

## FROM FRONT PAGE

### PROFESSORS DEBATE

technology — a missile defense system, for instance, would not have prevented the most recent disaster. He said the U.S. should address the discontent in the Middle East or new terrorists will arise. "We need to address the roots of the policy, not attack the results."

One long-term solution, he said, would be to build up the humanities departments in colleges so people have a greater understanding of other cultures. He pointed to the lack of foreign languages available at Behrend and the inability of students to take foreign languages after the third level. Also, there is a lack of faculty in several key areas, including anthropology, sociology, philosophy, and religious studies.

"We can't address evil without addressing intolerance," Christofferson said. As an example, he cited President Bush's words of launching a "crusade" on terrorists as a lack of understanding for Muslims. Christofferson said those words would bring up unpleasant memories of the Christian Crusades against the Muslims in the Middle Ages.

After Christofferson, Gamble presented his views on the situation. He reiterated Rossi's point that the U.S. has a history of backing less than democratic governments. He said the United States supported Afghanistan during the Cold War to prevent the spread of Soviet influence, but then pulled out of the country once the threat was gone.

Gamble also agreed with Christofferson that the U.S. has an obligation to teach students the beliefs of other countries and religions, but questioned if part of the problem was that students weren't taking those classes.

With his background in international law,

Gamble introduced what the U.S. could legally do in retaliation. United Nations regulations do allow for individual response to such actions, but there is a principle to be followed. He said self-defensive actions should be in reasonable proportion to those actions that provoked them. In other words, if the U.S. were to attack a country and hundreds of thousands of civilians were killed, this would not be in proportion to the supposed 5,000 civilians killed in last week's attack.

Gamble said part of the problem is a result of how Americans are perceived by foreigners.

"We need to be careful in proclaiming our sainthood — we aren't perfect, we do screw up, we sometimes screw up in major ways, and we are slow to admit it."

"We are perceived as arrogant by the rest of the world," Gamble added. And while we may not always be arrogant, it is still this perceived arrogance that provokes dislike.

A silver lining, Gamble said, could be we are now thinking about our appearance and can consider ways to minimize this evident arrogance.

Davies began by questioning whether it is accurate in referring to September 11, 2001, as the second day of infamy. He said the legitimate Chilean government was overthrown on the same day, an overthrow the U.S. supported. He said it was already a marker of serious disaster in history.

Since the Cold War, Davies said the world has experienced what is called the clash of civilizations. Many countries were unable to let down their guards after the Cold War and were easily drawn into new conflicts.

As the world "shrinks," diverse cultures come into conflict with one another. This has been called the "West versus the Rest," as the U.S. has come into opposition with China and the Middle East.

Another concept Davies introduced was the idea of guilt by association, in which people are assuming Islamic terrorists are representative of all Islamic people. Davies credited the media for consistently presenting the problem of attacking Islamic Americans for the terrorists' actions.

"But if we are doing this domestically, why not internationally?" He pointed out that only a small percentage of Afghans support the Taliban, the current government controlling Afghanistan. And he questioned why Americans would be willing to attack the Islamic citizens in Afghanistan when they realize the folly of attacking them in the United States.

Davies also discussed the U.S. training and support many of the United States' current enemies, including Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein. This final concept Davies called blowback, comparing it to someone firing a weapon and being injured from its kickback. In this way the United States provided potentially dangerous individuals with the knowledge and ability to injure the country.

After Davies finished his presentation, the floor was opened for the audience. The first question was whether the professors thought the United States should leave the Middle East unchecked and not interfere with its problems. Davies said we do have responsibilities to other countries, but that we should first reconsider our policies and future repercussions. For instance,

he said the current regime in Iraq was the result of our intervention. He added that the United States should reconsider the idea of bombing Afghanistan, saying "there is nothing to bomb in Afghanistan except for people."

Next, Dr. Syed Saad Andaleeb, associate professor of marketing, stood up and gave the audience a quick lesson on the beliefs of Islam. He said not all Muslims dislike or are attacking the United States — in fact, very few feel this way.

