



: the Clemson forum :

: Clemson university's progressive news and opinion source :

January 2007

www.clemsonforum.com

Issue 6

The More Things Change

Todd May
Contributing
Writer



Todd is a professor of Philosophy

The Democrats have taken Congress. Everything will be okay now. Not really.

We can hope for some domestic progress, or at least some slowing of the pace of regress. However, in at least one region of the world, the Middle East, we can expect very little change in policy. The lives of those that U.S. policy has done so much to destroy will go on much as they have. In order to see how little will change in that part of the world, let's look at three areas: Israel and Palestine, Iraq, and Iran.

Historically, supporters of Israel have made their home in the Democratic Party. This is because many Jews, traditionally liberal, have identified with the more nearly liberal policies of the Democrats. (This, of course, is back when there was a liberal edge to the Democratic Party.) Most Jews identify themselves as supporters of Israel and its policies, and the organized Jewish community does so as a monolithic bloc. Thus, the Democratic Party has embraced a pro-Israel platform that has never seen fit to recognize the true character of the Israeli occupation. It was, in fact, Democratic president Lyndon Johnson who decisively tipped the scales of U.S. policy towards Israel in 1967.

no effect on U.S. policy toward Israel. This is crucial for Middle East policy. Uncritical U.S. support for Israel has been the central reason that most Arabs and Muslims do not trust U.S. intentions in the Middle East generally. The continuing failure to address this uncritical support will ensure that U.S. efforts in the region will be met with resistance.

The source of the Bush Administration's uncritical support for Israel and its genocidal policy toward the Palestinians comes not so much from the traditional Jewish community as from the Christian right. The Christian right finds itself in league with Jewish advocates for Israel and its policies, for reasons having less to do with the health of Israel as with Biblical predictions about the apocalypse. The result of this alliance is that, between Democrats and Republicans, there is a convergence on blind support for even the most egregious of Israel's policies toward the Palestinian people, not to mention its recent attack on Lebanon.

Turning to Iraq, the problem is different. U.S. policy has not historically been opposed to Iraq or to its leadership: recall that the U.S. supported Saddam Hussein during much of the 1970's and 1980's, when he was engaged in a campaign of genocide against the Kurds and an aggressive war against Iran. The problem with U.S. policy now is that Iraq is a quagmire. The ascension of the Democrats to Congressional control does nothing to change this.

There are those who say that the Democrats will, at least, hasten the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq. This is probably true, but is it a good thing? It is entirely unclear if complete withdrawal of the military is better than staying. If we stay, the U.S. offers a motivation for the resistance and also reinforces the

view of the U.S. as occupiers rather than liberators. Alternatively, if the U.S. military withdraws, the civil war that is swallowing Iraq will only grow in intensity. This is the true dimension of the failure of the Iraq war. Not only was it begun on the basis of lies; there is no way to end it that is not dire. Perhaps participation or some other solution can solve the quagmire that we have created there. There will be no solution, however, that does not come at the cost of many more thousands, and perhaps tens of thousands, of innocent lives.

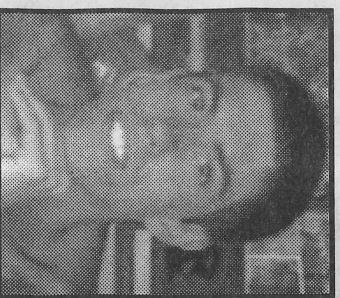
The difficulty with policy toward Iran follows directly from the quagmire in Iraq. This difficulty comes from two directions. From the Iranian side, there is a realization that the U.S. is willing to attack any country that cannot defend itself. This is a strong motivation for the development of nuclear weapons. Iran undoubtedly draws a lesson from the difference between U.S. policy towards Iraq and North Korea, two of the three members of the "axis of evil" (Iran being the third). One had no nuclear weapons, and was attacked. The other does, and was not. It's not rocket science. Well, okay, it is.

The other direction is that the U.S. cannot currently do anything

See CHANGE page 8

Useful Tragedies in American Politics

Bryan Cockfield
Copy/Layout Editor



Bryan is an Electrical Engineering major

The Christian right has been had. In one of the most deceitful political moves of this era, the conservative movement has taken advantage of an entire group of people and forced all of America's ignorant Christians, through religious and political rhetoric, to vote for them.

There are two tragedies in American politics as it exists today. The first is the reality that a political group has completely brainwashed a

religious group and convinced them that they are not doing "God's will" unless the people vote for conservative policies. The religious right has simply become a tool of the political right.

Religious groups of any kind should not have any doubt in the government of the United States any way, let alone the fundamentalist "Christians" in the religious right. Our government was set up to be purely secular and was based on limited central government to protect the rights of its citizens only.

On the other hand, it was a wonderfully executed and highly successful ploy on the part of the conservatives to bring a huge amount of voters to their cause. Even if those voters have not read the Constitution and have no knowledge of American politics or economics, they are voting because they have bought into the pro-

paganda from the conservatives.

It is somewhat similar to Mel Gibson's ploy after he released his film *The Passion of the Christ*. Just as Gibson's primary goal was to make money by pandering to ignorant Christians, the ploy of the conservatives is to generate votes by pandering to the same group of people. (After all, if Gibson really wanted to educate people on the sacrifices made by Christ, he could have made his movie available at no cost or just told people to read the Bible.)

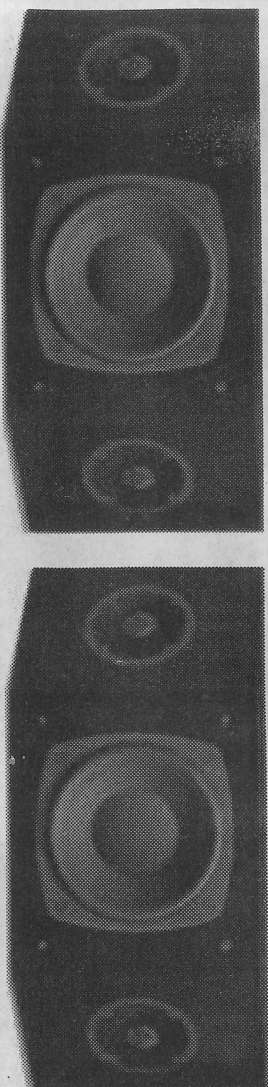
If these people simply realized that the country was founded on the principle of separation of church and state, it seems that we wouldn't have so much of a problem in this regard. Even if people do not understand this basic premise,

See TRAGEDY page 8

- FairTax: Adam talks about a plan that's fair for everyone.....3
- What the Democratic Party and J. Timberlake have in common...4
- Why free speech isn't so free after all.....4
- Think all Christians are Bible-beating fanatics?.....5
- Should we reinstate the draft?.....6

The Clemson Forum congratulates Hillary Clinton and Bill Richardson on their decision to run for Pres in '08...

Good luck...



