

Unfounded accusations

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld *not* to blame for actions of a few soldiers

A great lie has permeated the international media — including news agencies here in the United States — and it is a lie that, if left unchecked, threatens to destroy the seeds of democracy America is diligently planting in Iraq. This lie asserts that at the core of the prison abuse scandal in Abu Ghraib lies a structural mandate reaching as high up as Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld to conduct interrogations through psychological torture, humiliation and sexual perversion.



GEORGE DEUTSCH

In reality, nothing could be further from the truth.

By now, the world has been saturated with pictures of prisoner abuse from the Iraqi prison and, yes, these images are troubling and inexcusable. But these pictures represent the actions of a few soldiers and not the wishes of high-ranking military personnel or the secretary of defense. There is simply no proof to support claims that Rumsfeld orchestrated an elaborate plan to interrogate prisoners through torture and humiliation — such an assertion is laughable.

But laughable assertions and liberal politics often go hand in hand and, not surprisingly, this has become a partisan issue, with Democrats doing everything they can to demonize the Bush administration's handling of the Iraq war. Reports issued by the politically-left magazines Newsweek and The New Yorker first accused Rumsfeld of not only knowing about the misconduct, but encouraging it, according to MSNBC. However, these magazines offer up as proof nothing more than hearsay, anonymous sources and the sworn testimony of prisoners of war. In all fairness, the world deserves more justification for these accusations than untraceable sources and the words of alleged terrorists and murderers sworn to fight against the United States. No such justification exists.

Seymour Hersh of The New Yorker, citing an anonymous CIA official last month, said that "the Pentagon's (highly secret) operation ... encouraged physical coercion and sexual humiliation of Iraqi prisoners in an effort generate more intelligence about the growing insurgency in Iraq." People working the problem were to "use aliases." Congress was never to be fully

briefed and there was to be "no traceability and no budget."

But CIA Spokesman Bill Harlow offers up a different account. He said in a statement last month that "the New Yorker story is fundamentally wrong. There was no DOD/CIA program to abuse and humiliate Iraqi prisoners ... I am aware of no CIA official who would or possibly could have confirmed the details of the ... inaccurate account."

Defense Department Spokesman Lawrence Di Rita also denounced the report.

These denials notwithstanding, it is absurd to think that the secretary of defense for the strongest nation in the free world would encourage torturous interrogation tactics in a war his nation was winning and at the possible expense of his political career. Even more absurd is that his well-thought and "highly secretive" plan would involve unskilled military reservists being ordered to pose for staged photographs with

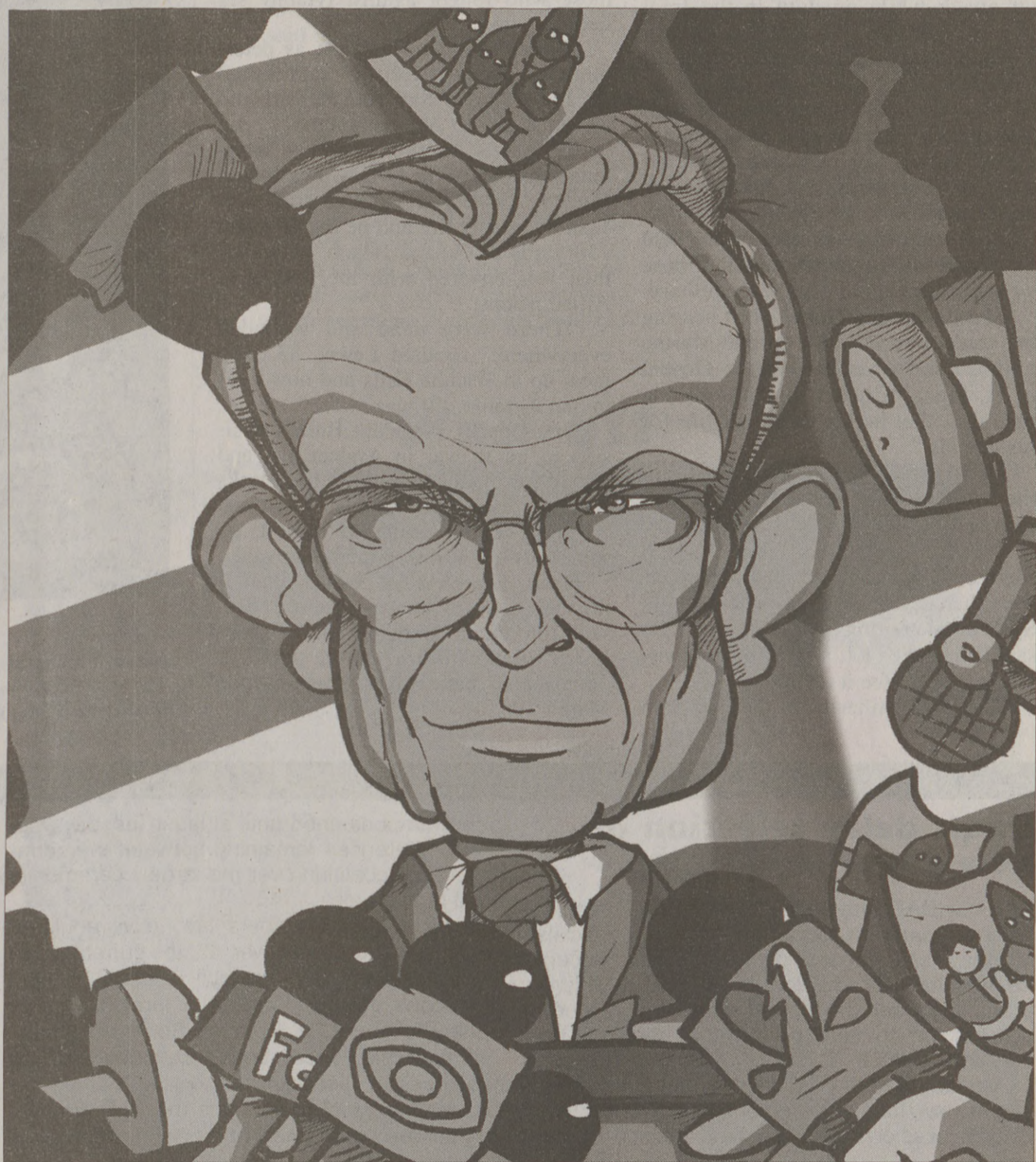
nude Iraqi prisoners. Surely, this nation's defense experts could come up with a better plan of interrogation than that, and all the evidence points to what the Bush administration has been saying all along: these soldiers were acting independently of high-ranking military personnel. So far, the highest-ranking soldier positively implicated in the scandal and the alleged ring-leader is Cpl. Charles Graner.

