

# Opinion & Review

## EDITORIALS:

### Somalia: Advance or Retreat?

By Wes Tomlinson

What are we doing in Somalia? Why are we still there? The American people deserve and demand answers to these questions. Our military personnel have been needlessly slaughtered, captured and degraded by an irresponsible and lawless bunch of uncivilized terrorists. These renegades in Somalia not only have no respect for law and order but also are ungrateful for the generosity of the American people who sent them millions of dollars worth of food, clothing and medical supplies.

The United States went into Somalia with the limited objective to relieve hunger and feed the starving people in that nation. Under the Clinton administration, there appears to have been a continuous escalation of unstated goals from feeding to policing to nation building. None of this escalation has been approved by the United States Congress or by the American people.

If we can not even defend citizens on the streets of Washington, D.C., how can we presume to defend a completely lawless and ungoverned country like Somalia? Do we continue to send in more and more troops to defend our troops who are already there? As more and more are killed and captured, do we continue to escalate our forces? Where does it all end? It looks like Viet Nam all over again. Will we never learn from the past? It is time to clearly define what it is that we intend to accomplish in Somalia, establish clear goals and a definite timetable to accomplish that mission, or do we even have one?

### Somalia: A Mission Explained

by s. cohoon

In response to the Wes Tomlinson article in the September issue of the *Lion's Eye*, let's get the facts straight. When U.S. troops were first sent there, the mission, while dubbed "Restore Hope", was, in George Bush's own words, to restore peace and order to discordant Somalia. The misnomer "Restore Hope" was interpreted for the American public by the conservative media to mean food airlifts. In Orwellian/Bush-speak: war is peace. That is, the restoration of order necessitates military involvement.

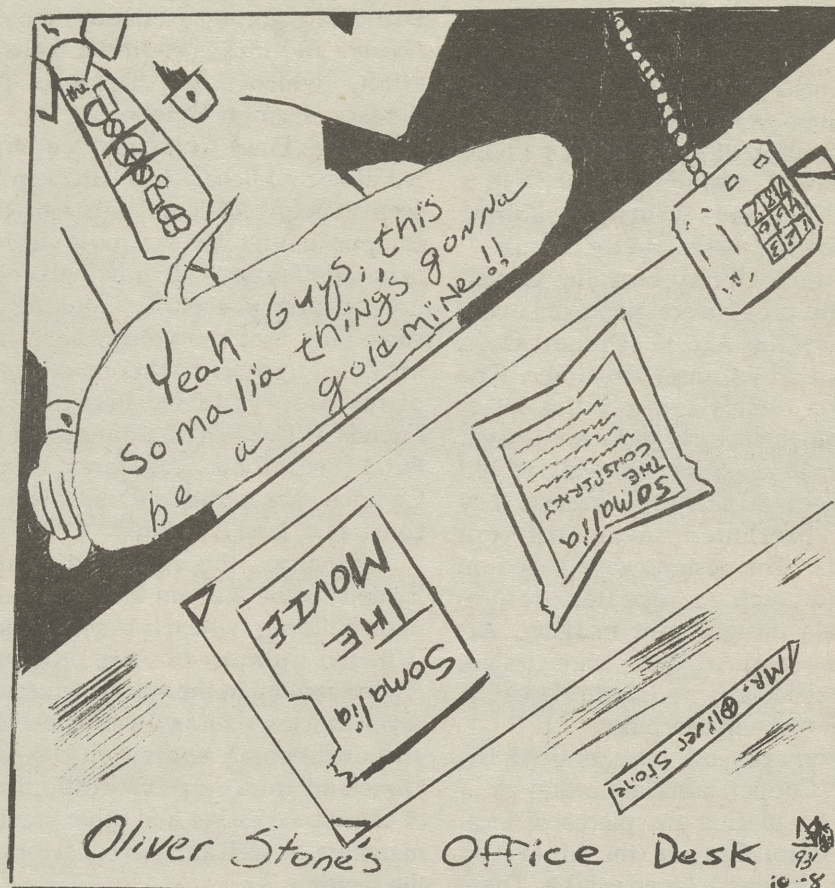
The intent of the United States is almost certainly to broker a new government for the nation of Somalia. What else could a goal of the restoration of peace and order mean? How can order exist without a militarily enforced democracy in such a situation?

