

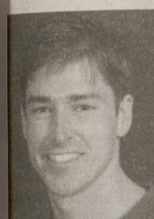
OPINION

THE BATTALION

Page 9 • Wednesday, April 14, 2004

Bring 'em home

Considering the death toll and lack of help from Iraqis, troops should now return



NICHOLAS DAVIS

Phase two of the war in Iraq has begun with Coalition forces fighting the people they were sent to liberate. The war has spread to the south, the west and the north of Baghdad, forcing Coalition troops to move back and forth to quell the opposition. Indeed, this is not how the occupation was supposed

to play out, especially with roughly two months left until Iraq's sovereignty is returned.

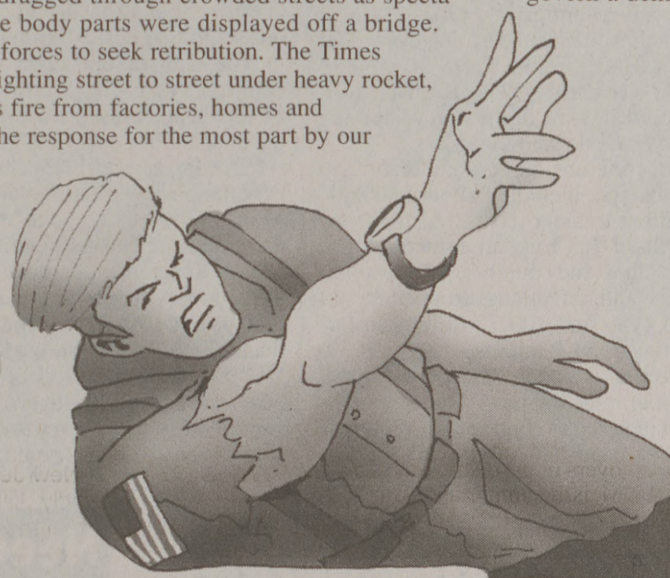
So what's the problem over there? Iraqis do not want to fight for democracy, and American troops are prohibited from doing their job properly. This is unacceptable and if America's military strategy is destined to remain under the clutches of political correctness, the time has come to bring our troops home.

The troops face many obstacles: the enemy is unidentifiable, Iraqi citizens provide no assistance and, similar to Vietnam, policies have taken over the military strategy. As a result, American troops must assume the role of babysitter rather than peacekeeper.

In Fallujah, as reported by The New York Times, "Four private security men were lured into a carefully planned ambush by men they believed to be friendly members of the Iraqi civil defense corps." Subsequently, these security men were burned to death, mutilated and dragged through crowded streets as spectators cheered. Later the body parts were displayed off a bridge.

This led American forces to seek retribution. The Times described troops as "fighting street to street under heavy rocket, mortar and small arms fire from factories, homes and mosques." However, the response for the most part by our forces has been too reserved.

Gen. Abizaid acknowledged the scaled-down retaliation



"... if our military strategy is destined to remain under the clutches of political correctness, the time has come to bring our troops home."

Iraq, capturing the towns his 10,000 militia troops encountered.

Sounds chaotic, right? And even the most naive person can recognize that returning sovereignty to Iraq by June 30 is a pipe dream. If the transfer of sovereignty continues as scheduled it will illuminate one thing: President Bush only has the November elections on his mind.

The Iraqi people are not ready to govern a democratic country. How

tion by stating, "The fact that we have been so judicious in the use of this force should not be lost on anybody. This country will not suffer intimidation by the United States of America."

Perhaps the lack of intimidation is part of the problem.

Soon after the Coalition's response, insurgents kidnapped three Japanese, two Israelis, several South Koreans, a Canadian aid worker and a British citizen to blackmail respective Coalition countries into withdrawing their troops.

Simultaneously, a cleric named Muktada Al-Sadr led a Shiite rebellion across southern

can they be, when the two main factions, Sunnis and Shiites, are not fighting each other, but they are fighting a common enemy, the Coalition?

If the people of Iraq truly wanted democracy, they would aid Coalition forces by identifying perpetrators of resistance, or at the very least vocally condemn the attacks against Coalition troops. None of this is happening.

In fact, in response to the retaliation on Fallujah, angry protests erupted and two senior Iraqi officials of the Iraqi Governing Council resigned because they viewed America's offensive strike on the town as unjust.

Unjust? This is insane. If anything, U.S. troops are being too lenient. This is most likely due to Bush's desire to make the Iraqi resistance appear minimal.

Nevertheless, every day, on average, one soldier dies due to a suicide bomber or a sniper shooting from houses or even mosques.

U.S. troops must be allowed to actually fight to win. If this isn't going to happen, let's call off the occupation and recall the billions of dollars America has pledged to rebuild the nation.

In one week alone Coalition casualties reached 40. No longer can the death of Coalition personnel follow with a half-hearted response. One American soldier equals the lives of countless Iraqi hostiles.

The appropriate response needs a Machiavellian approach. All towns showing signs of rebellion must fall under martial law or face destruction; all hostiles, militia, clerics and sympathizers of insurgents must be eliminated or detained, no questions asked.

The backbone of the Iraqi rebellion must be broken quickly and decisively. Hearts and minds of the Iraqi people will come later, as for now, the troops have a second war to win and they should be allowed to do just that.

