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# COMMENTARY

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Tuesday, October 23, 2001

## Editorial University, Sprint can reach an agreement

Incoming students may have thought they were getting a good deal if they signed up for a cell phone to use when calling their parents from the residence halls. However, many of these students were dismayed to discover they would be forced to leave the confines of their cozy rooms in order to use their phones. Sprint PCS, in particular, doesn't have adequate cell phone coverage to service the customers on the east side of campus.

Obviously, the problem of getting more cell phone reception would be solved by building more cell phone towers. But the answer is not that simple. There is invariably controversy over the placement of cell phone towers, and residents located near 15th Avenue and Villard Street are loudly protesting a new tower slated to be built in their backyards.

The tower is expected to be 150 feet tall and located only a few yards away from the new graduate student housing facility. The tower could also devalue property in the neighborhood, and some people fear it could cause cancer.

Speculation that cell towers cause cancer has not been proved. Although this is a serious concern, many of the products we use every day were once the subject of the same suspicions. More research needs to be done before we can make conclusions about health risks posed by cell phone towers.

The siting dilemma stems from trying to balance the concerns of understandably angry residents with the real need for the tower. Since this particular tower would be utilized mainly by University students, it should be put on campus. There is no need to inconvenience or possibly endanger those who happen to live near the University just so students can have better cell phone service. And the campus has many areas where the tower would not be as obtrusive. The University is planning within the next six months to create guidelines on cell phone tower placement. Sprint should withhold their application to the city until the University finds a suitable on-campus site for the tower.

A cell tower on campus is essential and a matter of common sense. Cell phones have nearly become a necessity for many college students, especially since the Sept. 11 attacks. But to avoid aggravating a potentially volatile situation, Sprint should wait patiently.

Sprint should wait patiently for the University to solve this potentially volatile situation.

### Letters to the Editor and Guest Commentaries Policy

Letters to the editor and guest commentaries are encouraged. Letters are limited to 250 words and guest commentaries to 550 words. Please include contact information. The Emerald reserves the right to edit for space, grammar and style.

## Shut up, Mr. Falwell!

In times of crisis like these, there are those who will dissent from the mainstream. On the one hand, you have those who are urging restraint in the conduct of the war, and pacifists who feel that war is unthinkable and wrong (I'm not referring to those few "pacifists" who



Pat  
 Payne  
 Columnist

merely want to feel morally superior or chic by opposing everything the United States does). There is nothing wrong with this sort of dissent when carried out in a sensitive manner, as it adds to the tapestry of debate. On the other hand, there's the religious right, who have never added anything of much consequence.

Mr. Jerry Falwell (I, from this point on, refuse to give him the respect accorded by the title "reverend"), on September 13, not two days after the attacks, went on the religious talk show "The 700 Club" and spoke on the tragedy. Instead of letting the dust settle and perhaps finding some words of healing that any real cleric worth the title would have given, he said the following: "What we saw on Tuesday, as terrible as it is, could be minuscule if, in fact, God continues to lift the curtain and allow the enemies of America to give us probably *what we deserve*... The abortionists have got to bear some burden for this because God will not be mocked. And when we destroy

40 million little innocent babies, we make God mad. I really believe that the pagans, and the abortionists, and the feminists, and the gays and the lesbians who are actively trying to make that an alternative lifestyle, the ACLU, People For the American Way — all of them who have tried to secularize America — I point the finger in their face and say 'you helped this happen'" (emphasis added).

Let us juxtapose this with a few passages from a recent statement by Osama bin Laden: "There is America, hit by God in one of its softest spots. ... The least that can be said about these people is that they are debauched. ... May God show them His wrath and give them *what they deserve*. ... These events have divided the world into two sides: the side of the believer and the side of the infidel, may God keep you away from them. ... When God blessed one of the groups of Islam ... they destroyed America. ... And (Americans) want to wag their tail at God."

"If in fact God continues to lift the curtain and ... give us probably what we deserve," indeed. Mr. Falwell, you stated parts of the terrorists' case for them. Quite simply, you have aided and abetted the enemy. Were this a more unenlightened age, you would be on trial for treason and sedition — quite



Steve Baggs Emerald

possibly fighting for your life. Feel lucky that the only outcome is the loss of any shred of credibility.

Mr. Falwell, you and people like you have said that the attacks were our fault because God decided to lift his protection of this nation for harboring people who have beliefs and/or lifestyles you find abhorrent. How dare you use this tragedy to push your virulent point of view and try to justify the murder of 6,000 people?

Mr. Falwell, before Sept. 13, I found you to be a distasteful, arrogant buffoon. Today, I find you beneath contempt. And no partial apologies you care to make to the nation should be accepted, much less heard. The best thing you could do in the wake of your statements, Mr. Falwell, is to shut up.

Pat Payne is a columnist for the Oregon Daily Emerald. His views do not necessarily reflect those of the Emerald. He can be reached at patpayne@dailyemerald.com.

## Letters to the editor

### War protests help terrorists

On Sept. 11, over 5,000 innocent people were murdered by terrorists who hate everything America and the West stand for: Reason, life, liberty, prosperity and the earthly pursuit of happiness. We are presently being terrorized in a vicious attempt to murder more innocent people via anthrax. (And who knows what's next?)

If this isn't evil, then what is evil? Nothing — according to one of today's leading postmodernist professors, Stanley Fish, dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Illinois at Chicago. In a New York Times column from Oct. 15, Fish writes, "... There can be no independent standard for determining which of many rival interpretations of an event is the true one." He argues further that there are no objective standards to judge an action as good or evil; it's totally subjective, hence relative. On this logic, calling the Holocaust evil is no more valid than calling it good.

Thanks to countless postmodernist professors like Fish, moral relativism is rampant in today's so-called institutes of higher learning, where many students are currently protesting America's war on ter-

rorism. Such protests will weaken America's resolve in winning the war on terrorism, thereby helping the terrorists. While the U.S. military destroys the terrorists and their sponsors, the rest of us should protest the protesters — and their relativist professors.

Glenn Woiceshyn  
 Calgary, Alberta

### A new kind of terrorist

I see that several abortion providers across the nation have received mail recently containing a "mysterious white powder." Perhaps those wacky anti-abortionists have taken a page from the "bio-terrorist" handbook. Funny, though, I don't hear any reference to "Christian terrorists."

Bill Smee  
 University classified staff

### Canada column lacks perspective

The article titled "There's no hope with dope" (ODE, 10/15) made me smirk and then laugh out loud. I agree with Debenham's initial depiction of the college experience. But that's where our agreement ends. If college is for learning how to be free thinkers and a chance to begin taking

a more experiential approach to life, how can you justify regurgitating inane "facts" about something you've clearly never done?

You've successfully wrapped every anti-drug campaign slogan and half-baked rhetoric from the folks on high to construct an article which only points to lack of perspective. I'm not encouraging anyone to do something they object to, but when you say that buying marijuana in Oregon "indirectly support(s) these organizations," citing the Taliban, you obviously don't know that Oregon's number one cash crop is marijuana. (Above even grass seed!) At best you might be supporting a Canadian family farming community. The marijuana trade in the Northwest is such a local economy there's little hope for Afghani hash even making it here.

So I thank you for bringing a smile to my face and filling in what would have been a rather blank page. Had the author not distilled Nancy Reagan's eight years as first lady into such a moving piece, I might have had to hear about more of the world's "arduous" problems, like anthrax and personal privacy violations.

Shane McCloskey  
 senior  
 architecture