Forum Feedback

Dear Forum,

I'd like to start by commending you on your efforts to create a progressive outlet at Clemson University. I've been here four years now, and I'm glad that your staff recognized the need for something left-leaning on this campus.

I find The Tiger a little boring mostly because I have no interest in reading updates on what the architecture students are doing or in cutting coupons. Although I tend to side with more of the opinions in The Observer, I find the whole newspaper a little too brash for my taste. While I've disagreed with over half of the articles written, I find that your newspaper gives me something halfway intelligent to argue with when I come to the realization that my friends have no idea what's going on in the political arena.

Maybe that's why I read your publication; I'm not one to solely read content that agrees with my opinions because that offers me nothing in terms of personal growth. I prefer to expand my mind by venturing into unknown territory rather than sitting in my house where everything is familiar.

Just wanted to show you a little support from an unlikely source.

Zach Dellinger

**We encourage and welcome any letters expressing your heartfelt opinions, ideas and comments. All of the content that we receive is edited for grammar, and we do our best to reproduce your letters as accurately as possible.*

You need a
place to
preach...

And we need
writers...

We welcome
your sermons

Write for us:

clemsonforum@yahoo.com

Letter From the Editor

Welcome to 2007 and the January issue of The Clemson Forum. As every year, I've already made several resolutions and broken every one of them. This year I tried to go easy on myself. I planned to attend Fike a whopping one time per week, and I promised I'd eat yogurt three times a week. I've been to Fike once, and there hasn't been any yogurt in my refrigerator since last November.

So I guess I'll just to stick to what I've always done rather than adding anything new to my routine. The good news is, the Forum is part of that old routine, as well as my commitment to providing Clemson University with a quality progressive newspaper where students and staff alike feel they can express their intelligent, well-thought-out opinions.

Additionally (as you probably notice from the giant black box to the left), I'd like you ask you all to direct your genius opinions towards the pen and paper rather than your apathetic best friend. I'm sure we'd appreciate you just as much...

Keepin' it classy,
Lindsay Stewart
editor-in-chief

Meet the Guilty Parties:

Lindsay Stewart
editor-in-chief
Says it right.

Bryan Cockfield
copy/layout editor
Does math...a lot.

Daniel Bjork
contributing writer
Played high school football.

Todd May
contributing writer
Still philosophizing.

Michael Schnibben
contributing writer
Quidquid latine dictum sit, altum videtur.

Trevor Seigler
contributing writer
A pessimist.

Adam Thompson
contributing writer
First-timer.

Kean Witzeman
contributing writer
A good Christian.

The opinions expressed in *The Clemson Forum* do not necessarily reflect those of the University, the faculty, the Board of Trustees, nor the staff as a whole. Artwork and photography reproduced in *The Clemson Forum* is property of the original artist. *The Clemson Forum* makes no claim to have created anything for which it does not explicitly take credit.

Thank you.

theclemsonforum@yahoo.com

(803) 981-4780

Printed by JS Printing. www.jsprinting.com

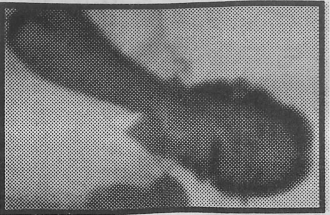
Published with support from the
Center for American Progress/
Campus Progress

{CAMPUS * PROGRESS}

CONNECT. ENGAGE. SPEAK UP.

<http://campusprogress.org>

The Private States of America



Kean Witzeman
Contributing
Writer

The Middle East is not the only thing under attack by the current presidential administration and the conservative backers that put Mr. Bush into office. Other targets of the American right-wing agenda include any "excess" programs undertaken by the government that could "easily" be undertaken by privatization. In other words, anything the government has ever done, during any period in history, except for waging war, is considered an unnecessary use of funds and is stealing money from the pockets of Americans.

Some hope to live in an America where our government is more inept than it was under the control of Bush et al, where the majority of control and legitimate power falls into the hands of American big business. One controversial issue that arose during the 2006 post-election debate hosted by Pi Sigma Alpha was the desire by advocates of the right to abolish the Department of Education in favor of an entirely private education system in America backed primarily by corporations and other means of private investment and donations.

Milton Friedman, a Nobel Prize winning economist and father of the privatize education movement, has influenced decades of conservative thought. Friedman strongly championed a voucher system, wherein parents could receive government monies to send their children to the private school of their choosing. In doing so, the funds would allow the private sector to grow while reducing the public sector, to the point where it was no longer needed, at which point all children would be educated in private schools without the government's assistance. Meanwhile, for-profit industries would develop that would efficiently manage

the schools and, through competition and the principles of a free market, the costs would go down while the overall quality of education would increase.

Although Friedman was certainly a brilliant man, one has to understand that economics as a pseudoscience is often based on how things should or might work in reality. There is very little empirical evidence that can be introduced into the field of study otherwise, making it heavily reliant on models and theories. It is a field that is constantly changing with new and improved theories and therefore basing a drastic overhaul of something as critical as education is a dangerous idea. After all, "trickle down economics" in the depression era was an ineffective ideology that only further hurt the nation as a whole.

The Hawley-Smoot tariff is another prime example of conservative economic and fiscal policy that had disastrous results, as it, arguably, was the primary catalyst for the Great Depression and exacerbated World War II. I do not mean to imply that conservative economic policy is more flawed than liberal policy, I simply mean to expose that drastic mistakes have been made due to faulty economic theories and practice. It's also important to analyze the reasons behind the cries for the beheading of the department of education. Is the betterment of education as a whole really the driving force, or is there perhaps a slightly less attractive reason? Dr. Kennedy of Indiana University explains in her article, "Privatizing Education, the Politics of Vouchers" that the primary pushers of this agenda are pro-market libertarians, big business itself, and Christian fundamentalist organizations.

The first two come from a similar standpoint which holds an element of credibility. The big-business, pro-market crowd believes that education is not an issue to be left to inept governmental bureaucracies. They feel that introducing competition to education will produce a superior product to the consumer, at a cheaper cost. However, as education is often seen as a

luxury good, there may be little incentive to lower the cost so everyday people can afford it. Many private schools desire an elite status and thus are not willing to lower costs in order for low income individuals with enormous potential to benefit. For example, the competition between the elite Ivy League schools as well as other top notch private and public universities has not driven costs down, but has rather done the reverse.

It seems that the American ideal of "you get what you pay for" is alive and well in the arena of educational institutes. Furthermore, if these private education companies would constantly lower costs in order to capture more of the market, then are they really providing a better service then what is currently in place, with schools operating terribly underfunded? The decreases have to come from somewhere, and as the history of American business has affirmed, that rarely comes willingly from the companies' bottom lines.

Also, if all schools are private, it is safe to argue that investment will be made, as it is always, in primarily affluent areas where the chance for success is greatest. It's no secret that for-profit industries or major corporations running private schools would demand profitable returns. What major corporations are willing to invest large amounts of capital into the projects and inner city areas of America to ensure those individuals' opportunity for education? It's sad, but it seems that the government is one of the only remaining institutions in America that at least maintains a semblance of concern for the impoverished while being able to provide some sort of large-scale relief. A privatized education system might somewhat benefit the middle and upper classes, but would spell disaster to the disenfranchised members of society.

