse, or how removing them could have been detrimental to society. The church congregation is a segment of society, too.

Although William Marshall, a co-author of the Vatican report, declared that zero tolerance "is certain to have disastrous consequences, including the clergy sex offender committing suicide or re-offending," his concerns are misplaced, because hypothetical victims are given more thought than real abuse survivors.

Evidence from the John Jay study more than confirms the problem of repeat offenders long before zero tolerance was put into place and in instances when zero tolerance was not enforced. Zero tolerance does not cause repeat offenses. Concerning suicide, the death of a sex offender would be tragic as a loss of human life, but if one had to choose, a criminal's self-inflicted death seems a preferable consequence when weighed against the devastating effects that a person would produce by sexually abusing a child. At least in that event, he can no longer be a threat to society.

Though it could stand to be improved, the zero-tolerance policy, cannot be relaxed if integrity, safety and trust are to be found in the relationship between the Catholic Church and its members. Responsibility for the effective implementation of the policy ultimately rests on the bishops. According to the John Jay study, only 14 percent of accused priests were ever reported by their bishops to the police, an alarming abdication of responsibility that can no longer go unpunished.

Lindsay Orman is a senior English major.

MAIL CALL

Hotard models Ag traditions

In response to a March 2 mail call:

Closing Hotard Hall in theory should not lessen the respect for tradition that its residents have, but it will not provide the opportunity for future residents to be as inspired. It is the smallest dorm on campus, which brings a closeness that is not felt in most other dorms. Their enduring dorm unity inspires residents to be more involved with Aggie Tradition, as a whole, than students from larger dorms or those that live off-campus.

There is a night-and-day difference between the atmosphere in the larger modular dorms and the older style dorms such as Hotard. There is no doubt in my mind that older dorms are the reason why tradition has not faded more than it has on Texas A&M's campus.

Removing the unique spirit of Hotard Hall will affect the Aggie Spirit by further sterilizing the uniqueness of A&M's on-campus living experience. It

affects more than just the current residents; it affects the campus as a whole by eliminating Hotard as a center to inspire residents to continue tradition.

Beth Weisinger
Class of 2006

It's manners: Men should treat women with respect

In response to a March 3 mail call:

To word it similarly to what was written in this mail call, it seems that one Aggie in particular needs an obvious lesson in social poise: Men should treat all women with respect, regardless of their so-called beliefs. While I understand his frustration at being asked to stand when there were empty seats available, this kind of selfishness and arrogance is appalling. Last time I checked, it was not only the members of the Corps of Cadets who stand up so that women may have a seat on the bus, nor should they

be the only ones expected to do so. In case you haven't taken a good look around, we are in Texas, where respect and manners are taken seriously, and women around here are very conscious of that. Of course women are as physically able to stand as men, but why be disrespectful and make them? I personally think it is wonderful that the Corps takes pride in its manners, and I am proud that those three members took the time to defend what they believe in. To all you boys out there, take note. Manners and respect are very important to all women, even in something that might seem small to you, like giving up your seat on the bus. To you, Mr. Ford: Good luck getting a date.

Kelly Doan
Class of 2005

High standards OK for players

In response to Matt Rigney's March 2 column:

I do not see how Mr. Rigney can state that Texas

A&M football players shouldn't be considered representatives of the University. Every student who attends A&M is a representative of the University and their actions may reflect positively or negatively on the image of the University.

Football players should be held at an even higher level of responsibility than the average student because they are public figures. Their actions should be scrutinized more closely simply because they are more well-known on campus and in the community. The team bears the insignia of A&M and represents all Aggies. If a member cannot handle the responsibility associated with being a public figure, they should not be on the football team or involved in any highly visible university organization.

To say that football players, who draw thousands to Kyle Field per game, should not be held to a higher standard is just plain ridiculous. They need to set a positive example for the students of this university and need to shine a positive light on Texas A&M in the surrounding community.

Jennifer Herendeen
Graduate student