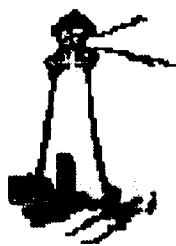


OPINION

The Behrend Beacon

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



THE BEHREND BEACON
"Professionalism with a personality"

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Penn State Erie,
the Behrend College;
First Floor, The J. Elmer Reed Union Building,
Station Road, Erie, PA 16563.
Contact The Beacon at:
Telephone: (814) 898-6488
Fax: (814) 898-6019
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Run to the hills, the liberals are coming

With the festivities of Halloween just around the bend and the presidential election quickly approaching, Americans are beginning to let down their guard. This week I was going to write about how the fashion industry should restore the moustache to its former glory, but something grave has been drawn to my attention.

While idly watching CNN the other day and drinking a Pepsi, ok, ok. I was really watching a Lifetime movie drinking a warm Pabst I found under the couch. At any rate, I saw a commercial that grabbed my attention like a bouncer snagging you by the collar and thrusting you face first to the curb. It was a Bush ad warning against Kerry's liberalism.

The ad not only told us to be wary of Kerry's shenanigans, but to also watch out for "dangerous liberals" in congress. Immediately I jumped up and locked my door. You can't be too safe with "dangerous liberals" running amuck. I loaded my shotgun with rock salt and keep one eye on the backdoor while watching NASCAR. Last week my car got egged, I bet it was those darn liberals.

Sadly, it seems to be the "cool" thing nowadays with everyone from famous



Andy McNeil
opinion page editor

rappers to Hollywood mainstays turning to liberalism. What are they thinking? Who the heck wouldn't want to be limited by the established views and traditional dogmas? Why would we want to be free from bigotry? I'd bet that these crazy liberals are the kind of people who would favor proposals for reform and be open to new ideas. Seriously, how can they tolerate the ideas and behaviors of others!

Enough of my bitterly satirical rant. I must admit, I am a "dangerous liberal" and a blasted democrat too. I even come from a family of army men. My grandfather was a colonel who worked in Washington. I grew up in a pretty traditional nuclear family and have learned to agree with some rather conservative beliefs.

One thing I cannot abide by, though, is the misuse of language, especially by our president and his campaign. Liberal does not mean evil. Why is it being used as an adjective that means so then? Well, it could be because everyone's favorite lethargic linguist, George W., enjoys inventing his own words. So why not just bend their meanings to fit his needs?

In all the excitement, Bush must have forgotten that the most extreme "dangerous liberals" in our country were the men who started it. George Washington, the original George W., was the most sought after "dangerous liberal" on this continent in 1776. So the next time you decide to go liberal bashing, look to the sky, there'd be a Union Jack flying over your head had it not been for liberal thinking.

"Dangerous Liberals" Rogue Gallery



Odd Letter of the Week

Dear editor,

Pennsylvania is vague. Not quite northeast, but not yet mid-Atlantic. Pennsylvania is analogous to generic cereal. Yes, it has flavor, but what is that flavor? It's kind of sweet; there are probably some peanuts in it; reminds me of granola; yet it's sour, kind of like an orange.

Behrend is Pennsylvania. In fact, it's Pennsylvania State University. And Behrend students are a good representation of western Pennsylvania. A few people come from rural settings; some even come from the Erie area, but most are from the suburbs of Pittsburgh.

Therefore, Behrend is vague. It is good at being vague, but don't ask it to be specific. A specific Behrend is about as effective as the corkscrew on your pocketknife.

Behrend is constant. Yes, things change—buildings get built and students turnover, but overall Behrend remains the same year to year. Behrend's constancy is equated well with its definition. In other words, Behrend is as constant as it is vague.

So there is nothing to do. You can be vague. You can be constant. You can eat tasty but generic pizza from Bruno's and drink generic beer in the apartment complex. It is possible to be specific, but it'll cost you—\$40 per meal at the Paper Moon or \$6 per beer at Molly Brannigan's pub (not including the tip).

But it won't kill you to be vague. A lot of good things are vague, like our national constitution. But if you are vague, don't hold out. Be as vague as you can be. If you're not vague enough, you might end up in a wizard costume. On the other hand, if you stick it out and are as vague as cheese, you might play a good game of ball.

So make your choice. You can be vague or specific. After all, this campus needs some diversity. Be careful. If you are specific, you should have low expectations, but if you are indefinite, don't forget to add a constant.

Sincerely,
Sam Marvit

KGB, Iran give Bush two thumbs up

John Kerry may have the New York Times and Bush's hometown newspaper on his side, but Bush was able to snag a few huge endorsements of his own. Former head of the KGB and current Russian president Vladimir Putin has given Bush the thumbs up as the election heads down the home stretch. Bush also managed to get Iran (you know, the country labeled by the president himself as a member of an "axis of evil") to say that they are with the president in this one.

It's really no surprise that Bush would get the KGB endorsement after installing a secret police force in the newly "free" Iraq. It's even less a surprise that a theocratic regime would approve of another world leader whose religion, though not the same religion, is the guiding force in his policies.

Of course, it's not that simple. Nothing is that simple, especially when you have the axis on your side. Putin's allegiance to Bush is a chance for his regime to move back toward the Stalinist days of old after his forces bungled a rescue attempt and killed more than 350 people. On the plus side, 26 of the dead are the terrorist hostage-takers.

Putin's totalitarian tactics in response to a terrorist threat have scary similarities to the Bush administrations "patri-



Dan Stasiewski
editor in chief

otic" defense of liberty. Donald Rumsfeld himself has defended property seizures in Russia directed at so-called terrorists that mirror new American policies under the Patriot Act. Making excuses for the Russian government is the only stance that doesn't seem hypocritical in this administration. To Bush's credit, Putin hasn't really been a proponent of democratic values such as a free press or freedom or being free.