Ultimately, the debate rests on an individual's viewpoint of American big business. Proponents of privatizing education rely heavily on the idea that large corporations could not only handle the daunting task of educating the

See PRIVATE page 6

FairTax is a Fair Tax

Adam Thompson
Contributing Writer



Adam is an Electrical Engineering co-op

Taxation should be fair for everyone. With the lengthy paperwork, forms, and obtuse-cated rules, many Americans have to hire someone to file taxes for them. Not only this, if one is wealthy enough, there are enough loopholes to almost escape the burden of taxes completely.

The weight then falls on the middle class. With no way to control the amount of money that one puts into the system, the current tax code is both unfair and is too lenient on those who have the means to manipulate the fallacies in it. The only truly just tax plan would involve the elimination of these unfair taxes (income tax, property tax, estate tax) and replace them with a simple sales tax.

Granted, the new sales tax would make everyday items more expensive (the cost would increase by around 30 percent, the scaled approximate of a 23 percent income tax), but with a gross income to spend, the difference would be quite manageable. The genius behind a strict sales tax lies in the fact that one can control how much tax one pays, or rather, the amount one pays is proportional to the amount he spends. This means that there would no longer

be any means for the rich to escape tax relief (they, in general, spend more), thus solving a taxation problem faced for years.

Furthermore, necessities such as food and

Why haven't more Americans heard of it? The answer lies in the fact that the United States does not wish to change.

clothing would be tax free (excluding luxury items such as articles of clothing over a set amount and non-essential foods). The poor, consequently, would not be punished with a regressive tax on the necessities of life.

Many against of this type of tax plan (sometimes referred to as FairTax) argue a high tax would have a negative effect on the economy. Naturally, they argue, if one is taxed at a high rate, people will not purchase as many "luxury" goods, and the number of businesses that manufacture and place headquarters in the United States would be jeopardized.

After studying the impacts of the FairTax plan, however, many economists have determined the opposite. Without losing income to taxes along with the continual property taxes, people will have more money to buy more items.

Furthermore, according to the National Bureau of Economic Research, the Gross Domestic Product under this type of taxation system would increase by about ten percent, salary by eight percent, employment by four, and capital stock by forty-two percent. In a poll of five hundred companies, four hundred stated they would either open up a manufacturing plant or move their headquarters to the United States if all taxes were replaced by a high sales tax.

With all of the benefits of a high sales tax, why hasn't the United States implemented it? Why haven't more Americans heard of it? The answer lies in the fact that the United States does not wish to change. Primarily, the power to enact an income tax is an Amendment to the Constitution, and changing to a simple sales tax would result in the repeal of this Amendment. (That's hard to do!)

Additionally, a more lucid tax plan would disintegrate the need for many IRS agents, accountants, and other businesses constructed to help the citizen pay his taxes. Lastly, and probably most importantly, is the fact that the government would certainly have to scale down spending. By eliminating miscellaneous taxes such as estate and property, the government will be losing some of its expected income. Some programs and a lot of pork barrel legislation will need to be cut to make this system work.

Though both Democrats and Republicans would lose a base agenda (raise taxes vs. lower taxes), the country would ultimately benefit—bringing the American economy to a new level of power and wealth.

Bringing Sexy Back



Daniel Bjork
Contributing Writer

On November 8th, the day after election day, I purposefully walked into my political science class a few minutes late so that I could be sure to walk by my conservative professor, Dr. Woodward, with as big a grin as I could muster after my party had won sweepingly across the nation. I was as happy as Strom Thurmond at a Klan rally, even though my own state did not follow the Democratic trend... and the President was still a Republican.

In any case, it is clear the Democrats are ready to bring sexy back to Washington. With Bill Clinton not being one of the newly-elected Democrats, hopefully it will indeed be sexy - not sex - that the Democrats bring back. The last two (really six) years have been decidedly unsexy. In 2004, President Bush earned a second term and it was the Republican Party which enjoyed a sweeping national victory. Since that time, not one significant piece of legislation has been passed, and no strides have been made in Iraq.

The President did his damndest to push legislation through, pushing hard in early 2005 for the privatization of social security. That plan was quickly shot down not just by Congress but by the people, who showed very little support for such a major change to the system. Earlier this year the President tried to pass immigration reform, but that was shot down by Republican extremists who believe any-

thing short of shooting an illegal immigrant on sight is amnesty. The closest the Republicans came in the last two years to making any significant changes came last year when they attempted to make American government a system of one party rule by ending the filibuster.

The beginning of the downfall of the Republican party came in early 2005 when Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist stood on the Senate floor and declared Teri Schiavo to no longer be in a persistent vegetative state (PVS). He had called an emergency session of Congress to pass legislation to make it legal for the state laws in Florida to be challenged in Federal courts to stop Teri Schiavo's feeding tube from being pulled. The Federal

"Perhaps the best move the Democrats made was locking Democratic National Committee chairman Howard Dean in a closet."

PVS based on a ten minute video tape, despite the opinion of several expert neurologists that she was.

This disaster put the Republicans on a slippery slope and, coupled with the President's failed social security reform plan, made for a rough first quarter of President Bush's second term. It never got better. There was scandal after scandal. Vice President Cheney and Deputy Chief of Staff Karl Rove were accused of leaking the identity of a CIA agent to the press, Congressman Duke Cunningham pleaded guilty to bribery

charges, many Republican Congressmen were tied to corrupt lobbyist Jack Abramoff, including House Majority Leader and powerful Republican Tom Delay, who was eventually forced to resign, and the Vice President shot a man in the face. To make matters worse the situation in Iraq was not getting better, and at times it seemed to be getting worse. To put the icing on the cake, just as the Republicans were making some headway in the polls, Republican Mark Foley was caught in September sending sexually explicit emails to a sixteen year old male congressional page.

The Democrats, on the other hand, managed to secure a victorious night on November 7th. Perhaps the best move the Democrats made was locking Democratic National Committee chairman Howard Dean in a closet. In the months leading up to the elections, Dean was not seen or heard from by a single voter. In an article that appeared in this very paper last february, it was yours truly who suggested that the Democrats could regain the majority in Congress if

See SEXY page 7



Lindsay Stewart
Editor-in-Chief

In an attempt to unite this campus and identify with conservatives on an important issue, for the first and probably only time in my college career I agree with Andrew Davis in his rejection of the free speech zones at Clemson University. Instituted in the early nineties, free speech zones were originally established as a way to "protect" protesters and other exhibitors from harm. Advocates cited famous demonstrations such as those during the Civil Rights and Vietnam War era, pointing out the violence that occurred in the process, and arguing that these zones would ensure the safety of those who wished to exercise their constitutional rights.

