

FIRING LINE

Berdahl missed his history

Unwilling to address anything specific about David Cole's "Open Letter to *The Daily Texan*" in his column ("Holocaust ad violates TSP's own standard," *The Daily Texan*, Feb. 22), UT President Robert Berdahl charges that the letter "is and will be a source of great pain and anguish to the Jewish people."

It is painful to have our most cherished beliefs challenged. Jews are going to have to learn to live with the doubts of others just as Christians have. So are historians. It's not the historian's place to "believe" in historical events. I think it comic I should have to point this out to a man whose career has led to the presidency of a great American university.

No free person will tolerate the proposal suggested by Berdahl that we respect the tribal-like taboo surrounding the gas chamber stories. Suppression and censorship are not the answer to historical controversy and doubt. Free inquiry and open debate are.

I believe Berdahl and *Texan* journalists understand this. What I don't understand is why they should make an exception to this ideal when the controversy is about the "Holocaust."

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