

# Newsweek dumps credibility down the tube

**Shannon Armstead**  
Commentary Editor

A news article in the May 9 edition of *Newsweek*, which falsely reported that the Koran had been desecrated by U.S. soldiers, outraging Iraqis and leading to even more murder and mayhem in Iraq, should cause us to question whose side the publication is on. While the media's desire for news that will grab attention is expected and acceptable, *Newsweek's* publication of a Koran being flushed down the toilet was a ridiculous means to gain the wrong kind of attention.

The report caused violent protests throughout the Muslim world. In Afghanistan, 16 were killed and more than 100 injured. In the past week it was condemned in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh, Malaysia and by the Arab League. Government and UN buildings, as well as mosques, were burned. Now Afghan Muslim clerics are threatening to call for yet another

er holy war against the United States.

All this destruction was caused by a story that contained no facts. While anyone who has used a toilet would know that a book cannot be flushed down the commode, a reporter somehow fell captive to the suggestion that this was not only a possibility but a significant story. To make the story valid, *Newsweek* claimed that it had sources without names, who in turn had their sources without names, who were investigators for the government that had learned from their sources, also unnamed, that in a report, unnamed interrogators

dumped the Koran into the toilet and in one case flushed it down the toilet to intimidate prisoners who were Muslim, but also unnamed.

After the story's validity was questioned, *Newsweek's* editor Mark Whitake decided to add insult to injury when he first claimed that the article was not sufficiently proven false, so it would not be taken back.

"We're not retracting anything. We don't know what the ultimate facts are," he said. Whitake ate his words the next day. "Based on what we

know now," he said, "we are retracting our original story that an internal military investigation had uncovered Koran abuse at Guantanamo Bay."

Mark found out the real facts after the story had been printed, taken for fact and sufficiently enraged thousands of Muslims across the globe to destruction.

Not only were the publication's allegations completely false, but they failed to take in all aspects of the after-effects of their reporting. Lest we have forgotten, we are, at this moment, at war. We are at war with a people whose ideology causes them to care little for innocent people. At times like these, extra care should be taken in the media.

*Newsweek's* feeding into this illogical, ignorant hatred not only risks their reputation, it costs lives. The media should seek to serve the people with news and care enough to realize that stories like the "Koran desecration" are only fuel for a fire of hate.



Illustration courtesy of capmag.com

## Letter to the Editor

In last week's article, "North Korea nuclear threat," Sam Krause asks the questions, "Why in the world would the United States redeploy troops stationed at the demilitarized zone on the 38th parallel to Iraq?" and "Why does the Bush administration downplay any problems that might be occurring within North Korea?"

The reason we are sending troops to Iraq instead of North Korea and trying to ignore the problem that exists is because North Korea poses no real threat to us: Israel. Apparently, giving Israel our military technology and weaponry along with our government donating \$5 billion annually is not enough unconditional support for them.

Now we must use our military might to subdue the Muslim world and thus secure peace in the Middle East for Israel. With the ever-rising animosity against the U.S. from the Muslim world we can expect our death toll from Iraq and the 9/11 strikes to rise exponentially. Sam is right, that "the priorities of our country aren't completely skewed." The priorities are #1: Israel and #2: America.

Mark Felling  
CCC Student

# Students can rest easy with new tuition hike

**Shannon Armstead**  
Commentary Editor

Tuition is on the rise, as usual, but don't stress, students; it's not that bad.

While it's easy to throw up your hands and start blaming the Republicans for not funding your education by keeping taxes low, there is no reason to get worked up about this year's tuition increase.

As poor college students, or perhaps not so poor, it is easy to squirm at the idea of having to give up more of the small amount of cash that passes through our fingertips. No worries, colleagues; the tuition increase for Clackamas Community College is only \$2 per credit, and we ought to be grateful. It could be worse.

According to the College Board, last year's students across the country paid between \$167 and \$1,132 more than in 2003, which means tuition is not increasing at the ghastly rate it has in years past. The College Board also reports that there is more financial aid to go around than ever before—over \$122 billion.

With the prospect of nearly endless scholarship opportunities, students can take their minds off the worries of rising tuition costs and employ their brains to find the best scholarships to make their college experience much cheaper.