Free speech zones were declared constitutional because they did not infringe on the content of what was said, the one aspect of free speech that is explicitly accounted for in the First Amendment. When the zones were first established, the Supreme Court rea-

soned that the location of where exactly one could practice their rights was not clearly defined. Therefore, since people were still allowed to say whatever they wanted within the limits of the free speech zones, these areas remained constitutional.

However, what these areas have become is a gateway to limiting free speech in general, largely because politicians have used them as a mechanism to discriminate against the opposition.

Our own President Bush has shown his adamant support of free speech and concern for the safety of individuals who choose to exercise their rights as US citizens by sending his Secret Service to locations before he arrives, and strategically placing these zones anywhere from a third to a half mile away from the site where he plans to speak. At one appearance by Bush in South Carolina, the only man carrying an anti-Bush sign was asked to move to one of the designated free speech zones. The man, Brett Burse, refused to move, and was arrested and slapped with trespassing charges.

When asked why he was forced to move, police responded that it was the content of what Burse was saying, and they were worried for the safety of the president. This is

where the problem arises, and why individuals like Andrew Davis and others are protesting. Coincidentally, the individuals asked to move into free speech zones are typically members of the opposition, and the protection that protesters receive is usually in the form of cement walls or a chain-link fence.

Additionally, public officials have failed to understand that the First Amendment does not apply to private citizens. If I wished, I could tell anyone I wanted that they needed to remove themselves to one of the designated free speech zones, because I am not in a government position. However, government action is the mechanism that triggers the safeguards that the constitution provides. When the ACLU and others decide that these protections may have been violated by the administration (not private actors), a constitutional challenge arises.

To be fair, during the 2004 Democratic National Convention in Boston, free speech zones were also used to "keep the peace." However, instead of the cement walls usually bestowed to protect the safety of these individuals, Democrats thought they would add to the sanctuary of civil liberties by toppling it off with razor wire. Case in point, all political par-

ties are guilty of misuse as protesters are sent to these areas as a way to keep them out of sight of the media, politicians, and, essentially, the general public. By allowing politicians and others the privilege to choose who does and does not have to assemble within the zones, they are, inadvertently, given the right to limit what the media and other nonprotesters can and cannot be subjected to. Ultimately, public officials have the ability to limit free speech by hiding behind the pronounced constitutionality of free speech zones.

In case you were wondering, the free speech zones at Clemson are located in the lower plaza of the Hendrix center and Cox Plaza in front of Johnstone. While these locations certainly do not remove protesters to an out-of-the-way location away from the eyes and ears of the general public, their mere existence leaves them vulnerable to abuse.

With the help of the Supreme Court, our government has succeeded in limiting the practice of your First Amendment rights and basic civil liberties to designated areas. On that note, remember that you must reserve these areas seventy-two hours in advance or you might have to wait until next week to speak freely.

Andrew Davis, You've Got a Point

The Faith of Reason



Michael is a History and Religion major

Michael Schnibben
Contributing
Writer

As many a secular-progressive surveys today's political landscape, they are confident in the advance and eventual triumph of that vacuous ideal known as "progress." Despite this unflagging faith, such people are nonetheless concerned that the forces of religion conspire to halt the impetus of progress and drag Western Civilization back into the Dark Ages. Many view religion as a residual element of mankind's barbaric, superstitious past; something to be tolerated at best but ultimately educated out of the general population. An honest evaluation of

such individuals that Christianity has never been an impediment to progress and elucidate the intellectual foundations of the world's largest religion. Before we can truly understand the ways in which Christianity has impacted our modern perceptions of the universe, we must first understand how Christians view their own religion and the deity it worships. The Gospel of St. John begins with the sentence, "In the beginning there was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God." Though the symbolic meaning of this phrase is somewhat lost to those of us who read only in modern English, it was not to those Christians who read the text in its original language: Koine Greek. In Greek, "word" is rendered as "logos," a term whose meaning goes far deeper than its modern transliteration. The concept of logos, loosely meaning "reason," was used by the Stoics

"Christians believe that reason, in conjunction with faith, can only bring one closer to God; what must be avoided are the uncompromising extremes: reasonless faith is fanatical, while faithless reason is heartless."

of Hellenistic Athens to define the vital force responsible for the creation of the universe.

The conception of God, and hence, Christ, as the logos was

adopted by early Christian philosophers, such as Justin Martyr and Anselm of Canterbury, who held God to be the absolute standard of perfection. They theorized that a perfect universe, created by a perfect God, would function according to

"The relationship between reason and faith is not the absolute dichotomy that some would wish to see it as."

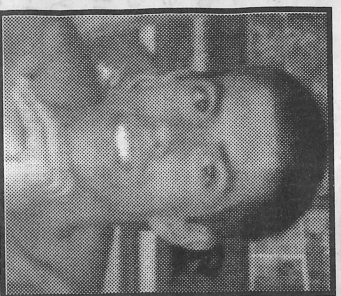
divine laws which could be understood by the human capacity of reason. Because perfection itself was a concept reasoned into existence by the philosophers of Classical Greece, the ultimate goal of reason was to achieve perfection by acting in accordance with the divine laws that upheld the harmonious order of the universe. Christ, as God incarnate, was the logos personified; he was an entirely perfect human, and through him perfection was within the grasp of every human being. Christians place their faith in a reasonable God who created an ordered universe; the fallen state of mankind is regarded as an aberration in God's original design, only by accepting Christ can we be redeemed and again in perfect harmony with God. Thus, faith and reason engender the same conclusion: as fallen creatures, we can only look to Christ for redemption.

This contrasted greatly with the Christian god, who always acts in accordance with the laws of reason; to restore perfection in the universe, though mortals may not always understand God's actions, Christians have faith that God's intervention will always bring his creation closer to perfection. Because God acts in a reasonable manner, it is possible to apply the laws of reason to his revealed truth and perfect our understanding of him. From this attitude arose the science of theology, which seeks to build faith through the application of reason.

Much more than being a religion founded upon reason, however, the Christian Church was the focal point around which Western culture mustered after the disastrous collapse of the Western Roman Empire in 476 AD; for the next three and a half centuries the Dark Ages descended upon the Western World. During these barbaric and troubled times, the Church shone forth as a beacon of

See REASON page 8

An Old Solution to a New Problem



Bryan is an Electrical Engineering major

Bryan Cockfield
Copy/Layout
Editor

Right now I am stranded on I-385 on my way to Charleston and

I have just called for help on my CB radio. Instead of becoming angry at my car (a 1989 Nissan Sentra named Sue that my father purchased new in 1988) or at highway patrol for sending approximately ten tow trucks past me while I was stranded, I was reminded of better times by talking on the old citizen's-band.

Those were the good days. The 1970s, when gas was thirty-five cents to the gallon, Led Zep-pelin still toured, truckers had to drive to Texarkana to get illegal west-coast beer for politicians in Georgia, driving a car with a manual transmission was not a lost art, American manufacturers made quality automobiles, and, most importantly, people understood the solution to the energy crisis that would arise with the dawn of the new millennium.

