

Editor's Comments



Ahhh, yet another Sunday in the office. No, I am not relieved; rather annoyed. Although as much as I get frustrated spending so much time here, I actually do enjoy it. Yes, there are plenty of other things I could be doing with my time. Yet, there is nothing like trying to figure out what to do when it's Saturday at 6 p.m., you're going to print the next night, and you still have holes on 4 pages to fix. This sounds frustrating, and in the mix of it all it is. Laying out the paper is something I, along with the other editors, call a headache. But the payoff when we are done is all worth it. After the last issue, the entire staff heard countless praises and compliments about the new look of the paper. Thank you to everyone for your kind comments and recognition of our staff's hard work in bringing it all together.

Anyway, there is something I want to complain about on the subject of time considering I have none. My

biggest pet peeve I consider the worst waste of time, which I'm sure many of you will agree, is the message after the message found when you call most people's cell phones. I called two of my friend's phones that subscribe to popular cell phone companies, Verizon and Cingular, to listen to their messages.

After listening to the phone ring four to five times, the message from my friend explaining how she's sorry she can't get to the phone and to leave her a message plays. Ok, I get it, I'm going to leave you a message so I'm expecting to hear that all familiar beep indicating it is my time to speak. NO! There is still a message from that annoying lady who proceeds to explain, "To page this person press 5 now. At the tone please record your message, when you have finished recording, you may hang up or press one for more options."

Maybe to some of you this isn't annoying or a problem, but I can't stand it. First of all, it's 2006. The first answering machine was invented in 1935, and the first commercially sold answering machine was available in 1971, according to askjeeves.com. Come on, that's at least 35 years of using this technology. With all the technology surrounding us today I think the one thing we all know is what the heck to do after the beep already. Especially when the person you're calling has already asked us to do so.

Also, the paging part; who the heck pages anyone? I haven't paged

someone since pagers were around. What is the point of sending your phone number to someone's cell phone by paging them when you're number shows up on the missed call list anyway? Besides, if I want to send someone a message versus leaving a voicemail, I would text someone not just send them my phone number. Plus in the time it took to listen to the instructions about paging the person and all that, I could have never called and just sent a detailed text already instead of just my number.

Another problem with this situation: I am constantly pressed for time. It takes nearly a whole minute to listen to the phone ring, listen to the first message, and then the next before that awaited beep comes and then you have to leave your own message. The message on my phone is simply my voice and a beep. It takes 10 sec. for my phone to ring and my message to play and probably another 20 sec. for someone to leave a message. In comparison to calling other people's phones, in the time it takes to call one person and leave a message (about 90 seconds) I could have actually called three people. With all the phone calls I make in a week that's a big difference to me.

So, needless to say, I wish there was a way to get rid of these messages. I've actually considered complaining but one person's complaint isn't going to do it. But maybe by letting people know what I think, and with other people agreeing, talking, and spreading the word about it we'll see a change and get rid of the annoying lady's message.

Regards,
Ashley Lockard
Ashley Lockard
Editor in Chief

Okay, people



Photo by KRISTEN POOLE - The Capital Times

This is the scene outside the second floor apartments of the 6000 building. Here's what we don't understand: There's a smoker's oasis right there. It's right there! And yet, there are cigarette butts and packs all over the ground. How hard is it to just drop it into the oasis? Most people don't leave trash laying all over the ground, so why do so many smokers insist on tossing their cigarettes on the ground especially when there is a designated "trash can" for them right there. It's ugly and it's dirty not to just non-smokers but even other smokers. So just be considerate and throw them away.

Any necessary corrections, comments or critiques are wanted and welcome. Please stop by The Capital Times office (E126), e-mail captimes@psu.edu, drop a suggestion in the box outside the office or call the office at 948-6440. Any corrections should be reported no later than a week after the paper is printed.

THE CAPITAL TIMES

We are currently looking to fill the following positions:

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SGA UPDATE

By HOLLY WEICHMAN
Staff Reporter
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January 26

- Matthew Kabik from Tarnhelm thanked the SGA for making the Tarnhelm possible.
- Congratulations to Andy Palacios for appointment to Community Service Chair.
- Circle K was approved \$13,000 for video karaoke and \$100 for decorations.
- The Criminal Justice club has been approved \$1000 for their FBI trip.
- The Black Student Union has been approved \$400 for their cultural semester trip.

- The Photo club was approved \$1365.35 for supplies.
- The Fencing club's constitution was passed by student court.
- Thank you to everybody who made Come in From the Cold a success. "A lot of people had a good time and it was a great event," said Mike Edwards.

February 2

- During public comments, Lorena Rologand asked SGA for help in bringing attention to the issue of date rape drugs. She is working with the company Drink Detective, which makes the product to test if a drink has any date rape drugs in it.

