

## Working to make a difference?

### Philip Morris contributions are not philanthropic, have own interest in mind

Anyone who watches television knows who the "People of Philip Morris" are, but they probably do not know the complete truth about Philip Morris.



MELISSA BEDSOLE

Philip Morris is a huge company that owns Miller Brewing and Kraft Foods and is best known as the maker of Marlboro — the world's best-selling cigarettes. But many of the commercials on television only present the Philip Morris name in advertisements describing the good deeds the company does for America.

The people of Philip Morris only do good deeds to cover up for targeting young children in tobacco advertising campaigns. These deeds are not as great as the company would like viewers to believe.

No one is saying that Philip Morris does not do good things for communities around the nation, but if the expenditures are examined more closely, it seems that the company is more interested in helping itself than anyone else.

Last year, Philip Morris gave \$115 million to people in need and then turned around and spent \$150 million on ads telling the public about its good deeds. Its soft money donations are nothing more than an attempt to cover its own hide and stay on the good side of the government. Because the tobacco industry is under intense scrutiny, tobacco companies donate money to the government in order to influence their decisions.

Philip Morris was the highest donor of soft-money contributions to the Republican Party in 2000 — with more than \$800,000 in contributions. From 1995-'96, the company donated \$1.9 mil-

lion to Republican Party committees and \$349,000 to Democratic committees, at a time when tobacco companies began facing heavy investigations.

Democratic N.J. Sen. Bill Bradley described the way money invades politics as being "like ants in the kitchen — without closing all the holes, there is always a way in."

Donald J. Simon, executive vice president of Common Cause said, "Soft money is the way to buy access and influence." Philip Morris has used donations to buy its way in because it realizes that it will need all the help it can get to continue its corrupt actions.

So, aside from the fact that they exaggerate their good deeds and buy off the government, the people of Philip Morris are still good people, right? Wrong.

Philip Morris says it discourages underage smoking through programs educating children in schools across the country but recently have shamelessly brought its ads into those very same schools.

This school year, the companies of Philip Morris donated book covers to middle schools and high schools across the nation, an action which seems like another good deed on the surface. However, the people in Mesa, Ariz., were much smarter than the people of Philip Morris thought.

Opponents of the book covers say the company "has found another way to market deadly tobacco products to the youth of America." There are several book cover designs, but parents and students in some of the schools found alleged subliminal messages in all of them. One cover shows background images of athletes with cigarettes in their hands and another has roller blades with buckles that closely resemble cigarettes.

In 1998, Joe Camel and other

cartoon characters were banned from cigarette advertising, with the assumption that cartoons appeal to young children. However, on one of the new covers, there is a character with an image beneath his face — Mesa sixth-graders have identified the image to be Joe Camel.

These schools are not being ungrateful by sending the book covers back. They are realizing that

children seeing cigarettes on their book covers every day could play a decisive role in whether they choose to smoke.

Philip Morris should be reprimanded for thinly veiled advertisements, but it is unlikely. It has already bought off the government.

At this time, Philip Morris has not been reprimanded for its actions. However, anyone can make

the decision to not fall for the lies that the company is trying to dish out to the American public.

Recently, Philip Morris, the world's largest tobacco company, admitted for the first time that "smoking is addictive and causes diseases in smokers." Its honesty in this matter should be commended, but it is time for that honesty to be-

come an element in all of its advertising and sales tactics.

Until then, do not be fooled into thinking that the people of Philip Morris are anything more than a company promoting unsafe products with questionable advertising strategies.

Melissa Bedsole is a junior psychology major.



JOE PEDEN/THE BATTALION

## Test-flagging discriminates against disabled students

Students with disabilities have a new victory to celebrate. In a recent settlement of a lawsuit with the Educational Testing Services (ETS), which gives standardized tests such as the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) and the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT), the testing service agreed not to flag disabled students' test scores.



BRIENNE PORTER

A man without hands who was given extra time and access to a computer with a trackball to take the GMAT filed the lawsuit.

Mark Breimhorst was not accepted to any of the business schools he applied to and filed suit, charging that the testing service's flagging policy violated federal and state anti-discrimination laws. The testing service flagged disabled students' scores with the note "Scores Obtained Under Special Conditions." This

policy reeked of discrimination and caused students with disabilities to be unfairly stigmatized.

The testing service may have started out with good intentions, but flagging disabled students' scores was unnecessary. The notice to graduate schools that these students have a disability that allows for special equipment or extra time to take the test clearly separated them from students who took the test under regular conditions. That is discrimination.

The ability to compare the test scores of a disabled person and a person without a disability should not be allowed. The students need to be judged by their scores alone. According to Judge William Orrick of Federal District, in a ruling reprinted by *The New York Times*, "the service's exams should 'equally measure the skills of disabled and non-disabled test-takers' — and that, if they did so, there would be no reason to flag the scores of test-takers who received accommodations."

ETS, by settling the suit and agreeing to change

its policy, is setting an example for other testing services.

The College Board, which administers the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), was not named in the suit, but it is planning to look into its notification policies.

Robert Schaeffer, the public education director of FairTest, a group that is critical of standardized testing, said, "This is a huge, major step forward for equal opportunity in testing."