The media-dubbed "war lords" in Somalia are as close as that country can come to popularly elected officials. Note the strong support of these "war lords" by the people of Somalia evidenced in such incidents as people dancing on and celebrating the destruction of a US helicopter. Such public support is the stuff which true democracy is made of.

The U.S. certainly has strategic military and economic interest in establishing, militarily if necessary, a U.S.-friendly "democratic" government in Somalia. Look at the geographic location of Somalia. It lies on a point extending into the ocean in the northeast portion of Africa. Such a place is key for U.S. naval and air stations, so close to that touchy middle east where we know the U.S. has an economic interest. The United States has had such bases in Somalia in the past, but cannot have them there if the country is in turmoil.

The final reason for U.S. involvement in Somalia is that because our involvement was established prior to Clinton's presidency, a precedent of military involvement in world affairs was in place as soon as Clinton entered the office. Our involvement was the final effort of the Bush administration, carefully timed, to continue the "U.S. as the world police" era which existed during the Reagan/Bush years.

Nevertheless, Wes Tomlinson is correct on one issue. That is, that Somalia is a Vietnam-like situation. As in Vietnam, the people of the country do not wish our presence. As in Vietnam, our interests are colonial in nature. As in Vietnam, our attempt is to install a puppet government with the U.S. pulling the strings. And, as in Vietnam, we are killing people and destroying what little infrastructure remains a delicate country.



### Will Your Job Application Show A Lack Of Involvement?

By John Bishop

A "welcome back picnic" took place at the Lion's Den on September 17. If you weren't there, you weren't alone. Ninety-eight percent of the student body also decided not to attend.

The picnic was intended to draw students to the Lion's Den, which is located directly behind the gym. The Den is designed to provide students with a place to study, play video games and, just hang out. The Lion's Den is also the headquarters of the fifteen clubs and student organizations currently on campus. The picnic was also supposed to give students an opportunity to mix and mingle with club representatives, as well as staff and faculty members.

The picnic itself was very well organized. There was free food, free drinks and even free compact discs. Unfortunately, there was also a decided lack of students.

Among those who attended the picnic were a number of faculty and staff members including Campus Executive Officer Dr. Ed Tomesko and Director of Student Affairs, Mr. "Pete" Coleman, who engaged students in a game of pool. Even radio station Y100 stopped by for a visit. The majority of the student body, however, couldn't be bothered.

Although the lack of students at the "welcome back picnic" was disappointing, it was, by no means, surprising. I have attended all the S.G.A. meetings this year and the number of students in attendance has been lousy at best. Having attended the "Drive-In" as a volunteer, I witnessed firsthand the "Golden Rule" Of The Students of Penn State Delaware County Campus: Thou shalt not get involved in student affairs.

Many students complain that the faculty and staff of Penn State "don't care" about student concerns, but very few students try to make a difference by attempting to fix what they perceive to be a problem. When given the opportunity to make their views and opinions known (like the "town meetings" or the "welcome back picnic"), only a small minority take advantage of the occasion. Although there are student organizations on campus which deal with issues like racism, ethnic diversity, illiteracy and the environment, only a small number of students are actively involved in these groups.

In the past, student organizations have learned an important lesson about student attendance at their meetings. If there is no free food, there will be almost no student attendance. Many students must have free food "dangled" in front of them, like a carrot, before they will attend a student organization meeting. Unfortunately, even free food could not save the welcome back picnic from being a victim of student apathy.

Fortunately, although student involvement may have been lackluster in the past, there is still hope for the future. There is still time for the students of Penn State Delaware County to make a difference on campus and in the community. It's still not too late to make a change.

Students who are interested in learning more about student clubs and organizations can contact Amy McCarthy, Student Government President, or Jodi DeRossi, Student Government Vice-President, in room 106. Students may also contact Mr. "Pete Coleman, Director of Student Affairs, in room 106. S.G.A. meetings are held every other Wednesday in the conference room of the Commons building.

Anyone with questions regarding the S.G.A., student organizations or the content of this editorial, can contact me at the S.G.A. office located in the Lion's Den. I'd like to see this campus come to life and start meeting its potential.

## THE LION'S EYE

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