Students skeptical about the need for a tuition raise should also keep in mind that the school has, within the past year-and-a-half, added the new

Roger Rook and Niemeyer buildings to the campus and is currently remodeling the PE building, Randall. The school is consistently upgrading for the benefit of the students and staff alike, with new technology and equipment.

A couple of dollars is nothing when you take into consideration the cost of all the school's ongoing upgrades. Even with its new buildings and updates, Clackamas is still the cheapest community college in the area.

While Clackamas continues to upgrade, the tuition hike this year has more to do with inflation. Most schools have a tuition increase every year due to inflation and students should fully understand and accept this fact.

Since many of us aspire to further our education, we should get used to the fact that our tuition costs will only increase when we attend at a four-year school.

While rising tuition may seem daunting, students should see the money they put into college as an investment.

According to the College Board, over a lifetime, the gap in earning potential between a high school diploma and a B.A. (or higher) is more than \$1,000,000.

What this boils down to is that whatever sacrifices you 'make for your education at Clackamas—or any other school—will pay off in the long term, and when your sought-after career is in full swing, the two extra dollars you pay this term will seem just as they are: insignificant.

# Russian affairs remain sketchy

**Sam Krause**  
The Clackamas Print

Tensions between the United States and Russia have been ambiguous to say the least.

First, the Russians have been vehement supporters of the War on Terror mostly due to their own struggles with Chechen separatists. After 9/11, Russia was subject to a string of terrorist attacks including the siege of a movie theater and the taking of hostages at a school in Beslan which resulted in the deaths of 350 people, 156 of which were children. These actions by Chechen rebels only strengthened the resolve of the Russian people to win the War on Terror and strengthened relations between the United States and Russia.

Second, George W. Bush and other U.S. officials have chastised the Russian government, specifically Russian President Vladimir Putin, for not upholding the values

of democracy. Governors are no longer elected by the public, but instead are appointed by Putin himself. In a recent interview with CBS' Mike Wallace, Putin addressed Bush's allegations of the restrictions on democracy that Putin has imposed on the people of Russia. Putin says the manner in which governors are chosen is not unlike how the president is chosen in the United States: members of local parliaments act as electors in this situation and choose the governors acting on behalf of their constituency.

Additionally, it is alleged Putin's friends, who have control of the media, have censored many journalists, if not fired them. Opposition, it is accused, is not given the amount of air time, newspaper outlets nor other means of communication to the public that state-run media is given. Putin denies such allegations, saying, "[There are] 3,200 TV and radio companies, and only 10 percent of them are state companies.

In Russia, there are 46,000 newspapers and magazines." He went on to say, "Even if the authorities federal or the regional level were to control all this mass media would be simply and practically impossible."

The war in Iraq has also been a matter of contention between the United States and Russia. Putin still opposed to the war. But this time, he believes it would be a mistake to withdraw from Iraq, essentially leaving its citizens in a quagmire created, in part, by the United States. Bush and Putin, though, had frank discussions leading up to the war and still do.

Russo-U.S. relations may be ambiguous, but there also seems to be a concerted effort to make up for past dealings of the U.S. with the former communist Russia is making strides toward democracy and has shown dedication to its allies, even when there are many issues that could have proved extremely divisive in the past.

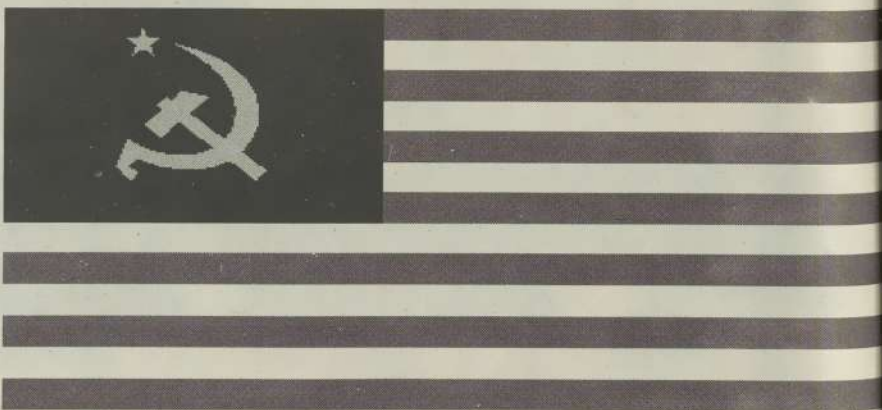


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