

opinion

Last, dying breath of Cheney's ideology

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Less than a month into the Obama administration, one would only assume that the members of the former Bush administration would be taking a much-needed break from the public eye. After all, why shouldn't they let the new president take the scrutiny for a little while after inheriting their mess?

Instead, Dick Cheney decided we all had to know his opinions - as if we didn't already know them - on Obama's executive orders to close the prison at Guantanamo Bay within a year and end the use of so-called "enhanced interrogation tactics" (A.K.A torture).

I personally thought I had seen the last of Cheney. At the very least I figured that he's completely embarrassed at the disheveled state the last administration left the country in, and he'd at least wait a month before going in the public eye. Instead, he embarrasses himself even further.

In his interview with Politico, the former vice president accused the new administration of being "...more concerned about reading the rights to an al-Qaeda terrorist than they are with protecting the United States against people who are absolutely committed to do anything they can to kill Americans..."

This is a wild accusation for the former vice president to make, but one must understand his mindset. After all, he did go on to say, "The United States needs to be not so much loved as it needs to be respected. Sometimes, that requires us to take actions that generate controversy. I'm not at all sure that that's what the Obama administration believes."

That seems very Machiavellian to me. Here's something else Machiavelli said, "Princes and governments are far more dangerous than other elements within society." The Bush administration proved to the world just how much truth that statement can hold. In seven years, their policies took an unstable region of

the world, and made the situation considerably worse. The whole time, this administration used fear as a political tool throughout their administration, in order to destroy the constitution, expand executive power, get us stuck in a Iraq for over six years, and severely damage America's image around the world.

Of course that didn't stop Cheney from voicing his opinions. He had to let us know that soon enough, we would all see that President Obama was naïve in his dealings with these "... evil people. And we're not going to win this fight by turning the other cheek."

Of course, this is a gross misrepresentation of the President. Cheney is more or less speaking about a caricature of the Obama, and not his true policies.

During the primary debates, the president did say that, "If we have actionable intelligence about high-value terrorist targets and President Musharraf (former Pakistani President) won't act, we will."

These are not the words of a man

who is likely to turn the other cheek when it comes to national security.

So what is Cheney's issue? In my opinion, this is a last gasp for air from a dying ideology. Cheney was part of the crew who took the country down in more ways than one. It led to the destruction of his party's control in Washington, and a landslide in the presidential election, with many traditionally red states going blue. Democrats also have a majority in both houses of Congress.

Nationally, it seems as though the ideology of the last administration has been rejected, and President Obama is being welcomed with open arms. The recent executive orders mean an end to the reign of an archaic way of thinking in our country.

There was a time when Americans looked at nations who used torture as an interrogation method as being sub-human. Over the past eight years, the Bush administration proved to have the potential to ignore the high road and behave as a feared empire, flexing military

might as the administration saw fit, and used any men's lives to accomplish their goals. If anti-American sentiment is good for terrorist recruiting, then the Bush administration delivered it to al-Qaeda on a silver platter.

Cheney's belief that we need to be feared in order to accomplish our political goals, in fact, makes us no better than the people we are hunting. That is not to say we should be passive against international terrorist organizations. Proper counter-terror activity should include heavy police work and strikes on high-level targets. It should also, however, include improving America's image around the world by winning the hearts and minds of civilian populations, before they have the chance to become terrorists. Guantanamo's existence and the use of torture do not help us in that effort.

President Obama's executive orders, in the long run, may in fact prove more effective tools in the war on terror than any missile used by the Bush administration.

Letter to the Editor



Open letter to the SGA, from a former Four Diamonds child



By CRAIG DEWALT
PENN STATE HARRISBURG ALUM

Dear Student Government,

As a former Four Diamonds child, Penn State Harrisburg student, THON Chair and Student Government Executive Board member, I would like to express my disappointment in your actions over the past year.

THON is probably Penn State's biggest tradition. THON is something that separates Penn State from all other universities across the country. THON is where selfless individuals unite for a greater cause and work hard to raise as much money

for pediatric cancer as possible. THON cannot be successful if there are personal differences internally.

I can understand the SGA's decision to not support THON financially for events. I truly believe that THON shouldn't ask SGA for money for events, because the point is to raise money without spending money. What I cannot agree with, is SGA's decision to not pay for hotel rooms for those students who want to support our dancers. Being selected as a dancer for THON is not only an honor, but it is a commitment. The commitment is to stay on your feet for 46 hours. The dancers

stand for 46 hours to support the children who care battling cancer, who cannot stand. The dancers stand for the children battling cancer who are at THON, having the time of their lives. If a Four Diamonds child were to see a dancer sitting, what message would that send them...To just give up?

It is important for Penn State Harrisburg students to be there with our selected dancers. The dancers want to see new faces. They want to interact with friends, and fellow classmates to keep themselves occupied. Without providing Penn State students with rooms for THON weekend, this cannot happen.

You are making this harder on the dancers, and keeping a lifetime experience from our students. I understand that there is a limited amount of money in the unrestricted fund, but I also think that some of that money could have been used.

I understand that there may have been problems between THON and SGA at the beginning of the year, but that doesn't make it right to take it out on the kids, which are the true reason for THON's existence. It's a shame that while a group of selfless students are representing Penn State Harrisburg well and helping kids with cancer, a group of selfish students are preventing

them from maximizing their efforts.

I am really disappointed that Penn State Harrisburg's Student Government has turned the other cheek to an event which has generated over \$50 million, over 30-plus years and has given Penn State such an honorable image over the years.

I would like to applaud anyone who supported THON in any way this year. You should be commended. The children and their families will thank you many times during THON weekend...If you get to go.

Sincerely,
Craig Dewalt