

The Behrend Beacon

published weekly by the students of Penn State Erie, The Behrend College

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"Professionalism with a Personality"

Postal Information

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Letter Policy

The Beacon encourages letters to the editor. Letters should include the address, phone number, semester standing, and major of the writer. Writers can mail letters to behrcoll2@aol.com. Letters must be received no later than 5 p.m. Monday for inclusion in that week's issue.

The View From the Lighthouse

The Six-Year War

The attack of Sept. 11 ushered in the true beginning of the 21st century. With a terrorist ring waging an attack on the United States, world history has now been exposed to a new kind of war - a war not of state versus state, but organization versus state, or organization versus civilization (depending on how you look at the situation). It is unprecedented. We are in many ways, making the rules as we go along.

The Bush administration recently announced that the war against terrorism could last up to six years. We do not know how long this war will last for sure; six years is an estimate. We at the Beacon think that the six-year estimate is a legitimate prediction. We are not military experts who can fall back on Academy expertise, but we understand the cost of freedom.

This war would probably have been over by now if we were engaged in a state versus state war - for example, Desert Storm. But this war, being different, must be strategic and all encompassing. This war is not about dropping a few bombs, rolling in the tanks, raising the Stars and Stripes, and saying, "OK, this one is over." No, this war is about removing terrorism from the world like a surgeon would remove a cancer.

This operation must be highly planned, specifically targeted and precise. We must not only topple our enemies' regimes. We must sort through a state's government and determine who is with whom. Then we must remove those against us and leave the ones with us and engage in nation building.

To justify the long war we must understand what social forces caused this new war. Just as the conditions of Germany under the Treaty of Versailles contributed to WWII, various factors caused the rise of terrorist groups. We at the Beacon believe that the political situations and economic circumstances in the states which harbor terrorists help bin Laden's organization.

We do not excuse the terrorists. We think they are evil and calling them the scum of the earth is an understatement. We believe that the situations of the general public in the regions helped cause the war.

By this we cite oppressive regimes and backward economic systems. We genuinely believe that had these governments been democracies and had free economies we would not be writing this editorial today. Put it this way: If you had to live in the desert, were barely eking out a life and lived under an oppressive government with no rights, would blowing yourself up in an airplane seem all that bad?

Now if you had the right to vote and participate in your government, if you had basic rights and liberties, if you had an education, if you had a good job, and money to spend would you want to blow yourself up on an airplane?

In this regard, we must not only see this as a military action, but a state building one. We must defeat our enemies and then provide them with a democratic form of government with a market-based economy. We may have to oversee this transition over a period of time and give the states economic aid. Germany has not been an aggressor since the U.S. and Allies briefly occupied the state, set up a democratic government, a free economy and implemented the Marshall Plan. Germany has since become a world power and a great trading partner of the U.S. and the rest of the world.

And so as we did with Germany and Japan, we must do with these states. We must make it a sterile place for the breeding of terrorists. This will take time and money. But freedom is not cheap and cannot be achieved in a day.

Another factor that will add to the time of this war is the training of foreign armies. As you read this staff editorial, we are in the process of training Philippine troops to combat terrorism. It will take time for these militaries to learn the skills they need to protect Western Civilization. This training will add time to our campaign without doubt, but it is worthwhile.

One can look at all the above and say simply, "So what?! Lets just worry about us!" One can say this, but he or she should wake up from the isolationist world because it is long gone. This would just leave us vulnerable to further attacks and not solve the problems that caused this war in the first place.

But for the sake of argument let us look at this option. We will pull all of our troops back home and have them patrol the border, airports, and fly the skies in defense of the next attack. This operation would cost billions and take years because the threat of terrorism would never be removed, and it would take longer and cost us more money in the long run.

We only have one choice in this war: to stick to our guns and wipe terrorists from the face of the earth. This may be an impractical goal, but it must be reached as soon as possible. We must not get lazy, bored, and cheap. We must stick with this war until our objectives are met whether it takes two years, six years, or 10 years. We must follow through in this operation.