Sadly, only one Democrat has crossed partisan lines and been vocal in his support of the U.S. response to the scandal. Connecticut Sen. Joe Lieberman said that though U.S. forces have apologized for the Abu Ghraib prison abuse, he has yet to hear any apology for the 3,000 American lives lost on Sept. 11, 2001.

Lieberman is right. America cannot continue to allow political correctness and the increasingly negative opinions of the international community to overshadow the good it is doing in Iraq — building democracy.

The issue, through selective reporting, has taken on a life of its own. For example, the discovery of the chemical agents sarin and mustard gas last month by U.S. forces was largely ignored by the media in spite of the fact that these chemical weapons represent the justification for war the Bush administration has sought

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for so long. Most of the liberal media has shown that it is so bound by partisan ideology that it would rather continue to subvert its own country's war efforts than concede any sort of justification for invading Iraq. This is a shame. The Bush administration has done the right thing by instituting its own investigation into the abuse scandal and fully disclosing what it knows about soldier misconduct. These soldiers must be punished for their crimes, and the U.S. mili-

tary court-martial system will take care of that. The healing has begun, and it is time for all of America to unite and move forward.

George Deutsch is a senior journalism major. Graphic by Will Lloyd

Legislation favoring illegal immigrants unfair to others

Two students sit next to each other in a classroom. One has illegally immigrated from Mexico and the other, although born in Texas, grew up in Louisiana and dreamed of attending Texas A&M his entire life. If you think they are paying different amounts for tuition, you'd be right.



SARA FOLEY

However, many students would be surprised to learn that illegal immigrants are the ones getting the breaks in tuition rates.

Conforming with a growing national trend, laws are being passed around the country that give illegal immigrants the benefit of paying in-state tuition rates, effectively punishing those immigrants who are in the country legally as well as out-of-state residents.

In June of 2001, House Bill 1403 went into effect, allowing illegal immigrants to be considered residents for the purpose of tuition pricing at state schools in Texas. Three years later, Texas is one of eight states that rewards those who break immigration laws, with 16 other states that are considering similar measures.

This policy not only violates common sense, but the Illegal Immigration Reform Law of 1996, which prohibits in-state tuition rates to be given to illegal immigrants if those same rates are not offered to all U.S. citizens. A&M is only one of the many state institutions that discriminates against law-abiding citizens in favor of illegal immigrants who may have only been in the country as few as three years.

On May 20, Kansas became the latest state to hop on the bandwagon.

Kansas' own law, which mirrors HB 1403, will go into effect July 1 and treats illegal immigrants as in-state residents provided they have spent the past three years at a state high school or earned a GED while in Kansas. However, the law doesn't apply to foreign students who are in the state legal-

ly, who will still have to pay out-of-state tuition rates. The application of these laws are more than just an inconsistency within the legal and educational systems but an insult toward those who are law-abiding. These laws are a motivational force for immigrants to take full advantage of American resources without having any legal responsibility.

