

JONI'S
CORNER

Airline security can be worse than a Russian winter

Submit a letter to the editor!

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JONI SMITH
Foreign Correspondent

As you are reading this, I am probably waiting in a line in Dulles International Airport to have my luggage checked or to have my shoes looked over for bombs.

All this time in airports has made me think about airport security.

Since Sept. 11, 2001, the level of security in our nation's airports has been top priority for the FTA, FFA and all the airlines. Bush and his cohorts have put their two cents in on the topic by saying that all passengers on airplanes from Middle Eastern dissent should be watched carefully and should have to undergo more rigorous luggage checks than a white man. Perhaps someone should remind President. Bush that one of

the most devastating attacks on American soil, besides the ones on Sept. 11, was committed by a white American who had actually served in the U.S. Armed Forces - Timothy McVeigh.

I think if we only look at certain people as potential threats to our country's security, it will only be a matter of time before another terrorist attack takes place.

Another problem I have with airline security is the relative disregard of weight restrictions many airlines have. Every airline supposedly has a weight limit for passengers to adhere to while packing their luggage.

I have recently had to deal with such limits while packing for my study abroad trip and it is no easy

feat to pack clothes, toiletries and school supplies to last me four months into two suitcases which must weigh less than 44 pounds. However, British Airways, the airline I will be flying, just sent me an e-mail saying that due to a large

many miles of ocean may be too heavy just because someone complained that the airline would not allow them to pack everything but the kitchen sink. The irony of this situation seems to be that a 70-year-old grandma could pose

more of a threat as a passenger of an airplane than any of Osama's buddies if she packs too many presents to take to her grandchildren.

All this aside, I'm ready to see what

Russia is all about. There are some things that cannot be learned in a classroom and there are some opportunities you cannot pass up even if it means being across the world from everything familiar to you.

I look forward to continuing my column next week

from St. Petersburg as I shiver in the below-zero temperatures. Da svidanya!

“ I think if we only look at certain people as potential threats to our country's security, it will only be a matter of time before another terrorist attack takes place. ”

Joni is now either en route to Russia or waiting in line at the airport metal detector. Look for her column from Russia soon!

America cannot wait for another war

LINDSAY SAUNDERS
Staff Reporter

Once again America is preparing to go defend "what is right." It's "once again," but not for this generation. The closest thing our generation has known to war is the Persian Gulf War in the early 90s. I was about nine years old and my fourth grade class was putting together packages to send overseas. I knew what was going on, but at the same time it meant nothing to me.

Now, it does. It's 10 years later and I'm almost 20 years old. Now I like to read the news for myself and really know what is going on. To me, war is not just a thing you read about anymore. I don't take war lightly, especially after 9-11.

What is really going on? Do we want to fight? Should we go to war? Our country is thinking about a draft. This is a new concept for many of us to grasp, but a reinstatement of the draft might be necessary for us to have enough forces for defense.

Iraq may be concealing nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. If Saddam Hussein were to have possession of this kind of weaponry, he would be capable of joining forces or easily selling out to bin Laden and Al Qaeda.

Hussein has been portrayed to me as another "Hitler" and another Hitler joining forces with bin Laden terrifies me.

The thought of the draft is also scary, especially when it hits so close to home. We are concerned about losing so many of our people and harming so

many more innocent civilians. But what about all those lives that were lost on 9-11? What about all those lives lost at Pearl Harbor?

The thing about Pearl Harbor and World War II is that we waited to join the war. Because we waited Japan made an advance and hit us hard at one of the strongest naval bases in our country. We lost so many lives then because we *waited*.

We *waited* for 9-11. Bush knew something. The government had some sort of hinted warnings. The events of 9-11 could have

been prevented, but because we waited we lost some 3,000 lives that could have been saved.

I see no point in waiting this time. Why wait for Saddam to get hold of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons only to share them with bin Laden? Why are the inspections so doubted? The inspections are doubted because something is going on, something that is not good.

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