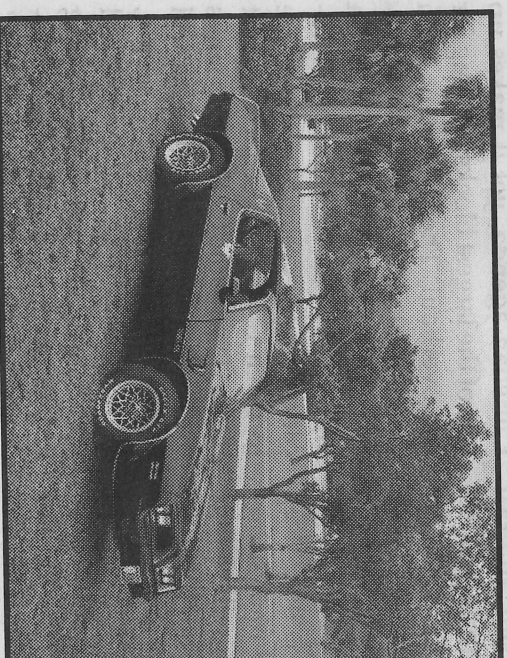
The solution, of course, is to use as much of the fossil fuels as we can as fast as possible. This will coerce our government, as well as the private sector, out of the Middle East and into the laboratory to develop an alternative to petroleum-based products before the situation gets

further out of control.

Obviously, the faster we can consume all of these products, the less we will care about what happens in the Middle East and other expensive parts of the world. We could even develop alternatives to gasoline from resources we have in abundance in our own country, like water and hydrogen or even sunlight.

Currently, it would be too hard to actually use water or sunlight to produce usable energy. It is easier to get mixed up in the affairs of other countries, damage wildlife preserves, drill through hundreds of meters of solid rock, ship crude oil halfway around the world or pipe it in from the hurricane devastated parts of the Gulf of Mexico, then refine it, distribute it, and burn it, than it would be to develop some kind of cell that converts sunlight into electrical energy and stores those charges in something we might call a "battery." Therefore, by forcing the energy crisis to a peak, R&D in the complicated science of electricity will be given the opportunity to develop new, cheap sources of energy.

Since drivers of automobiles are the primary buyers of petroleum, the first step towards this goal is to change the driving habits of two key demographics. First of all, the stereotypical "soc-



cer mom" will move from her mini van into a Ford F-350 Super Duty Extended Cab, to make sure she has plenty of room for children (who will grow up and also need vehicles to drive), book bags, groceries, and all of the other accoutrements of motherhood, while also getting optimum usage of fuel (gasoline or diesel, depending on the truck).

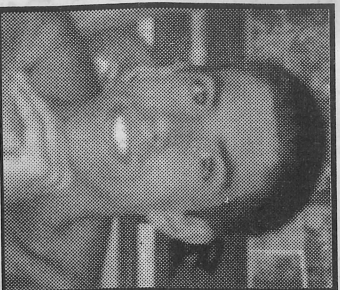
Many in this demographic already drive vehicles of this nature out of pure necessity, so the next step is to get environmentalists out of their hybrid cars and other Japanese engineering marvels and into American-made sport utility vehicles

or Hummers, if they prefer. Since I am neither supporting a family nor an environmentalist, I will be forced to drive a 1973 Pontiac Trans Am with a four hundred and fifty-five cubic inch engine (and about as many horsepower) and a maximum fuel efficiency of nine miles to the gallon.

Although automobiles are the chief concern in the energy crisis, there are other important applications of fossil fuels. Clemson University currently uses coal to produce 60 percent of its

See TRANS AM page 7

For the Good of the Nation



Bryan is an Electrical Engineering major

Bryan Cockfield
Copy/Layout Editor

The president has committed 20,000 additional troops to the Middle East. To keep these troops from stretching too thin (as our military leaders, president, joint chiefs, and defense secretary have done in the past), even with the additional troops, the United States should return immediately to the draft.

The sooner the U.S. returns to conscription, the better off we will all be. Not only would a draft strengthen the military, it would improve an already burgeoning economy and would also improve the character and disposition of the American people.

This draft, which the U.S. should employ in the months to come, will draft both men and women with one exemption – those who are in college, but only students who are actively pursuing a degree that will help the war effort upon graduation. However, once these students graduate, they will be eligible for a commission as an officer via the draft.

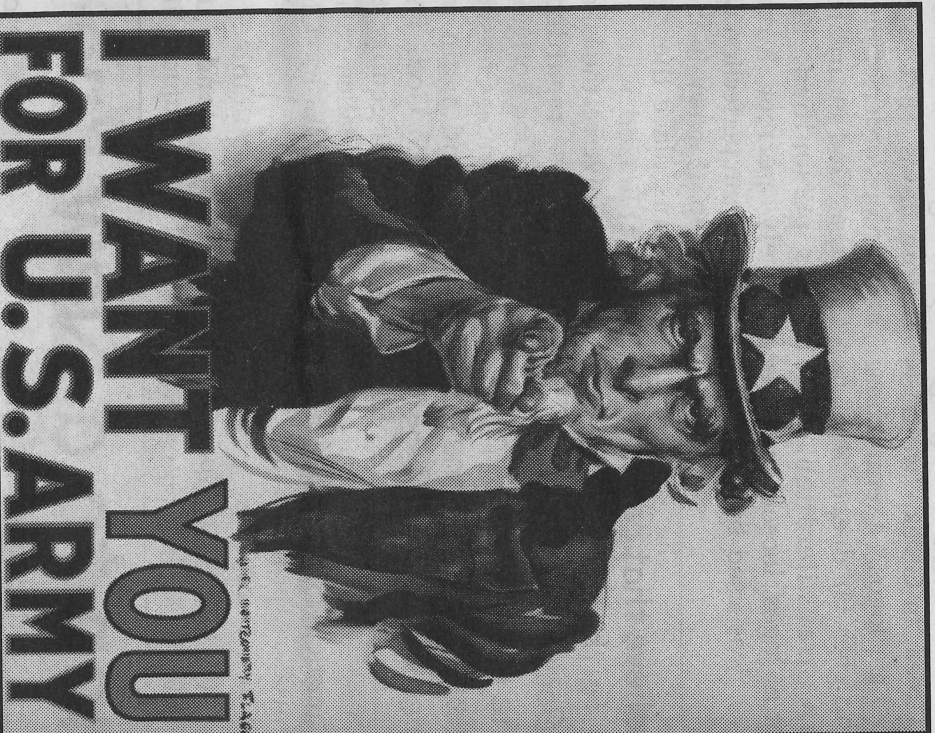
Obviously there will be a lot of debate as to what kinds of majors will qualify as “helping the war effort” but one thing is for sure: majors such as (but not limited to) English, political science, business, and industrial engineering will be taken first. Other engineering majors, science majors, and architecture majors will be allowed to stay in school.