Nicholas Davis is a senior political science major. Graphic by Chris Griffin

MAIL CALL

Racial preferences hurt education opportunities

In response to an April 12 mail call:

Kellee Carr demonstrates in her mail call that she should in fact be supporting the Young Conservatives of Texas, rather than opposing our view that racial discrimination in education is wrong.

Carr says that society must address the "root" problem of failing public K-12 education, and only then should we end racial discrimination in college admissions, recruitment and scholarships.

What Carr fails to realize is that as long as racial preferences slap a Band Aid on the problem of unprepared minority students, politicians and parents will never have to fix K-12 education.

Carr should join YCT in our fight to increase K-12 education opportunities through school vouchers, which would give parents the opportunity to move their children away from inadequate schools and put them in the one of their choosing.

I do not think that Carr really believes it when she implies that students who are on the losing end of our administration's race-based policies should simply sit quiet and take it. Rather, she has bought into the idea that no one gets hurt from discrimination against non-minority students.

In reality, no one wins from the immoral and arbitrary programs that judge people on the color of their skin. With regents Mays and Jones stating that race will count in our new admissions policy and President Gates saying the opposite, A&M officials need to come clean with the specific criteria that students will be judged on in admissions.

Hopefully, they will take the moral high ground of equal treatment under the law.

Weston Balch
Young Conservatives of Texas
Class of 2007

Hildebrand blameless in judicial court case

In response to a April 13 news article:

We are deeply disturbed by yesterday's article concerning Jack Hildebrand. It inaccurately reflects our judicial court cases which were against the Election Commission and not Hildebrand.

We did not mean for any blame to be placed on Hildebrand. Furthermore, the judicial court agreed in its opinions and faulted the Election Commission for multiple failures to uphold rules and inappropriate interpretations. It is the practices of the Election Commission, and not Hildebrand's finances, that were called into question.

However, because he was the only student body presidential candidate besides McAdams to proceed to the run-off, his finance report was the only other one audited by the Election Commission and available to use as evidence. These hearings were the culmination of a three-week-long battle with the Election Commission over the regulations and not a response to the election results.

In fact, McAdams announced in judicial court that he would withdraw from the race if Hildebrand was punished. The end result of this process will be the change in the election process that we have been seeking.

We sincerely regret any harm that has come to Mr. Hildebrand through this process and wish him the best of luck as our new student body president.

Aaron Kinsey
Class of 2004

Jonathan Platt
Class of 2004

Artwork better than articles they accompany

In response to an April 13 mail call:

I understand some people may have a problem with the artwork chosen for

The Battalion, but they don't speak for everyone.

Daniel Nieswiadomy says "Aggies... (don't) read The Battalion ... to see a picture of a girl in a skin-tight shirt and low-rise jeans."

I am an Aggie, and Ivan Flores' artwork is one of the primary reasons I read The Battalion. I feel that it is beautiful. I often spend more time staring at it than even at the text it illustrates. I feel that there is nothing offensive or shameful about the female form or even sexually suggestive drawings.

I recognize, however, that not everyone agrees with me. In fact, I commend Mr. Nieswiadomy's drive and effort in expressing his opinion; however, I think it is going a little too far to tell The Battalion to stop showing some pictures because you find them offensive.

I feel that, rather than depriving the Aggies who enjoy Ivan Flores' artwork of some daily enjoyment, that he simply try to ignore them the best he can. No one's forcing him to read The Battalion, after all.

Anthony Giarratano
Class of 2006

Art 'follows in artistic legacy' of others

In response to an April 13 mail call:

Am I to understand at our institute of higher education, where girls can be seen wearing anything from skin-tight jeans to tube tops, there is still someone offended by Mr. Flores' work?

For a gentleman who claims to read The Battalion for "news, sports and crossword puzzles" he seems oddly unoffended by the pictures of girls in our soccer team wearing rather skimpy shorts. Perhaps he missed those during his indignant fainting spell brought on by a sketched abdomen. One must wonder if he's capable of navigating campus in anything but a permanent state of outrage.

Personally, I find Mr. Flores' remarkable talent to insert thin, anime-styled women into virtually every subject

amusing. Surely, in starting every project with the goal of working attractive women into the subject matter, no matter how improbable, Mr. Flores is simply following in the artistic legacy of such notable painters as Art Frahm and Jay Scott Pike.

Matthew Gross
graduate student

More steps toward uniformity needed

In response to an April 13 mail call:

I applaud Charles Holland's mail call about A&M's utter failure to enforce complete uniformity among all students. We suggest this be taken further and all students on campus wear official A&M apparel, perhaps khaki pants and shirts, possibly even requiring incoming freshmen to receive an "official" maroon A&M tattoo. This horrible travesty against University pride must stop immediately, unless we wish to continue disgracing this University with the freedom of expression.

Students attended Texas A&M for the traditions, pride and school spirit. These scandalous students ruin our "most prideful" school spirit. It is a shame that A&M students wear colors like green, red, pink or even orange. They do not have a place on campus.

Scott Phillips,
graduate student

Nathan Robinson
Class 2003

Andy Liddell
Class of 2006

