

Can anyone really 'buy American' today?

Editor:

The injunction to "buy American" urged on us by Christinalynn McCoy in the Feb. 10 issue, in response to your Jan. 20 editorial, sounds simple--but attempting to act on it is not easy.

Should many of us follow her advice, our own economy could suffer further damage--the opposite result from the one McCoy intends.

How to determine what product is American? An American corporate name is now virtually meaningless as a guide to either the source of the product's component parts or the country where the parts are assembled.

Chevrolet Geos are made entirely abroad, as are Mercury Tracers, whereas many Toyotas are assembled in this country (Corollas in California, Camrys in Tennessee) by unionized American autoworkers.

"Buying American" cars could shift production to Mexico, Canada, Korea, and yes, even Japan. Even "American" cars assembled in this country often contain high portions of parts made elsewhere--in Japan, Germany and so on.

Reality isn't as simple as McCoy would like it to be. The auto industry--like most industries today--is effectively international. Zenith televisions are no longer made in the U.S., either. The

average consumer cannot possibly track the source of all the parts of all the products she buys.

Instead, she should follow your editorial's advice: buy the best product available for the price.

Americans have been doing this in buying "foreign" cars; if McCoy thinks this habit is irrational or trendy, she should check the frequency-of-repair and owner-satisfaction ratings in any consumer automotive rating.

Only this fact has stimulated the sluggish U.S. producers to improve their products--as they have done noticeably over the past five years or so.

But the "Big Three," and other U.S.

producers, have to go further to match the quality of design, manufacturing, and service of products made (often in this country) by Sony, Toyota, Matsushita, et al.

Protectionism is not the answer; it would only protect inefficient and unresponsive companies from the competition that stimulates them to improve.

Until that happens, I'll continue to drive my Toyota--happily, proudly, and with not a single glitch in 48,000 miles.

Louise Hoffman
Associate Professor of
Humanities and History

SGA president addresses student apathy issue

Editor:

Let's begin with a thank you. SGA owes a debt of gratitude to the Capital Times, especially Karen Putt and Terry Wolf. The notoriety SGA received in print and over the airwaves in February was valuable media attention, and it was sincerely appreciated.

Speaking of media, those in positions of power over public opinion might take time out of their extraordinarily busy schedules (which seem reserved for "mature" students) to gather basic facts before riding into the intellectual sunset on a dictatorial jackass.

A broad perspective is the anticipated

environment of the educated, the intellectual, the student and others reaching toward truth and justice.

A letter to the Editor in the February issue of the Capital Times said apathetic students were not exclusive to PSH. Nor are students over the age of 22.

"Older" students dot the country, and non-traditional students account for 40-50 percent of total enrollment. Since Student Government organizations continue across the country, I tread dangerous ground in assuming that all non-traditional students rush home after classes as Wolf suggests in his Feb. 10 "Wolf's Den."

In response to comments made in the last issue of the paper, I call attention to

the facts. For example, printed statements from Putt were "Perhaps it's simply that they (SGA) don't know what the clubs do." And quoting Wolf, "They don't know what the hell we do, and they don't care."

Fact: SGA constitution and bylaws approved by the student body state "SGA is to control and direct activities of student organizations in the best interest of the student body."

Wolf's column also said "I remember submitting a budget for WPSH that included \$24 for two Stanton d6807a phono styli," and someone did not know what it was. Putt wrote "I work with insufficient equipment and budget, beg and plead for every penny the paper receives."

Fact: It is curious that Wolf is fixated on a \$24 question when SGA's concern focussed on his budget request for \$13,000.

As for the Capital Times' insufficient equipment, the issue was discussed with SGA prior to Putt's editorship. The paper was to submit a proposal in writing and SGA promised to approach every source of funding possible for the needed equipment. Not only was there an absence of begging and pleading, a written proposal never appeared.

Fact: The finance committee shall prepare an annual budget for the allocation of the student activity fund to be presented to the senate for adoption, as outlined in the bylaws.