Should Secretary of State Colin Powell appear on MTV? Hot Debate of the Week

Hey, Bill Clinton did it, so why can't Colin Powell? As one of the biggest media outlets to the teenage and young adult population, MTV deserves to bring important and influential people under its spotlight. What pimply-faced, squeaky-voiced 15-year old comes home from school and automatically flips the TV on looking for C-Span or MSNBC? Chances are if someone wants to appeal to the teenage masses, MTV is the place to go.

Middle-aged folk (and older) like to stereotype the younger generations as being ignorant and uninterested in politics. Ever try to talk about politics with someone 20 years your elder? They commonly say "No, you're wrong, you're too young to realize this, but back in the day...blah blah blah."

So now, those same people are probably arguing against bringing the Secretary of State on a network like MTV; probably so they can continue to harass the younger generations about politics. MTV has already effectively educated teens about politics. During election years, the network sponsors "Rock the Vote," which takes political candidates' issues and puts them in perspective for their younger audiences. What parent would be against putting their children in front of the TV to watch and learn about national leaders before watching "The Real World." It's a win-win situation; education over cable TV! Go for it, Colin!

- Rob Wynne

Colin Powell should not appear on MTV. Period.

Many people view the appearance of our Secretary of State on "Music" TeleVision as being an important step in bringing politics to the youth of America. I say hogwash. MTV bringing politics to the youth of America is like someone pushing their best friend down the steps then handing them aspirin, as they lay crumpled in a heap at the bottom.

While Powell has faithfully served the United States as a soldier and a politician for the past 40-odd years, MTV has defiled our nations' airwaves with its morally decadent programming for the past 20. (Granted, I have nothing against moral decadence, but I don't think serious politicians belong on, say, the Spice Channel, or MTV for that matter.) MTV has shored teens' attention spans to the point that the only thing they can pay attention to is MTV, which has gotten to the point it doesn't even show entire ideas for teens would lose interest. Granted, teens would get to ask pertinent questions such as "Boxers or Briefs?" and "Paper or Plastic?" - two questions actually asked in prior MTV forums. I think MTV should encourage teens to become involved in politics, not feed them liberally biased pop-politics in a neat little package. If the kids don't have the attention spans for C-SPAN, let them watch Headline News. It's real trippy with all the weather and sports and farm information all going on at once, and they never stay on one story for more than 30 seconds. Perfect for the MTV generation.

In closing, feeding an apathetic youth population with pop-politics is enabling it to continue being apathetic. Youth will never look outside of MTV as long as their politics are handed to them in a Bagel-Bite sized package.

- Ben Kundman

Every week, two editors from the staff will debate a topic that is hot. Students, faculty and staff are encouraged to email suggestions for the hot topic. Send ideas to behrcoll2@aol.com

Money, that's what I want



Attitude problem Paige Miles

Business Manager

Money would solve all my problems. Shallow? Sure. Naive? Maybe. But lately, being the completely broke student I am, I'm beginning to believe that a little bit of the green stuff could make me blissfully happy.

I was talking with my mom the other day about which major I will pursue for the highest paying career. "You really like that stuff, don't you?" said my mom.

"Money? It's not that I so much like it, it's that I need it," I responded. She then told me to marry a millionaire. No problem there. (Any takers?)

It's always been said that money doesn't buy happiness. Well, I think a large amount of money would buy

plenty of happiness for me. Generally, I'm a content person, but money troubles weigh on my mind, and tend to stress me

out. For example, as I sit here and type this, my hands are freezing cold. I don't want to turn up the heat too high in our house because that would hurt both my roommates' finances and mine.

Recently my doctor warned me that my weight is falling dangerously below average. Sure, I can blame being sick or even petite for that, but it's all really about how expensive food is. McDonald's dollar menu couldn't have come out at a better time. For \$3.18, I can get a medium Coke, a double cheeseburger, and four chicken nuggets. Could there be a better meal? Not that I can afford!

