

Mailbox



War is taking away innocent Iraqi lives and has to stop

Although I am strongly opposed to the war in Iraq, I have been watching CNN religiously for the last two weeks in order to keep up with any and all developments.

It hurts me to see the number of innocent Iraqi citizens we kill each day, the number of troops who have given their lives for our country and the photographs of war.

It has, however, made me realize how lucky I am to live in a country where I can work, play and learn without having to constantly look over my shoulder and live in fear.

If nothing else, this war has made me truly appreciate my freedom. However, I learned this morning that Oregon Senator John Minnis has proposed a bill that protest will be considered an act of terrorism, and protesters (even the peaceful ones) can be sentenced to life imprisonment as a result. Minnis gives the definition of terrorism in his state as:

"A person commits the crime of terrorism if the person knowingly plans, participates in or carries out any act that is intended, by at least one of its participants, to disrupt: (a) The free and orderly assembly of the inhabitants of the State of Oregon; (b) Commerce or the transportation systems of the State of Oregon; or (c) The educational or governmental institutions of the State of Oregon or its inhabitants."

I don't want to start counting

or naming the number of rights that we have as citizens of this country that this bill violates. I would, however, like to point out that by this definition, isn't a peaceful strike, or even a food fight in a school cafeteria, technically an act of "terrorism"?

I would also like to make the following point: "terrorism" is defined by our country as "the calculated use of violence or the threat of violence to attain goals that are political, religious, or ideological in nature...through intimidation, coercion or instilling fear."

Unless I'm wrong, haven't we technically been terrorizing both Iraq and Afghanistan for terrorizing us? And does it make any sense that people in this country (or for now, Oregon) who feel strongly enough about the acts of terrorism to voice their feelings and opinions may be arrested and imprisoned for life for committing an act of the very issue which they were protesting against?

If that sentence didn't make sense then I've gotten my point across. I encourage anyone who feels as strongly as I do to visit <http://www.leg.state.or.us> and voice your opinion on this issue. Although right now this bill has only been proposed in Oregon, who is to say it won't soon spread through the country?

- Jane Steele

Students for Peace and Justice arguing that taxes should be improved, not detrimental

Martin Luther King once said, "The bombs in Vietnam explode at home; they destroy the hopes and possibilities for a decent America." Change Vietnam to Iraq and his words apply today.

Many students and even full time workers may not notice where their taxes go as the needs of communities are slighted to cover the huge costs of America's military.

Estimates on how much of our income taxes go for past and present military expenses run as high as 47 cents out of every dollar.

Next year, the estimated \$100 billion Iraq invasion will take it higher.

Grisly images of this invasion reveal the terrible loss of American and Iraqi lives that we all feel.

King's words urge us to remember the other lives harshly affected, even lost, by the staggering costs of war.

For the cost of one day of this war (\$1.1 billion), we could prevent cuts to education programs for FY2003. Spending on one year's nuclear weapons program (\$16 billion) could instead provide health coverage to 7 million children. (All figures from War Resisters League)

Half the world's military spending is spent by the U.S. Its killing effects are clear if we consider what could happen if we offered other countries aid, not military threats.

For the cost of 6 Trident II missiles (\$350 million), we could instead provide vaccinations for 10 million children world wide.

Or we could take one month of current U.S. military spending (\$38 billion and rising) and save 11 million lives fighting infectious diseases.

"Will we have community or chaos?" Martin Luther King's challenge still rings out.

This is why Student for Peace and Justice will be leafleting at the post office on April 15 when taxes are due—to remind people that our taxes should be going to improve, not destroy, lives.

- Anne Cassebaum

Basketball court necessary in North Area

As the North Carolina weather continues to become warmer and the rays of the sun not only an uncanny sense of happiness, but countless beautiful golden bodies to the Elon community, I step outside of my gloomy dorm in Colclough to be faced with a realization so disheartening that not even the countless gorgeous girls tanning in bikinis can brighten my spirits.

North Area is the only dorm complex on campus without a basketball court, and I want to play.

Administrators may argue that the North Area population is closer to the Jordan Gym than any other areas, but that is hardly a justification.

Why, should those of us in the North Area be confined to a stuffy indoor gym while others are able to fully experience the beautiful atmosphere that was one of the main reasons many of us chose to attend Elon?

Moreover, since one of the

main goals of this university is to create facilities that promote excellence, it would only be logical for a basketball court to be constructed in the North Area.

While at first glance, it is easy to become aware of the physical demands required of such a sport, there are also other, internal factors that need to be addressed.

"Street Basketball," in its raw form or as raw as it gets inside of the Elon bubble), demands more from a player than any referred game.

It requires poise, leadership, confidence, teamwork, self-control and a myriad of other traits that can potentially be brought into the realm of academics.

The tenants of North Area are not equipped with such facilities, leaving them at a disadvantage – a substandard means of pursuing excellence.

All things considered, the tenants of the North Area deserve a basketball court to call their own.

Prospective locations for such a site range from the under-used, paved cove behind Colclough, Maynard and Chandler, to a spot adjacent to the sand volleyball court.

Due to the fact that many students have schedules so tightly crammed with classes and activities, they often find themselves having to cut any form of exercise out of their daily routine.

The truth is, even if the court at Jordan Center opens up at some point during the day, there is no way to find that out without making the journey over there.

Furthermore, by the time I do arrive at the court, my time is running out. We need a place to play when our time is precious. Build us a court, Elon, and those of us in North Area will be one step closer to reaching our potential of excellence.

- Joe Woods

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