Enough--the point should be clear. Fact finding is an important part of media coverage.

To continue, the lone resident of "Wolf's Den" attempted to speak for "older" students who do not have time for high school stuff like SGA.

The PSU Student Government began in 1906 when General James Beaver was acting president of the college. Beaver formed the Student Board, composed of six upperclass students, because Beaver had faith in the students wisdom and their ability to govern themselves.

Since 1906, the PSU Student Government Association has evolved from its advisory role by upperclassmen to representation throughout all classes and colleges. A fact that may cause educated members of society to recall some grade school stuff like "Government of the people, by the people, for the people, etc..."

Perhaps it's time to answer Putt's editorial question of whether or not we should punish student apathy.

Those who feel the answer is yes, can punish the student body by disbanding SGA. Other dictatorships were born in similar fashion for identical reasons.

Those who feel student apathy is a dangerous climate of discontent have an opportunity to make a difference.

Raise your voices, lift your pens, let your words be heard while time and organizational platforms permit.

Comments, both positive and negative, will be welcomed in Room 212, the "Hillside Castle."

SGA intentions were misrepresented

Editor:

I am writing in response to your editorial in the Feb. 10 issue of the Capital Times.

The first thing that struck me was your one-sided view of the SGA. You declare SGA is out to get clubs through threats and withholding funding.

As a newspaper, you should get information from both viewpoints before declaring God's holy truth based on anonymous tips. I would expect you to get at least maybe some information before yelling to the world that SGA is a dictatorial jackass.

I find it a personal attack against the individuals of SGA and not SGA as a

whole. As a member of SGA I stand behind WPSH, but what I read in the editorials may just sway my feelings. It seems to me that since this incident involved someone who works at the newspaper it was treated as earth-shattering news.

I think the people who are leading others in a mass media area should set an example of self-control and stop acting like children.

There seems to be "bad blood" between certain individuals on both sides, and now it's being aired publicly. It surprises me that both Karen Putt and Terry Wolf aired such problems in this way.

Yes, there was a problem with what was budgeted for WPSH. This was

brought to my attention by the students.

That is why we, SGA, are in office, to listen to the student body. Wolf appeared in front of SGA for a change in the budget. The result was an advance so the station could keep operating, as well as a review of the station's budget.

Maybe if Wolf had stayed at the meeting, a few more things could have been fixed, but throwing a temper tantrum and storming out did not help his case at all.

I think this newspaper yells "Wolf" before it thinks. Do us all a favor and get the full story before tooting your horn.

James Racz
Junior Senator, SGA

XGI dispels blood donor myth

Editor:

It is getting close to that time of the semester when the XGIs go around seeking donors for their semi-annual blood drive.

I am taking the opportunity to seek some donors and to dispel some rumors that have descended upon my ears about the Central Pennsylvania Blood Bank.

Since I am always on the quest for blood, I ask all my friends to please donate.

I have heard an excuse that really isn't all that true, but nonetheless, still ruins the image of our blood drive.

The non-donors say they refuse to

donate blood because the Central Blood Bank turns around and sells it to the area hospitals for profit. The Central Blood Bank is a non-profit organization.

The only way someone gets charged for blood is if they are not a donor. The Central Blood Bank then gives the patient an opportunity to find donors to replace the blood used, instead of paying a fee. So actually, paying for the blood is a last measure.

People that donate blood at our blood drives are automatically put on a list which excludes them from being charged for blood. You may be charged for the change of the blood but not for the blood.

When you need blood, tell the hospital

you donated. They will ask you the name of the organization and you will tell them CHI GAMMA IOTA/Central Penn Blood Bank.

They will contact us and we will verify it. It is that simple to get so vital a service free.

For further questions, please contact Claire M. Hall. She is the vice-president of the Central Pennsylvania Blood Bank. She may be reached by calling (717) 534-1188, or write her at: Corporate Office/Donor Center, 475 W. Governor Road, Hershey, PA 17033-0434.

John F. Bedoya
XGI

Michael Hermick
President of SGA