The law does come with one condition: Those who receive the tuition break must agree to file an application to become a legal citizen at some later point. However, the contract comes without specifications or a deadline, and neither the universities nor the states have a way of following up on the students to ensure they are pursuing citizenship. Instead, the affidavit they must sign is only a weak rationalization on the part of the lawmakers to attempt to rescue the law from the strict scrutiny it deserves.

If the concepts of this law were to be applied across the board, there is no reason other than illegal immigrants could not vote, hold public office or be citizens in everything but name. Unfortunately, legislatures accept these inconsistencies without considering the social and economic consequences.

The law poses disadvantages for more than just those who pay out-of-

state tuition and are angered at illegal immigrants who do not. All collegiate applicants who have played by the rules are now forced to compete with candidates who are not even legal citizens. In effect, these students are not only vying for the spots that could potentially be given to illegal immigrants, but their tax dollars are subsidizing an education for students who have no legal right to be there. During a time when universities struggle with increasingly limited enrollment capacities, a citizen should not lose his spot at any public university in favor of an illegal immigrant, no matter what agenda or quota the immigrant might fulfill.

The universities are losing money too. At A&M, out-of-state students pay \$258 more per credit hour than resident students. For every 10 illegal immigrant students classified as residents who enroll in 14 credit hours each semester, the University loses more than \$72,000 annually. This is an unfair requirement of the government, which first takes state funding away and then in the same breath requires state institutions to charge less for students that logically should be paying a higher rate.

These laws communicate that if someone considers himself a citizen, he should receive the rights of one. However, with those rights come responsibilities and allegiance to a government that only citizenship can guarantee. State governments will continue to reward these individuals who harvest benefits with lawlessness instead of accountability and will continue to make a mockery of this nation's immigration policy.

Sara Foley is a senior journalism major.

A new American vision

By Troy Appel
THE DAILY NORTHWESTERN

(U-WIRE) EVANSTON, ILL. -- Who knew anyone could fix America? The proposals now fill Web sites, books, yard signs and pamphlets all showing that with one vote for one candidate our nation will achieve its maximum potential. With America's savior residing on every street corner, I have decided to throw my vision in to the ring.

I now present my vision for America, one where the concerns of our people take precedence over the concerns of overseas nations. This vision will focus on three key issues: foreign policy, economic policy and a call to those who feel left out.

The hot topic now filling the campaign for the American presidency is foreign policy. I say it's time we stop involving ourselves in every overseas conflict that does not directly impact our own national security.

The situation in Iraq has cost hundreds of billions of dollars only for us to see more terrorists popping up by the second. The foreign policy vision has been taken over by neoconservatives, believers that we must use our military power to push our values on everyone. But their vision has failed. We just prove that we want to take over the world -- the terrorists' point.

We shouldn't throw money into war-torn nations, like Liberia, or into the non-stop fighting in Israel. Both of these seemingly hopeless situations should be avoided, when money can be better spent helping the homeless on the streets of America. It's time America becomes a "gentle giant" in the world -- finally letting the other nations of the world live their life. If we do this, Osama bin Laden won't have a leg to stand on.

No empire in this vision. For economics we should give the IRS something better to do -- fix our budget.

Now standing at \$2.2 trillion with at least 18 percent and 41 percent going to

the military and Social Security-Medicare respectively, cuts have to be made.

We see \$1 million bombs -- let's make them \$750,000, a big change in the long haul. For Social Security, with the average life expectancy now at 77.2 years, as per 2001 data, people are receiving some sort of benefits for 15 years on average. We need to raise the retirement age, even one year will go a long way. Give a 10-year notice to citizens that the retirement age will be raised so they can prepare adequately.

The American people are smart. Let's also let them invest that money. Let's be truly fiscally conservative.

As for the hot issue of jobs, we need to focus on the free-trade deals that help our economy boom but leave it vulnerable for when the world markets dry up.

We should make a true attempt to strengthen American industries by protecting them, via tariffs, from potentially cheaper foreign products. It's time we tax companies for shipping jobs overseas and put a stop to leaving the American worker out to dry in favor of fresh, out-of-college labor or overseas workers.

Responsible economics will place the American economy ahead of third-world countries on the pecking order.

Finally, to those of who are apathetic to the whole process -- it's time to wake up. The effort that goes in to reading a newspaper, watching the news and engaging the issues is not that great.

To those who feel like you have been left behind by the government: Vote. Sitting out only ensures your defeat -- with more people voting in America, our government will feel the wrath of its constituency.

I have presented a vision to fix foreign policy and economic policy. Hopefully I lit a fire under those who don't care -- and done it all in just more than 600 words.

If only getting all of this done was that simple.

Troy Appel is a columnist for Northwestern University.