He also said much of the dislike Muslims do feel is the result of American cultural infiltration in the Middle East and the trade policies our country supports. He also said people in other countries are resentful because though the United States donates millions of dollars to others, much of the money is not spent on what it is appropriated for. The elite are only getting richer and the rest of the citizens are living in poverty.

When asked what short-term solutions the professors would suggest, a varied response was given. Christofferson said changes in our economy were necessary, but he doubted President Bush has the courage to confront international capitalism.

Davies said Americans can be incredibly compassionate and used the mass donations at blood banks as an example. He said we should funnel some of that compassion to the reorganization of our foreign policy.

Rossi recommended that our government should provide as much hard evidence it has on the perpetrators of the attacks. Without this evidence, he said both Americans and foreign countries will be less likely to support a U.S. military attack.

### STRUCTURAL CHANGES



PHOTO BY ROB WYNNE

David E. Roth, associate professor of engineering, has been involved in structural engineering since 1970. He offers several suggestions for improving the structural integrity and design of skyscrapers that may prevent future devastation like that seen last week.

architect who designed them.

"Without that flexibility, the buildings would have broken like a pretzel," Roth said. "They did withstand the direct hit of the airplane. What no one anticipated was the jets being used as flying missiles. The World Trade Center could take the impact but not the intense heat."

The jet fuel from the nearly full tanks burned at 1600 degrees Fahrenheit, the temperature at which steel begins to melt. As a result, the buildings collapsed upon themselves. The lower floors were unable to support the weight of the upper floors, and this led to "pancaking," in which each level crashed down upon the next.

"We can't design buildings for an explosion like this," Roth says. "We can design them to get people out." To do that, buildings will have to go beyond the current fire and safety codes. The World Trade Center had a four-hour rating from the Underwriters Laboratory. That meant that it could be evacuated in four hours. In order to protect against something like this, Roth said there must be measures in place to allow evacuation within one hour.

These measures include having frequent fire drills, placing fire marshals on each floor to help disabled people get out in an emergency, and finding a place to park the fire engines where they will not risk being buried by rubble. Structurally, buildings should be equipped with more staircases. This is an implementation which can be made to existing buildings by replacing the elevators with stairs. Another consideration would be having stairwells that start on the lower levels to offset the traffic from the upper levels during evacuation.

Roth notes that structural engineers have learned from the disasters of the past. Two of the most devastating wake-up calls occurred in San Francisco, where earthquakes wreaked havoc in 1906 and 1989. Another was sounded

*"We're going to have to rethink the size, shape, and fire safety of buildings. If we're going to rebuild stronger and safer, as they say we will, something has to change."*

-David Roth  
associate professor of engineering

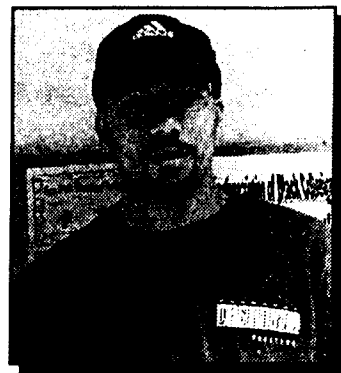
in 1940 when the suspension bridge in Tacoma, Wash., collapsed after picking up the natural frequency of wind and waves, causing it to oscillate ever more erratically.

"We're going to have to rethink the size, shape, and fire safety of buildings," Roth says. "If we're going to rebuild stronger and safer, as they say we will, something has to change."

"The most important lesson I've learned in all this has nothing to do with engineering," says Roth. "It's a people lesson. Terrorism has failed miserably. This event has brought the country together more solidly than anything I have ever seen. Those terrorists killed a lot of people, but they didn't break our spirit."

### QUESTION OF THE WEEK

*What would you do if you had an incentive instead of being paid minimum wage you might have more loyalty.*



*"If you had an incentive instead of being paid minimum wage you might have more loyalty."*  
**Andrew Hernandez**  
International Business, 03



*"Check people in better and have better metal detectors."*  
**Jessica Sarver**  
Chemistry, 01



*"Better background checks on employees and better training for security."*  
**Giovanni Reimer**  
International Business, 03



*"Give security guards better training."*  
**Holly Anderson**  
History, 05



*"Better check in policies before getting on planes."*  
**Casey Weed**  
Operations Management, 05

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