- Steve O'Holla said, "Thank you everybody for coming to PSU Idol."
- During the student court report it was announced that the Racquetball club and the GSA passed new constitutions. GSA will be holding elections soon.
- Poem and short story readers are needed for the 17th annual African-American Literature reading. There will be literature selections available. The event will be held on Feb. 6th.
- Brian Johnson will speak about Leadership and Diversity Feb. 7th at 12:15 in the special events room.
- PSU Idol raised between \$320-370 for THON. Thank you to everyone who came to the event.

Domestic spying Specter says Gonzales' rationale for spy program 'strained and unrealistic'

By HOPE YEN
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) - Attorney General Alberto Gonzales has not adequately justified why the Bush administration failed to seek court approval for domestic surveillance, said the senator in charge of a hearing Monday on the program.

Sen. Arlen Specter said Sunday he believes that President Bush violated a 1978 law specifically calling for a secret court to consider and approve such monitoring. The Pennsylvania Republican branded Gonzales' explanations to date as "strained and unrealistic."

The top Democrat on the Senate Judiciary Committee, Vermont Sen. Patrick Leahy, predicted that the committee would have to subpoena the administration to obtain internal documents that lay out the legal basis for the program. Justice Department officials have declined, citing in part the confidential nature of legal communications.

Specter said he would have his committee consider such a step if the attorney general does not go beyond his prior statements and prepared testimony that the spying is legal, necessary and narrowly defined to fight terrorists.

"This issue of the foreign intelligence surveillance court is really big, big, big because the president, the administration, could take this entire program and lay it on the line to that court," Specter told NBC's "Meet the Press."

The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 established legal procedures for conducting intelligence-related searches and surveillance inside the United States.

Specter said the FISA court "has really an outstanding record of not leaking, and of being experts. And they would be pre-eminently well-qualified to evaluate this program and either say it's OK or it's not OK."

Leahy charged that Bush misled the public when he said during the presidential campaign in April 2004 that his administration was following the law by getting warrants for wiretapping.

"I think ultimately we're going to have to subpoena them," Leahy said on CBS' "Face

the Nation," expressing doubt that lawmakers would get the material otherwise.

Under the National Security Agency program put in place after the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the government has eavesdropped, without seeking warrants, on international phone calls and e-mails of people within the United States who are deemed to be a terrorism risk.

In testimony prepared for Monday's hearing, Gonzales argues that Bush had authority under a 2001 congressional resolution authorizing force in the fight against terrorism and that heeding the 1978 law would be too cumbersome.

"The terrorist surveillance program operated by the NSA requires the maximum in speed and agility, since even a very short delay may make the difference between success and failure in preventing the next attack," Gonzales said in statements obtained by The Associated Press.

Specter was not so sure.

"I believe that contention is very strained and unrealistic," Specter said. If the FISA law was inadequate, he said, Bush should have asked Congress to change it rather than ignore it. "The authorization for the use of force doesn't say anything about electronic surveillance."

Sen. Russell Feingold, D-Wis., was expected to press Gonzales on why, during Gonzales' confirmation hearings last year to be attorney general, he dismissed as "hypothetical" a situation in which the government conducted warrantless eavesdropping. The NSA program was long in place by then, and Gonzales was White House counsel.

Assistant Attorney General William Moschella, in a letter Friday to Feingold, said Gonzales was referring to as "hypothetical" the idea that Bush would allow warrantless monitoring that was illegal.

That statement is accurate, Moschella wrote in a letter obtained by the AP, because the administration's position is that Bush had legal authority under the 2001 congressional resolution.

Gonzales has acknowledged disagreement with former Justice Department officials, including Attorney General John Ashcroft and Deputy Attorney General James Comey, about the legality

of the program.

In responses to written questions from Specter, Gonzales challenged media portrayals about the scope of the spy program, saying it is not "a dragnet that sucks in all conversations and uses computer searches to pick out calls of interest."

The Washington Post, citing unnamed sources, reported Sunday that the program involves computers sifting through hundreds of thousands of communications to select for human review. The program has resulted in thousands of conversations in which someone in the U.S. has been at least briefly monitored, the Post said.

The Post report said that nearly all of them were quickly dismissed as insignificant and that perhaps no more than 10 solid leads a year have been pursued with further domestic surveillance, usually with a court warrant.

But Gen. Michael Hayden, the No. 2 intelligence official in the government, said it was "not true" that "we somehow grab the content of communications and then use the content of the communications to determine which of the communications we really want to listen to."

"When NSA goes after the content of a communication under this authorization from the president, the NSA has already established its reasons for being interested in that specific communication," Hayden said on "Fox News Sunday."

In addition to possibly pursuing documents about the program's legal basis, Specter said he might seek testimony from Ashcroft and Comey.

"If we come to it and we need it, I'll be open about it," Specter said, referring to subpoenas. "If the necessity arises, I won't be timid."

Specter also said the administration should tread carefully when it came to using subpoenas against journalists to investigate leaks of classified information.

The New York Times in December disclosed the existence of the NSA program, which is classified.

"I think if you move into the area of really serious national security issues, that there may be a justification for it," he said.