In the morning, I often have trouble deciding what to wear. If I had more money, I could buy more clothes, and no longer would I have the terrible stress of picking out an outfit. Plus, I wouldn't have to do laundry nearly as much. (When you have to kick your

dryer to get it to light, you'll understand how much laundry can suck.)

Two months ago, I bought a car. The car only cost \$948 (although the blue book value was \$4000). It has its faults. The locks are fubar and the horn doesn't work. Money would fix this. Okay, so I could probably fix this, but I really don't have the patience. A mechanic would. Also, I'm sure I'll be dropping the clutch on the car pretty soon, and that's going to cost a hefty \$700. Money would buy me a new Jeep Wrangler that has a working horn and a brand new clutch.

Bills are a whole different realm. Since I got screwed on books like every other Behrend, my credit card is suffering. I despise having a balance on it, but there is no way I can pay it off. On top of that, I have rent, insurance, utilities, and cell phone. Yeah, it's part of being independent and living away from home, but it's pretty gosh darn expensive. I wouldn't have to worry about any of these bills if I had a sufficient amount of funds.

I can hear my mother telling me that money won't make me content with life nor will it make friends. And it's also true that I don't want friends who like me for the amount of money I have, but that's not an issue. As I said, I'm content with life in general, but the money issue is what drives a majority of the United States to do what they do. Some abuse money or don't know how to be happy with it, which in turn creates the evil image money holds. Truly, it's about knowing how to manage money and still be happy with life aside from finances.

My management professor told us in class that Bill Gates has so much money, he doesn't know what to do with it. He's attempting to give it away, but failing. I hereby volunteer to take any excess money that Bill Gates is having problems disposing of. Also, sympathetic readers can send checks to the "Paige is starving fund, c/o the Behrend Beacon." Greatly appreciated. Miles's column appears every three weeks.

Her resolve: a good resolution



Chit chat for change Christine Kleck

Editorial Columnist

They have made movies about them. People have broken them within days of making them. By the time you have to come up with another list for next year, your lack of commitment or your success at incorporating them into your life has caused you to completely forget the list from the previous year.

Yes, as you all may have guessed, they are the famous and infamous New Year's resolutions. Whoops! Did you forget to generate a few this year? Well, I wouldn't worry about it, because I'm sure the other half of you are also saying whoops because you have already broken them.

At any rate, I have decided to devote

this column entirely not to what you have chosen to resolve this year, but rather why? Why do people make (and usually break) resolutions each year and why do they choose to resolve the areas of their lives that they do?

I think a lot of it has to do with the desire to change and a new chance to make that change. There is something about putting up a brand new calendar each year that draws us into that mode of starting over. It's something about a never-before-seen year that contains never-before-experienced months on the upcoming pages that makes us think that we have to run out and change the world. Okay, maybe some of us just want to change one part of our lives. But, all-in-all, a desire to start over always seems to pop up around the first of each new year.

Is it a dream that you keep having?

Maybe it has to do with those few extra pounds that just seem to linger? Is it a relationship that needs mending? Or a credit card that needs cutting?

So what the world is telling us that we aren't all perfect and that by Christmas or so we should, at the bare minimum, be at least a little bit "better," based on what we decided to resolve in January.

Now this is all well and good, but we should never lose sight of why we resolve things and change things, or rather why we should resolve and change and improve our lives - for ourselves. We must always remember that these changes are simply a reflection of the inner person who chose to make those changes in the first place.

Resolutions based on what society and others tell us to change and improve will only end with a breaking of that resolution. Ultimately, that

unresolved resolution will probably just re-surface next year at this exact same time.

How boring is it to make and then break the same resolutions each year at exactly the same time. Remember that variety is the spice of life and being true to one's self adds extra zest to that spice.

Create resolutions because you want to change and because you desire to improve a particular area of your own life. If, 365 days later, you feel better about yourself because you created those goals, stuck to them and then reached them - I would have to say that you have accomplished a resolution that many people don't think to achieve at the start of each new year. That is the resolution to come up with a good resolution (that is a resolution for you and by you, of course!)

Kleck's column appears every three weeks.