

Editorial

PSU needs to reprioritize

Governor Casey's recently announced \$731 million cut in this year's state budget means Penn State will be tightening its financial belt.

This cut takes approximately \$12.6 million, or five percent of the University's state funding, away from Penn State this year.

Penn State President Joab Thomas recently wrote an open letter to the University community calling the cuts "very severe," adding, "we must do everything we can to meet the Governor's directive."

To prove his sincerity in backing the Governor, Thomas has placed a freeze on hiring system-wide, ordered departments to lessen travel expenses and said the University would defer maintenance costs.

At the same time, Governor Casey decided to free up \$16.8 million for the design phase of a 16,000-seat arena at University Park. Another \$17 million for construction has been approved by the state legislature, and awaits only Casey's nod. Additionally, the University plans to commit between \$17 and \$22 million to the project, bringing the total cost for the arena to over \$50 million.

The seating capacity in the new arena will bring the Penn state facility on level with other Big 10 schools. Many Big 10 coaches have complained about having to play in the 6,846-seat Recreation Hall, University Park's current arena.

According to Penn State treasurer Steve Garban, "It (the new facility) is one that has been desperately needed for years."

As desperately needed as, say, new books for Penn State libraries? If the Big 10 is upset that their athletes may have to compete in front of an unacceptably small crowd, it is a good thing they don't send their students to study in PSU's libraries.

Penn State's library system boasts only 45 volumes per student, placing the University dead last in the Big 10 for that category -- not to mention the fact that this campus still doesn't even have a real library.

The University has definitely lost track of its priorities when it deems that a \$50 million sports arena should take precedent over its educational mission and commitment to its students.

Opinion/Editorial



MIKE LUCKWICH
ATLANTA CONSTITUTION

Letters to the Editor

Ambassadors. Next time we will represent ourselves.

Robert Hardy
Eighth semester
MIS

Vail Weller
Eighth semester
English

Editorial error

When I read the January 31 editorial (entitled "Secret war"), I saw zero consideration of security realities regarding war reporting in the Gulf. I also noticed an astonishing factual error: that this war is the only one that has been censored.

I do not believe that the military has trashed the First Amendment. They are justly concerned with the security of the troops and holding casualties to an absolute minimum. I might ask: is it ethical to photograph a wounded soldier without his/her consent? No, because that directly violates privacy rights.

Also, many of the world's leaders, including Iraq's demonic Saddam Hussein, have access to CNN and our network television (or so I'm told). I have no reason to doubt this, so I believe that disclosing allied military strategies in the Gulf on CNN and the networks is unethical. (Do we really want Saddam Hussein to get his ideas for battle plans by watching our television? Of course not).

I'll be blunt about this. I would not be surprised if the recent ground offensive by Iraq into Saudi Arabia (in which more than a dozen allied soldiers died) may have been indirectly caused by our television media. Saddam Hussein might have gotten the impression from our television media that the coalition was not about to conduct a ground offensive just yet; this in all likelihood probably would have given him a major opportunity to ruin allied plans.

This subversive reporting is a betrayal of the public trust. I believe that the media might be inadvertently undermining the safety of our troops with their reporting of military strategy in the Gulf.

Don't get me wrong. I

strongly support the First Amendment. But there is a danger that if we do not combine constitutional logic with common sense, the First Amendment might be converted into a suicide pact.

Daniel Yogman
Fourth semester
DUS

Poor support

Operation Desert Support was shown on the 6:00 evening news on Thursday, Jan. 31. We watched the proceedings and felt encouraged that so many people showed up to express their support for our peers serving our country in the Persian Gulf.

We were also glad to see that the event was advertised as a non-partisan activity; that is, not promoting the war, nor denouncing it. It should be universally known that regardless of the position one takes concerning the war, we all support the troops.

However, our mood darkened considerably when we saw that someone had set up a "BOMB BAGHDAD" circle onto which people were throwing paper airplanes from the second floor of the Wintergarden.

This act only shows a blatant disregard for human life. Is an innocent Iraqi citizen less important than an American one? We think not.

Upon viewing this ignorant sideline activity, we became very confused. Is this the way the Behrend community wishes to portray their support-by provoking further aggression?

Sending letters in support of our troops is a fine idea, but under the guise of bombing Baghdad, it was in very poor taste. Didn't anyone think this through?

Shame on you, Lion

Unfair bill

Can you answer this question? Were we here on campus during the month long semester break? The obvious answer is NO! We were at home! Yet Penn State must believe that we were here.

The reason we say this is due to the phone bills awaiting us when we returned from Christmas break. We don't know about you, but we certainly didn't use the phones while we were gone. The dorms were locked, so we couldn't have used the phones even if we wanted to. Basically, we paid for a service that we were unable to use.

So we decided to inquire as to why Penn State is trying to soak us for every last penny we have (kind of like the \$35.00 computer fee we are all billed for and any supposed damages to residence halls). But the response we received was very lame! In fact, if a student responded this way to a professor during class, the professor would regard this answer as an attempt to avoid answering the question at hand.

We asked why we were billed for a full month instead of being billed for part of the month, like we are in August and May. The answer we received was: This is how it is set up. Does that answer the question for you? It didn't for us! Can anyone give us a real explanation?

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