After this draft has been proposed, the American people will actually see an increase in the effectiveness of national security, rather than empty White House rhetoric about how the country is more secure because of some new, unconstitutional policy (i.e. the U.S. Patriot

Act). The draft is a sound national security policy because it directly benefits security by effectively strengthening the military.

Apart from renewed national security, we should immediately see a drastic economic expansion. With the country driven more towards the war effort, we will see a noticeable upward trend in the economy, similar to the economic escalation right after the United States engaged itself in World War II. The only way to improve the economy significantly is to get involved in a war. Even Ronald Reagan improved the economy by spending massive amounts of money on national defense to create a peacetime war economy.

Even though there are many practical and useful advantages to the draft, it will also improve the morale of the American people. This is not to imply that they will be happy about the draft in any way, but they will be



tioning properly.

Private
continued from page 3

youth of America, but that the companies in general have a fundamental concern with the overall wellbeing of the American people. Those opposed to privatization are not quite as easily convinced about the altruistic nature of business and business leaders, and for good reason. Our government is neck deep in corruption, scandal and incompetence (hopefully that will change with the past election), but business has not had a perfect record either.

Despite all the talk from the pro-market libertarian side about improving education throughout privatization, it's not hard to discern the other, possibly more important issue behind their interest in education. Ultimately, private education means less governmental expenditures which means less taxes which means more money that well-to-do people have to use in worship of the Material Gods. After all isn't that what America's all about? The system of government we have in place can be controlled and is meant to be reformed rather than discarded when aspects of the systems are not func-

tioning properly.

On the other side of education privatization from the pro-market, libertarian/conservative movement is the much less rational right-wing Christian agenda, yet it makes up one of the largest blocks pushing for the overhaul. The argument from fundamentalist Christian organizations like The Christian Coalition and Citizens for Excellence in Education (CEE) is reliant on the desire to teach religion in school. Robert Simonds with the CEE greatly sums up the argument with the typical jargon religious zealots love, saying, “atheism and many perverted forms of immorality are being forced upon all public school students, not just Christian students.”

Once again, we see a few outspoken members of the religious right attempting to influence the government of the United States in order to press their particular religious beliefs on the country as a whole. Because private religious schools are currently available for parents to send children to if religious education is an important issue to the family, their argument and rational for privatization has little intellectual credence.

When it comes to the state of

motivated to start paying attention to foreign policy if their friends and family members are being forced to fight and die in a war. People, as individuals, will seek to become informed, rather than have their opinions dictated to them by Fox News Channel. They will assess whether or not they believe that the conflict in the Middle East is actually worth the lives of men and women who are United States citizens, registered aliens, illegal aliens, refugees, dual nationals, or disabled.

As it is now, with an entirely volunteer force, the American people do not care about the crisis in the Middle East, the people who are dying, or for what reasons they are fighting and dying. The high-ups in the Bush administration do not even know the particulars of the civil war that has engulfed the area (one administrator could not tell a reporter whether or not there were more Sunni or Shi'a in Iraq).

The only opposition to a return to the draft is more empty rhetoric from cut-and-runners that claim that conscription is an infringement on basic civil liberties and freedoms. But we should all be comfortable with giving up some of our basic freedoms and civil liberties for the sake of security. After all, the U.S. Patriot Act passed 99-1 in the Senate, with Russ Feingold (D-WI) as the only senator who cared not to compromise civil liberty.

A few years ago, a few senators proposed to reinstate the draft with no exemptions (including women: Universal National Service Act of 2003, HR 163) Perhaps they realized that if women want equal rights, they should have equal treatment. Or they saw that this was the first step on the road to a renewed draft which would finally be successful with involving the American people in foreign policy. The policy would effectively end the war by finally creating an informed constituency. No wonder that the HR 163 bill was killed by the people a draft would hurt the worst: current members of Congress and their affiliates.

American public education, few people have delusions of grandeur. It is near impossible to overlook the numerous flaws that have become inherent in the system, but at the same time it becomes important to realize that the system can be changed. The question is not why public education is failing us, but rather why are we failing public education? The answer seems to be that our culture is becoming less conducive to producing an environment where education is seen as the most important issue. We can provide for national defense through tax revenue but we have qualms with providing adequate education for future generations. We can overthrow tyrants and establish “democracies,” but we cannot overthrow the ignorance plaguing our own country or establish a society where education is viewed as a fundamental human right.

We put more trust in big business that has few checks and balances, while at the same time forgetting that our elected officials are subject to such a system. We allow the ethics of competition, capitalism and higher profit margins to control our lives, while forgetting that we as humans have a respon-

sibility to each other that sometimes falls outside of basic capitalist market principles. Competition and high profits are great, but people living in the greatest country that world has ever seen are able to eat and are afforded the opportunity to receive a decent education. Education needs to be viewed in terms outside of the classroom as well. Instead of buying the new 600 dollar video game console, how about spending 20 bucks on a few good books? How about encouraging kids to use their imaginations and foster other creative processes that can be an important form of learning outside of the classroom?

As a country, we need to prioritize. Before we privatize education and further disenfranchise those who are poor or have special needs, perhaps we need to take a critical look at ourselves. Possibly the blame falls squarely on us rather than a faceless bureaucracy. The change needs to come from within, not from without. We have the power to change and the government has the funds to provide an efficient system. What we need, not the means or the infrastructure, but rather the collective will power to see to it that that happens.

Waiting for the End of the World



Trevor is an English major

Trevor Seigler
Contributing
Writer

If the last time you went to church they were giving out free "Im-p e a c h B i l l a r y" b u m p e r stickers, you have probably tuned in to some Sunday morning services or the Trinity Broadcast Network fundraisers to see what you're missing out on, Jesus-wise. And if you've tuned in lately, you know we're all screwed.

Don't laugh, unbelievers; according to reputable preachers like Oral Roberts' creepy sons Creflo Dollar, Benny Hinn, and Kirk Cameron, the end of the world is nigh. What's more, it's likely to happen any day. Like, today even! And if you're not cool with God, you'll be cast into the eternal lake of fire. Otherwise known as downtown Sandusky, Ohio.

And no one gets out of Sandusky alive...

But what to do, fellow sinners? Praying is right out, you've all forgotten how. And no, the last time you asked God, Allah, Buddha, and all the gods of Hinduism (just to cover your bases, you may have thrown Satan into the mix) for help on your last research paper doesn't count. It's not His fault that you got that C-.

Conversion back to Christianity at the last minute won't cut it either. I get the impression from Megiddo: The Omega Code 2 that the world will be ensnared by an over-the-top Michael York as their new savior, so by the time you join back into the fold the fold will have used some really bad CGI effects to show it's actually a front for the Anti-Christ. And the

health insurance package will be crap.