This settlement does not cover law school or medical school entrance examinations. These other tests need to end their flagging practices because they also discriminate against groups of students. All students deserve to have the guarantee that they will not be segregated because of a disability.

Even though many admission officers say the flagging policy helps them become aware of how much disabled students are able to accomplish, the premise under which the policy began is not enough to allow it to continue.

David Wilson, president of the Graduate Management Admission Council, said, "The unfortunate thing is, most of [business school admissions officers] thought it was beneficial for applicants to have that flag because when admissions officers looked at the applicant's experience, and saw that a person had achieved all that despite a disability, it usually had a positive effect."

Yet, even with that line of reasoning, the policy was discriminating. In that case, it discriminated against non-disabled test-takers.

No matter how one views flagging policies, they are discriminatory and should not be continued. Other testing services need to learn from the ETS settlement and take a long look at their own policies. Discrimination, whether for or against those with disabilities, is not ethical or legally right.

Brienne Porter is a junior political science major.

### CARTOON OF THE DAY

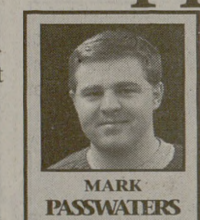


THE UNCARTOONIST

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## Russian opposition — same song, second verse

Welcome back, Soviets. It cannot be said that you were missed.



MARK PASSWATERS

To be honest, the group in charge of the Russian Federation Soviets cannot accurately be considered Soviets. It has renounced communism and replaced it with some other form of totalitarian structure while claiming it is working toward democracy. Even if its claims are true, the actions of the current Russian government are eerily similar to those taken by the Soviet Union during the Cold War. It is time the United States dealt with it accordingly.

President Bush said he was "deeply concerned" by Tuesday's arrest of FBI agent Robert Hansen on charges of spying for the former Soviet Union and Russia. Bush should have been concerned with the actions of the Russians far before this latest incident; they have returned to playing the role they abandoned in 1989: Being the adversary of the United States at every turn, while thinking nothing of lying to the rest of the world.

To anyone who knows Russian history, the Bear's renewed stalking of the Eagle is not a shock. For a thousand years, the Russians have required a foe to help take the minds of the Russian people off their own

suffering. The Russians have decided to face off with a very powerful country; first it was the Ottoman Empire in a dispute over the Turkish straits, then it was Napoleon's French, then the British Empire, the Japanese, the Nazis and finally the United States. The long-suffering Russian people could at least take pride that their homeland was a global power to be reckoned with.

Russian President Vladimir Putin is struggling with an economy in a shambles and a nation with a confused political landscape. It is not surprising Putin, a former KGB agent, has decided to take the time-tested approach of leaning toward totalitarianism while finding a foe to blame everything on. Once again, the United States is a perfect fit for the enemy.

The first warning signs came when the Russian nuclear submarine Kursk sank last year after one of its torpedoes exploded inside the boat. Instead of coming forward and admitting responsibility, the Russians blamed an invisible American submarine for the disaster, saying the Kursk had been rammed.

Last week, the Russians stepped up the rhetoric, using the Russian newspaper *Pravda* — long known in the West as being the mouthpiece of former Soviet policy — to accuse American National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice of making anti-Russian statements to an Italian newspaper just days before.

According to *Pravda*, Rice called Russia "a threat to the West" in an interview with *El Figaro*, an Italian magazine. (Rice's comments smack of ignorance and sensationalism and ... offensive arrogance, imperialist fantasies and proof of total ineptitude," *Pravda* railed.

Two small problems: Rice never gave an interview to *El Figaro*, which took her comments from an interview with the French magazine *Politique Internationale*, in which she said she "did not see Russia as a threat to the West."

The Kremlin has also taken to insulting Bush, calling him a "cowboy" with "imperialist delusions." The Russians have not stopped at words. In recent weeks, they moved tactical nuclear weapons to the port city of Kaliningrad on the Polish and Lithuanian borders. They also conducted massive military exercises in which Russian aircraft violated Norwegian and Japanese airspace — something not done since the 1980s — with long-range bombers, and they test-fired four different types of intercontinental ballistic missiles.

The Russians are stepping up diplomatic opposition to the United States. Along with the French and the Chinese, the Russians have strongly condemned the "barbaric" American and British air attacks against Iraqi radar installations. While the Russians are claiming they only have "humanitarian interests" in mind, it should be remembered

that the Russians have billions of dollars worth of defense and construction contracts waiting to be grabbed when U.N. sanctions against Iraq are lifted. Putin seems to have decided that, whenever the United States is involved in a diplomatic dispute, Russia must take the other side. This would increase the chances of Russia benefiting economically and in prestige.

Perhaps the Bush administration is catching on. CIA director George Tenet testified before the Senate Intelligence Committee that the Russians have played a major role in "advancing these ... weapons of mass destruction programs of rogue nations." The United States should not stop at voicing concerns. It should cut foreign aid to the Russians, and increase its military budget. Russia's actions cannot be considered those of a nation looking to improve relations with the United States, much less that of an ally. The Clinton administration went easy on Boris Yeltsin, knowing he was trying to get his nation through major struggles to true democracy. Putin has reversed course, and Bush should do the same thing. The Russians are once more a threat to American national security and should be treated as such, even if the chilly weather between the two nations freezes into another Cold War.

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