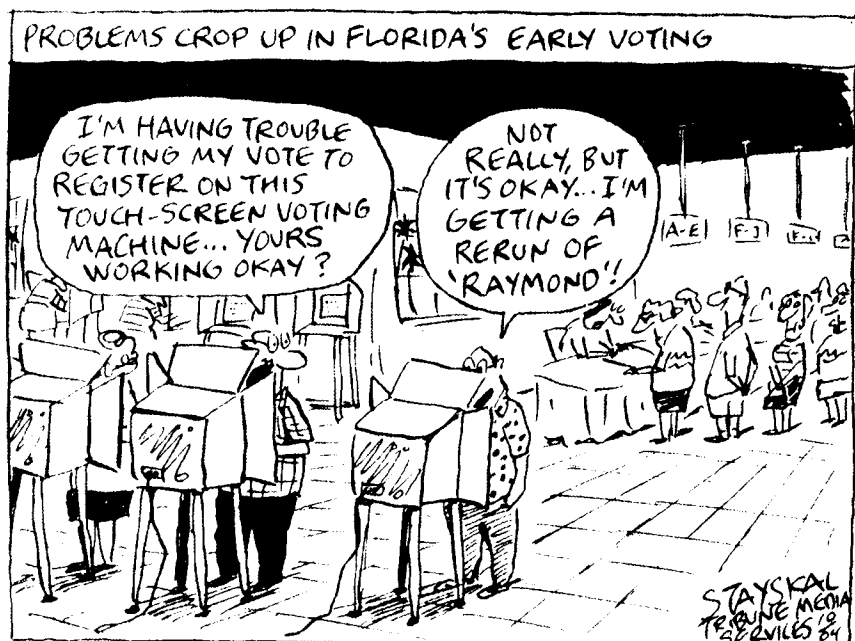
I often wonder about Bush's belief in freedom. His idea of liberty seems to be prescribed to him by an almighty god. That is fine if a person has the John Kerry/Thomas Jefferson philosophy on religion and politics. Religion is supposed to guide a person. But it isn't sup-

posed to convince President Bush that he is doing God's work because, as he said, "I trust God speaks through me."

If Iran is going to have it out with this country, I guess it is easier for Iran to justify its actions by taking on another fundamentalist state. The language Bush uses to describe himself, his war and his programs (such as faith-based initiatives that do the job that governmental programs can do without religious indoctrination) makes the president sound more like a Christian cleric than a politician. After all he did say he believed God wants him to be president.

Of course, the President's spirituality isn't the only reason why Iran wants a Republican as the president. As was reported by the Associated Press, Iran favors Republicans for their turning of a blind eye to international human rights violations.

It looks like Bush is building his international coalition after all. With the KGB and two of the three members of the "axis of evil" on his side (we took over Iraq, remember), Bush is just about ready to take on anything the terrorists can throw at us. With his policies, the world is going to be throwing a whole lot more our way.



Hey, that's my eye-patch!

Every time I have to write one of these things it takes me at least an hour to think of anything to write about. Then it takes me at least half an hour to actually begin writing it. Write, erase, write, erase. Once again I'm feeling the pressure. This time it's different though. Last time I was feeling some political pressure, this time the pressure is greater, more intense, more social life threatening.

Okay well social life threatening might be over the top. I'm feeling the Halloween costume pressure. You think I'd be used to it seeing as I've been dealing with it since I was born. I think my first costume was a pumpkin. Yes, folks my mother dressed me up like a pumpkin when I was a baby which most people find to be adorable.

Yeah, I admit I was adorable but it set the bar a little high. A few years later she dressed me as To To, Dorothy's dog from the Wizard of Oz. I was a dog! Granite my older sister was Dorothy and my older brother was the scarecrow. Let me tell you we looked just peachy walking around watching out for lions and tigers and bears, yep, oh my! It was even cuter when my sister tried to shove me in her basket. She got hers later though; when she dressed up like a tube of toothpaste. In seventh grade I showed up to school



Amy Frizzell
managing editor

on costume day fully decked out as Mimi from the Drew Carey show. I never really found out what happened that day but I'm guessing it was cancelled. Fortunately I was able to take the moo moo off and wear my t-shirt from gym class. But the makeup took weeks to fully remove.

Trust me, I wasn't exactly the coolest kid in school that day.

Fortunately, I've been able to leave those incidents behind me - until now. Even so every year right around this time I start to feel my chest tighten and my

stomach turn as I try to conjure up an original idea. This is the point when you start to freak, you're going to be the only one without a totally original stand out costume. Ultimately you'll be the laughing stock of the party if you show up in a haphazard outfit.

But let's face it, once you do find a good idea there are so many road blocks that could pop up. Say you think of the best idea in the history of Halloween costumes but when you try to find the pieces of the outfit they're nowhere to be found. You search and search and waste all your prime costume working time looking for that one pair of huge white cartoon gloves to successfully pull off your Mario outfit.

Or ever worse, you get the outfit take it home and put it on and you realize it doesn't fit and you can't move. There's always the fake mustaches that never seem to stay put or the coconut bra that well just won't stay in the right areas. This could cause total and complete pandemonium, especially if you have a big hockey player older brother who thinks you should always dress as a pumpkin.

Next to registering for classes Halloween might very well be the most stressful time of year for college students.

McNeil angers you?
E-mail
beaconletters@aol.com
Do It!