Other religions are nice, if you've got the time to devote to them. But if you get lazy, you could always create your own. I've started the Church of Sarah Vowell, but I doubt a witty and acerbic commentator on modern American life will suffice when you get to the Pearly Gates. Still, have you read *Take the Cannoli*? It's way better than the Bible.

The truth is, there's not much you can do to prepare for the end of the world. Folks have been trading in on the idea of "it could all end tomorrow" for as long as there's been a today, or a tomorrow, or a Today Show. In fact, I'm sure they'll have Richard Simmons on this morning, making fat people feel bad about themselves while strutting about in spangled Spandex. If that's not a sign of the end of days, I don't know what is.

Let's say, for argument's sake, that Kirk Cameron is onto something (other than the fact that his old show actually featured a character named "Boner," he's led a reputable existence since at least 1988). Let's say that we're in the end of days, that the tsunami, the war in Iraq, and the cancellation of Arrested Development while According to Jim continues its assault on unsuspecting viewers are all signs of the impending apocalypse. Why are the preachers so damn happy about it?

Sure, it means they'll go to heaven, where they can finally be free to snort as much coke and sleep with as many young men as they would have liked to while they were on Earth, if not for the dearth in hotel employees all over America who can't keep their mouths shut if they know what's good for 'em. But for the rest of us, it just means endless event that can't be stopped, like natural disasters, accidents of man, and Celine Dion. And that's a pretty grim por-

begging for a chance and now they have it, here's to hoping they do not blow it. Upon entering my class on November the 8th, I consoled my professor, telling him that I knew how he felt; he replied that I might get to feel it again soon. For the time being, however, sexy is back, and the Democrats' main focus over the next two years should not be on 2007, but on 2008.

Trans Am

continued from page 5

electrical energy. This is simply not enough. As a research university, we are in a unique position to develop alternate forms of energy for future use while at the same time doing our part for America to consume fossil fuels. I believe that we should increase the use of coal on campus to produce around 90 percent of our electrical energy. (It would simply be impractical to try for the ideal 100 percent.)

An argument against this proposition is that the effects on the environment could be damaging. However, at our current rate of consumption, we will eventually run out of fossil fuel stores, so the total amount of pollutants will be the same no matter how long it takes us to get there. Also, once we have a market for new forms of energy, we won't need to drill for oil in Alaska and other natural wildlife preserves.

There is also a concern that all of this increased consumption will hit American wallets. But these extra expenditures will stimulate the economy and possibly eliminate the federal deficit. This would result in tax cuts and more money for Americans in the long run. By spending more money, we will be making more money.

And, following the current trend of our federal government to subsidize to oil companies for producing less oil with the aim of somehow stimulating production, we should subsidize American automobile manufacturers. It's not their fault that un-American Americans would rather drive cheaper, efficient imported cars

tent of things to come.

But look on the bright side, when the earth is engulfed in fire and brimstone and there is much wailing and gnashing of teeth, you have an excuse not to go to work. Plus, it gives you time to square things with people to whom you owe a debt of something. I'll go ahead and start, feel free to chime in anytime you think you've got something you need to get off your chest.

To all the girls I've loved before (who, for legal reasons, shall be referred to as Beth H., Brooke H., Becky R., Joanne J., Bonnie M., Nicole P. and Angelina J.), I'm sorry that I either let you down or lived up exactly to whatever you thought I'd be. And Angelina, honey, if it doesn't work out with Brad...you've still got my number, right? It's in the book.

To my bosses (who, for legal reasons, shall be referred to as Larry W., Larry S., and Johnny E., but not Jeremy B. because he can claim he's "co-manager" all he wants but he's just the assistant to the manager), I guess I wasn't that good of an employee. But that's what you get by hiring a registered pyromaniac.

To all my friends, who shall remain nameless because I'm not sure I have any, I think it's time you paid me back for all the hours of time we spent together pretending to get along. I've rounded it up to about \$0.12 cents each, but I have over five million friends. So pay up.

And finally, to all the people who I may have offended over the years: Get bent. I said what I said, I know what I said, and it's your problem if you can't deal with it.

Well, I'm glad I got that off my chest...the end of the world can come anytime now and I'll be good...yep, no rush but I really could use it now...I've cleared my schedule for this...it's not happening, is it? Shit, now I have to go to the Salvation Army and get all my stuff back. Because I didn't think I'd need a DVD player, my clothes, or my family anymore.

Boy, is my family going to be pissed...

Sexy

continued from page 4

if they could shut Howard Dean and other extreme liberals up - and that's exactly what they did. There was a small scare when another Democratic blabbermouth, John Kerry, insinuated that those who could not make it in school wound up in the military, but by that time it was too little, too late for the Republicans. Now, sexy will officially be back in Washington.

The Democrats must take full advantage of the next two years and keep sexy in Washington. The Democrats should pass the President's plan for immigration reform, and they should raise the minimum wage (although whether or not the President would sign such a bill is uncertain). The Democrats should also pass legislation they know the President will not sign, such as social security reform that does not involve privatization and federal funding for stem-cell research. The Democrats must avoid raising taxes on the middle class in the next two years, and must avoid passing socially liberal legislation, such as any piece of legislation that contains the words "gay" and "marriage." Above all else, the Democrats must make headway in Iraq, and show that they too can be strong on defense. If there is a terrorist attack on American soil in the next two years, it would damage the Democratic party in such a way that it may never fully recover.

This election does not give the Democrats a mandate on any socially liberal policy. It does, however, give the Democrats a mandate to try something different than what the Republicans have already tried. The fallout from the elections is already evident, with the terribly unsexy Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld "resigning" the day after the elections and the President announcing a change in direction in Iraq after months of saying we just need to "stay the course." For two years the Democrats have been

rather than economical American counterparts. We should all learn that in the oil industry, it's all right to be a looter and not a producer.

Money isn't the only issue at stake. If we don't implement this plan soon, mass panic could set in. In fact, the longer it takes us to expend our supplies of fossil fuels, the more devastating the sudden lack of fuel will be when it occurs. And, since the United States only responds to crises when it is too late to do anything helpful (such as the implementation of airport security only after the terrorist attacks on September 11th), the solution is to initiate this crisis quickly so we can go ahead and deal with the damage that it will undoubtedly cause.

We already see people lining up to buy gas when prices spike. Admittedly, reasonable people point and laugh at those who are foolishly supporting the demands of OPEC and the apparently random whims of hurricanes, but one day there really will be a shortage.

This panic would be lessened if everyone knew that fossil fuels could be completely consumed any day and if they had an alternative mode of transportation ready to go on that day. If we continue to conserve resources, we will only mislead ourselves and believe that fossil fuel supplies are far from being depleted. Imagine the panic that would come about one day if we continue believing that oil supplies will never run out. It would be apocalyptic.

Every good American should follow these simple procedures to ensure we deplete the fossil fuel supply as fast as possible. However, it is important to note that I do not have the means to purchase the '73 Trans Am myself. As a poor college student, I apologize to everyone that the energy crisis is affecting, but Sue currently gets a standard 35 miles to the gallon. I will, however, accept donations to help purchase the more economically-friendly Trans Am so I can do my part for America.

Reason

continued from page 5

light in the darkness; so powerful that not even pillaging hordes of Huns, Magyars, Saxons, Norsemen or Saracens could destroy her. As the barbarians were slowly converted to the religion of Christ, the re-civilizing of the West proceeded in the halls of monasteries and cathedral schools, where the learning and culture of the ancient world was protected from the chaos outside. By the Middle Ages, these centers of learning had evolved into universities, where the clergy instructed new generations in the wisdom of the ancient world. The cultural renaissance that swept Europe at the dawn of the thirteenth century would have been utterly impossible without Christian Church, to whom it looked for inspiration as well as patronage.

The influence of Christianity on the modern world is felt well beyond the aesthetic arts; modern science is very much indebted to the Church. The first astronomer to challenge the geocentric model of solar system developed by Aristotle, Nicolas Copernicus, was a Catholic cleric whose research was financed by his uncle, the Archbishop of Warmia. Over a decade before Copernicus published *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium* in 1542, his work was well-known and received with much interest by many high-ranking clerics within the Church, among them Pope Paul III (1534-1549), to whom he dedicated the book. The heliocentric model of Copernicus, though imperfect in many ways, came to us through the patronage of the Catholic Church and the diligent work of one of her own clerics. Though received enthusiastically by the Catholic Church, Martin

Luther, Philipp Melancthon and a host of other Protestant "Reformers" vehemently opposed the Copernican model.

Of course, no discussion of heliocentrism would be complete without mentioning Galileo Galilei, who was hauled before the Inquisition and forced to recant his previous statements in 1633. Galileo was not condemned for his beliefs, but his insistence on their absolute truth without proper evidence, asserting that tides and waves are caused by the Earth's movement; an argument now known to be erroneous. Despite the apparent backlash against astronomical science during the time of Galileo, the calendar in use today, the Gregorian Calendar was promulgated by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582, when he issued *Inter Gravissimas*, a papal bull that dropped eleven days from that year, altering the ancient Julian Calendar. The new calendar took effect in the Catholic World on October 15, 1582; it would take Protestant nations well over a century and a half to adopt the new system, still in use today.

The influence of the Church on science has continued well into modern times; the Big Bang Theory, now the most accepted explanation for the beginning of the universe, was first developed by Georges Lemaitre, a Catholic priest from Belgium who first observed galaxies outside of the Milky Way. Though the American astronomer Edwin Hubble was ultimately given credit for the theory due to his discovery of redshift movement, it was nonetheless enthusiastically received by the Church. Pope Pius XII (1939-1958) even went so far as to declare that the Big Bang was the moment of "Fiat Lux" ("Let there be light.") recorded in the Book of Genesis.

Tragedy

continued from page 1

they should understand that the country was also founded on civil and personal liberty and that any law passed that abridges these basic rights is antithetical to anything any of the founding fathers would have wanted.

Even the founding fathers who were religious Christians (although most were atheist, agnostic, or deist) believed in separation of church and state because they realized that it was necessary to protect government from religion just as much as it is necessary to protect religion from government. None of them wanted their religious leaders to have influence on public policy just as they didn't want their political leaders to have influence on their churches.

However, since we have been abandoning the ideals that were set up during the framing of the Constitution, the conservatives are now able to avoid key issues in politics (such as all of the financial scandal sweeping both parties on Capital Hill) by making scapegoats of "religious infidels." Issues like this, however, should have no part in government any way because same-sex marriage and other social issues are constitutionally irrelevant.

It is also convenient for the conservative movement that a fundamentalist (i.e. ignorant) Christian will not be open to discussing religion. Anything deviating from the exact word of the Bible is wrong, and since the conservatives in political office appear this way, these are the politicians and the offices that zealous "Christians" will always vote for. Even if a policy is blatantly unconstitutional (such as the gay marriage amendments), the facade that "religious" politicians set up virtually guarantees that these un-American policies become law.

On the other side of the political spectrum, the other sad reality is the fact that those people in the lowest income tax bracket do not know that they are pawns of the political left.

Those on the left claim to be champions of the common American. They support the poorest of the American people with things like income tax bracketing, minimum wage hikes, welfare, and many other economic sanctions.

Far from being a force that has arrested the development of civilization, the Christian Church has been the single most powerful force behind the creation of the Western World. Its clerics kept classical culture alive during the Dark Ages, engendering a flowering of culture during the medieval period that continued through the Renaissance. The Christian Church believed in a reasonable, lawful universe centuries before Kepler, Newton, and Einstein would use mathematics to discover its inner workings; it has patronized and promoted ideas that challenged long-standing notions of scientific fact, fundamentally altering the way in which mankind views his universe. None of this contradicts Christian beliefs, as adherents to the Faith of Reason; Christians believe that reason, in conjunction with faith, can only bring one closer to God; what must be avoided are the uncompromising extremes: reasonless faith is fanatical, while faithless reason is heartless.

Despite their disparate methods, both science and religion quest after the same ideal: truth. Only when each side realizes that will we be able to foster an environment of mutual respect and understanding.

Dominus Vobiscum

**Love it? Hate it?
We wanna know.**

clemsonforum@yahoo.com

ing the minimum wage is to increase the amount of low-class citizens within the United States. After all, these people tend to vote for the politicians who seem to raise their standards of living. Whatever a party can do to increase its voter base it will do, even if it is very short-sighted.

It is only a matter of time before people realize that they are being used by the government, either by the left or the right, and in ways that the government has no constitutional authority over. It is interesting, however, to consider that the political right doesn't create religious people, they only mobilize them to vote, whereas the political left creates its own voter base by exploiting and expanding the poor with harmful short-term policies like raising the minimum wage. Although both practices are abhorable, the greater political sin should be apparent.

Change

continued from page 1

to stop Iran's acquisition of nuclear weapons. U.S. forces are stretched too thin to mount a ground assault, while attacking suspected sites with conventional weapons is unlikely to work. Mounting a nuclear assault against Iran is another invitation to mass terrorism. The isolation and derision that the U.S. currently enjoys will be nothing compared to what happens if it mounts a nuclear, or even a conventional, assault against suspected Iranian nuclear sites.

One should not discount the possibility of Israel's mounting an attack. However, given the U.S. alliance with Israel, that would be hardly better for us than simply doing it ourselves. For much of the world, and rightly so, the U.S. and Israel are viewed as a single policy entity.

What is the upshot of this? In many quarters, the scope of the Democratic victory has been a source of euphoria. To be sure, there are upsides to the victory and to its scope. However, it should not be overestimated. In one of the most volatile regions of the world, and the region to which the U.S. is at once the most committed and the most vulnerable, there is nothing to suggest that the recent election will offer improvements. Change in U.S. policy in the Middle East, if it is to come, will have to come from the people rather than from the parties.